



## what's inside

- 2 Comments about VAP
- 3 Sectoral org plans for 2003
- 5 Work-life balance at IRRI
- 7 IRRI scientists receive awards

# DG optimistic about IRRI's future



**D**irector General Ronald P. Cantrell expressed optimism over IRRI's future despite budget shortfalls that affected most of its activities last year.

Dr. Cantrell called for greater staff efficiency and productivity which he said are vital to IRRI's future as he announced a balanced budget for IRRI despite an expected budget deficit and a no-staff-reduction plan in 2003.

Speaking during the end-of-the-year seminar last 5 December, Dr. Cantrell said, "We are not planning a staff

reduction program next year (2003). We will continue to update our projections on income and monitor all variables that come into play on the expense side. Right now, we can say that all things considered, we will have a balanced budget."

Major events during the latter part of 2002 augured well for IRRI despite

budget cuts from donor countries. These were the International Rice Conference in Beijing held in September, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in Manila in October, the McNamara Lecture in Japan, and the

● to page 11 . . .

## CIE creates VAP for loan assistance

**T**he Council of IRRI Employees (CIE) has established the Voluntary Assistance Program (VAP) to help employees secure loan assistance in cases of illnesses, injuries, or diseases not covered by health insurance.

The CIE, with support from the Office of the Director for Administration and Human Resources and Finance, will facilitate the management of common fund donations from employees.

VAP aims to assist NRS with large, unexpected medical and hospitalization bills, promote camaraderie among employees in times of financial difficulties, enhance employees' sense of social responsibility, and encourage generosity among employees in helping co-workers in need of assistance.

The mechanics of the program are as follows:

1. Employees will be encouraged to donate cash or the cash equivalent

● to page 2 . . .

## What employees say about VAP

The VAP is an outstanding idea to help IRRI employees who are suffering from serious illnesses but have limited cash to sustain their medical treatments or when their medical insurance is exhausted.

It also demonstrates the *damayan* (helping) spirit of Filipinos in time of need. I hope that with the help of fellow employees, the fund will grow and be adequate to support our fellow employees who need longer medical attention. Congratulations to CIE for this wonderful idea," assistant scientist Joel Janiya of Seed Health Unit told *Sandiwa*.

"ECDC has an automatic deduction of about P50 per member as *abuloy* (contribution) in case of death. In case of sickness, we request a needy member or his/her representative to file an emergency loan (hospital bills should be attached) of about P30,000 payable in one year. ECDC does not donate a certain amount in case of sickness," Joe Roxas of Plant Breeding, Genetics and

Biochemistry said. He suggested a regular IRRI-wide raffle to be coordinated by sectoral organizations to raise funds for the VAP.

"This should be conducted regularly even if no one is in need. A minimum amount of P20,000 to a maximum of P100,000 per needy employee (or legitimate dependent) can be given. If the regular lotto draw can collect millions of pesos, I think a regular IRRI-wide raffle can generate much and help a lot," Mr. Roxas said.

"This is a very laudable project. I hope that everyone extends full support to the project. If necessary, all employees should participate by paying additional premium to cover the increase in health insurance coverage or maybe, the institute should probably increase funding for additional health insurance," Domingo F. Tabbal of Crop, Soils and Water Sciences said.

"I am willing to pay an additional

health insurance premium to cover additional health insurance coverage. This way, the amount that will be needed from cash donations of fellow employees will be reduced. I would like to emphasize that each one of us must also assume an additional burden to take care of our personal health needs. We can always extend help to our co-employees in need, but they should not always bunk on the practice," Mr. Tabbal said.

For Ellanie Cabrera of Social Sciences Division, "This is really a good move! Congratulations! I was one of the employees who sought financial assistance last year when my husband underwent an adrenalectomy because we exceeded our health insurance coverage. Maybe, this is the reason why I didn't think twice when Tita Nelie (de los Reyes) requested me to participate in the CIE-sponsored December concert. It was for a good cause. I am proud being part of it!"

### ● CIE creates . . . page 1

1. lent of their sick leave credits to the fund.
2. Those who are willing to make a contribution will sign a deduction authorization form c/o CIE, with a copy to HRS-ER, HRS-NS, and the OU Administrative Coordinator.
3. The authority to deduct will be forwarded to Treasury for computation of the cash equivalent and deduction. Funds will remain at Treasury for safekeeping.
4. Donations are accepted all year round and employees are encouraged to donate to the VAP each year to build up the fund's resources.
5. The financial assistance, in the form of no-interest loans, will be paid through salary deduction.
6. The VAP Committee will administer the program as part of the

Institute's Employee Assistance Program.

Those who are qualified under VAP are (1) regular IRRI qualified employees and (2) immediate family (legal spouse, legitimate and/or legally adopted children). The following are not covered by the program: self-inflicted injuries, plastic and reconstructive surgery for cosmetic purposes, drug abuse and related cases, injuries or illness resulting from participation in riots, illegal strikes, rebellion, etc., treatment of injuries attributable to own misconduct, use of alcohol, illegal actions, participation in any act of crime, violation of law, or unauthorized acts, and unnecessary exposure to imminent danger or hazard to health.

The VAP Committee shall be composed of the CIE Chair, past CIE Chair or designated representative, Senior Manager of the Treasury, the Manager of HRS-ER, and Occupational Safety and Health consultant. The Senior

Counsel and the Manager of HRS-NS shall serve as resource persons. Among the duties and responsibilities of the committee are accepting and screening of applications for assistance, prioritizing the recipients according to need, and preparing and disseminating quarterly reports to employees through *Sandiwa* and public folders.

The program will give priority to sick employees. When funds are insufficient and when two or more employees need assistance, the committee shall evaluate, decide, and prioritize the allotment/distribution of funds.

The financial assistance shall be processed within a week and shall be paid directly to the hospital or physician and not to the employee, if possible. The employee shall pay back the granted amount through salary deduction in terms determined by the VAP committee.

## Sectoral organizations bare 2003 plans

**P**rofessional growth, community service, scholarship programs, and strengthening of organizational membership will be the main focus of the four sectoral organizations—IRRI Filipino Scientists Association (IFSA), Society of IRRI Nonresearch Professionals (SINoP), Association of IRRI Research Support Staff (AIRESS), and Association of IRRI Secretaries and Administrative Staff (AISAS)—for 2003.

President Carlos Huelma said, “IFSA plans to further strengthen the camaraderie among members through programs and activities that support scholarship, scientific discussions, sports, and sociocivic activities.”

“IFSA will promote partnership with other organizations that involve community development projects in improving and protecting the environment,” Mr. Huelma said.

Mr. Huelma emphasized professional growth among nationally recruited staff as the rallying point in IFSA’s representation in the Council of IRRI Employees.

“With the election of Tom Clemeno (CIE chair and IFSA vice president), Rolly Torres (chair, CIE general welfare committee), and Carlos Casal, Jr. (co-chair of the CIE strategic planning and research committee), we have a very good representation in the CIE.

“For sure, IFSA representatives will represent the welfare of its members especially in the area of professional growth. We will continue to develop strategies in facing the challenges that lie ahead through open discussions among our members. With God’s help and the active support and participation of our members and constituents, 2003 will be a prosperous year for all of us,” Mr. Huelma said.

SINoP will implement two community outreach programs this year, namely, the Values Enhancement Program for jeepney drivers in Los Baños and the Read to Lead Program for elementary school pupils.

President Eves Reyes also announced the launching this year of the SINoP scholarship program and the adoption of the Bagong Silang Elementary School under its *Tulong Paaralan*

(Help a School) program. SINoP will also support the Work-Life Balance Program of IRRI management.

Among organizations, work-life balance is “providing flexibility on how, when, and where people work, supporting and allowing people to do their roles and responsibilities in the family, training, and supporting time management and work planning, increasing productivity, guiding, and supporting managers on how to manage flexibility.” Examples are allowing employees to work on flexible time and a continuous five-day vacation leave.

Other activities of SINoP include: Fund-raising *Lambingan* (Romance) dance concert featuring the Filipiniana Dance Troupe and the University of the Philippines Los Baños Choir, sportsfest (April), musical concert featuring the renowned violinist Gilopez Kabayao and family (no date yet), back-to-school sale (May), seminar series (to start in June), general assembly and bingo socials (September), pre-Christmas bazaar (12-14 November), musical (12 December), Christmas party and election of officers

(19 December), and the traditional gift giving to the orphans of Kibo in Bay and Pinagpala in Pila, Laguna (20 December).

“SINoP will usher in the Year of the Goat (2003), prepared and confident as an effective and enthusiastic mover of ‘Team IRRI’. We will listen, and be good followers and responsible leaders,” Ms. Reyes said.

“SINoP will be ‘Looking in, reaching out’. We will enhance the competencies of our members in line with the mission, vision, and values of the Institute. We will reach out to strengthen our ties with IRRI’s partners and the whole community as well,” she added.

AIRESS is reviewing its general membership to strengthen the organization, president Jonathan Abengania said.

AISAS plans to develop its own website within the IRRI Intranet that will highlight the organization’s mission, objectives, strategies, achievements, and profiles of its leaders. It will also conduct livelihood seminars on sewing and candle making for its members and interested friends this year.

“One of our projects this year is selling used elementary and high school textbooks to raise funds for our scholarship program,” president Ely Tabaquero said. “Proceeds from the traditional Valentine, book, and candle sales activities will help support our scholarship program.”

---

## AISAS spells out mission at induction rites

**M**odern communication technology and trends in office operation will keep secretaries and administrative staff challenged and their status in the workplace elevated to a new level.

Eliza (Ely) Tabaquero of CSWS, president of the Association of IRRI Secretaries and Administrative Staff (AISAS), expressed this view in her inaugural message last 21 January.

“Our mission is to improve and elevate the status of our members to the highest level of recognition. It is now time to say goodbye to the old image that we (secretaries) are just good in

preparing coffee for our bosses. Time, technology, and current trends in office operation have changed all that. We are now an integral part of today’s business and industries. Let us take pride in our jobs because what we do also contributes to the institute’s objectives to succeed,” Ms. Tabaquero said.

“IRRI’s excellence and dedication to its mission has molded us into one of

the best in our work and in our relationship with our supervisors, co-workers, scholars, guests, and fellow members. Let us all work together cohesively and with mutual respect and make our workplaces a joyful place to work in," she said.

In his inspirational message, Director General Ronald P. Cantrell encouraged AISAS to set realistic goals and exert efforts to work on them.

Ian Wallace, director for Administration and Human Resources, inducted into office the AISAS board of governors, building representatives, and new members for 2003 as follows:

Eliza Tabaquero, president; Rosalie Laude (CSWS), vice president; Jacinta Evangelista (CSWS) and Evangeline Gonzales (SHU), secretaries; Selene Ocampo (DAHR), treasurer; Teresita Santos (GRC), auditor; Fe Danglay (GRC), public relations officer; Lea de los Reyes (LDS), representative to the Council of IRRI Employees; and Nelie de los Reyes (PBGB), ex-officio.

The building representatives are Arlene Rivera (Chandler Hall, Harrar Hall, and Communication and Publications Services), Lucy Gamel (F.F. Hill), Melanie Quinto (M.S. Swaminathan), Perlita Malabayabas (Experiment Station,

Physical Plant Services, and Transport Office), Rosendo Gutierrez (D.L. Umali), Yollie Aranguren (N.C. Brady Laboratory and K.J. Lampe), and Lolit Adriano (Hemmi Laboratory).

The new members are Any Lyn

Genil of the DDGR; Ireneo Gibas, CSWS; Jennifer Hernandez, TC; Salome Palmones, EPPD; Marilyn Bonador, LDS; and Teresita Victoria, International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications.



**Pictured at the 19<sup>th</sup> AISAS induction are (back row, left to right): Darshan Brar, R. Sackville Hamilton, Ronald P. Cantrell, Ian Wallace, and Bill Hardy. Front row (left to right): Nelie de los Reyes, Melanie Quinto, Lolit Adriano, Lucy Gamel, Rosalie Laude, Elisa Tabaquero, Evangeline Gonzales, To Phuc Tuong, Jacinta Evangelista, Fe Danglay, Teresita Santos, Lea de los Reyes, Arlene Rivera, Perlita Malabayabas, Ramil Gutierrez, Yollie Aranguren, Edwin Javier, Rhoda Lantin, and Domingo Tabbal.**

## Let there be light!



**Trainer Rodolfo Hayagan (left) of TESDA closely watches as a trainee switches on the light during practical exercises. Let there be light—and there was.**

**N**ineteen out-of-school youths and unemployed adults from five barangays in Bay, Laguna successfully finished the one-and-a-half-month Basic Electricity Course sponsored by the IRRI Community Projects.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) conducted the course at the Barangay Masaya Hall from 4 November to 19 December in coordination with the Municipal Social Welfare and Development (MSWD). IRRI provided P37,139 worth of electrical materials for use by the trainees.

The participants came from barangays Masaya, Paciano Rizal, Puypuy, Sta. Cruz, and Tranca. The knowledge and skills on basic electricity (house and building installation) they learned would prepare them for employment opportunities in neighboring municipalities.

# Work-Life Balance at IRRI

(An Interview with Fe V. Aglipay, Manager, HRS-NS)

By Sylvia Avance

**Q:** From an HR point of view, what is Work-Life Balance (WLB)?

**FVA:** Human resource professionals believe in the holistic development of human talents. We acknowledge that every day, employees have to make decisions between the demands of their jobs and the responsibilities to self and the family. Oftentimes, there are sacrifices made in favor of the job and the family suffers. On the other hand, there are also instances when employees may not be able to put in their best efforts in the workplace because there are family matters that get in the way. We at HR believe that career and family can go well together and that a happy family is a driving factor for employees to be productive in their jobs. With this, global companies have adopted programs that will help workers "balance professional and personal responsibilities, because conflicts can affect employee productivity and, in turn, organizational achievement." This was highlighted in the results of the study by Mercer Human Resource Consulting based in the USA.

**Q:** How does WLB benefit the employer/employee?

**FVA:** We must understand that WLB is a program initiated by management based on the needs of and upon consultation with their employees. Surveys by human resources consulting firms in 2001 revealed that employers who have work/life initiatives firmly in place make employees feel valued; reduce absenteeism and increase productivity; reduce staff turnover and save on recruitment costs; reduce retraining costs; retain valued employees; and maximize available labor. WLB programs produce a loyal and better-motivated workforce in a less stressful environment.

Employees who have achieved WLB will have improved self-esteem, health, concentration and confidence; greater responsibility and a sense of ownership toward work; less tendency to bring home problems at work and vice versa; and loyalty and commitment. WLB will also result in better relations between employees and management. The most important result is that employees will have time to achieve a better balance in life outside work, and greater control of their working life.

**Q:** Could you give examples of WLB practices?

**FVA:** Benchmark studies conducted by human resources consulting firms have classified work/life initiatives in these categories: flexible work options; time off and leaves; information and counseling; financial support; health and wellness; child care initiatives; retiree support; family participation, training, career development, internet use; and community involvement. It is important to note here that programs offered by companies may depend on the budget and priorities of the organization. The organization must first examine its culture to determine how appropriate and beneficial some programs can really be.

Based on a 2000 survey of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP), the top WLB programs offered by "best practice" companies in the country are the



following: salary loan; work-related seminars; transportation allowance; car loan; educational assistance for employees; food allowance, transport services; worship facilities; calamity loan; flexitime; study leave; resource library; health and wellness programs; special leaves; career planning and mentoring.

**Q:** How about WLB here at IRRI?

**FVA:** We have a long list, but I would like to highlight the more important ones that are already in place here at IRRI even before this idea became a hot item in the corporate world.

- Health and wellness program that includes sports activities and tournaments in soccer, basketball, volleyball, chess, and bowling. The IRRI Club is a venue for fitness programs such as tae-bo, aerobics, weightlifting, etc.
- A comprehensive medical insurance plan that covers the employee and his/her immediate family;
- Christmas week holiday;
- Shuttle/Transport services to selected areas at UPLB;
- Maternity, paternity, and compassionate leave;
- Bereavement assistance (sack of rice, cash advance, bus service);
- Livelihood programs for family members;
- A multipurpose credit cooperative (IRRI-ECDC) that offers loans for various purposes;
- Extensive staff training and development programs that include developing personal and interpersonal relationships, stress and time management;
- Subsidized on-campus staff facilities such as cafeteria, medical clinic, and sports areas for baseball, basketball, tennis, badminton and other games; and
- Employee assistance programs, including livelihood training and counseling.

Last year, the Director General has mandated flexible work arrangements. This year, the DAHR has also given us the go-signal for employees to go on multiple-day continuous leave so that we can have time to focus on family concerns which may have been neglected because of work pressures.

**Q:** Are there other WLB programs that are in the pipeline?

**FVA:** Yes. Because we believe that IRRI's most important assets are its human resources, we continue to explore resources and ideas that will offer more choices for our staff on where they would like to invest their time for family and work. Given the financial and staff resources that we have, our training curriculum for 2003-2004 includes programs on parenting, personality development, coaching and counseling, establishing marriage relationships, and various productivity workshops. This is done based on the concept that each employee owns his/her personal development as well as the responsibility of getting the appropriate WLB and training program to address individual concerns.

## New Year's resolutions in the workplace

**M**aking a new year's resolution is a traditional practice that dates back to the early Babylonians. Today, after singing Robert Burns' *Auld Lang Syne* at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, one struggles to get the resolution urge.

To some people, making New Year's resolutions gives a sense of focus and renewal, and the guilty awareness of an unkempt resolution made the previous year. Losing weight, quitting smoking, returning borrowed books and CDs on time, and woe to chocolates are some of the more popular resolutions in this modern era. But some don't even have a clue!

What about in the workplace? *Sandiwa* interviewed some staff about their 2003 resolutions in the workplace. Here they are:

"I will increase my efficiency and do more work per unit time so that I can have sufficient time for other activities as an officer of IPFA. Also, I will further refine my lab techniques so that I can minimize wasting precious reagents, pipette tips, tubes, etc.," says **Mark Nas** of Plant Breeding, Genetics and Biochemistry (PBGB).

**Adonna Robles** of the Office of the Deputy Director General for Research says, "For 2003, I would like to continue to enjoy work at IRRI, thank God for all His little and big blessings, and count every day as a privilege that we continue to be part of the solution to feed many hungry mouths and empty stomachs in the world. In practical terms, I would like to be more productive and more useful by being involved in various activities of the Institute."

**Gina Zarsadias** of the Training Center vows, "To learn additional skills, be more creative and resourceful, remain happy, and add more fun into work."

**Sylvia Avance** of the Human Resources Services is focusing on "establishing more positive and authentic human relationships at work, with family, and community. I must combine this with the optimism that things will

work out well, a confidence that I can influence the circumstances of my life, and an expectation of a good future."

"In my work as an HR professional, I will enhance the following: Passion, an extraordinary and compelling way of believing and doing things; Perspective, not only in understanding a situation but also in accepting the fact that changing situations is exhilarating, exciting, and thrilling; and (quoting Dr. Warren Bennis) Meaning, because I believe that 'we are all hungry spirits, looking for meaning, and wanting to make a contribution,'" Ms. Avance adds.

"For 2003, I'll try to lessen the clutter of papers on my desk so I don't have to swim through everything each time I'm looking for a document," says **Iris Operario** of the Library.

"Changes can be done anytime given the need and determination. At work I try to do what I should; we can only be at a particular time once, so better make the best of things. But lately, I realized I already have these imaginary walls that in some way limit my capabilities. Might as well try to start getting out of the shell," **Reycel Maghirang**, PBGB.

**Alvaro Pamplona** of PBGB resolves to cut the cost in operating the nurseries at Plant Breeding under his supervision due to the centralization of work brought about by the implementation of the retrenchment program year. "This includes nurseries in breeder seed production, crossing program, observation nursery for screening pests like tungro virus, and foundation seed production," he says.

**Sulpicio Malabanan**, an Experiment Station (ES) lead research technician, is "ready to take additional responsibilities since my supervisor joined the SRP and to finish on time all the jobs assigned."

**Jesse Banasihan**, another ES lead research technician, says, "Aside from

### Bouman chairs JCC



Bas Bouman, water scientist at Crop, Soils and Water Sciences (CSWS), is the new chair of the Job Classification Committee (JCC) effective 2003 March 1.

Albert Atkinson, training and courseware specialist at the Training Center, will replace outgoing JCC chair Gene Hettel, head of Communication and Publications Services, as internationally recruited staff (IRS) representative.

Joel Janiya of CSWS is replacing Renato Reaño of Genetic Resources Center (GRC). Both are former chairs of the Council of

IRRI Employees.

Director General Ronald P. Cantrell said the new JCC appointees "will enjoy observer status on the Committee before taking up their new duties at the beginning of March. In future, JCC members will each serve a term of three years. Thus, each year three members will leave the Committee and be replaced by three new members."

The other JCC members are Edwin Javier (GRC), Emmy Ballesfin (Central Registry Services), Pepito Cabauatan (Entomology and Plant Pathology Division), Corinta Guerta (Office of the Director for Program Planning and Coordination), Artemio Madrid (CSWS), and Manuel Vergara (Transport Services).

"I would like to welcome the new JCC members and to thank the outgoing members who have served the Committee well since its early days in 1998. It is Mr. Hettel, Mr. Reaño, and other long-serving members still on the Committee who have made the JCC a success," Dr. Cantrell said.

warehousing job, I will assume additional responsibilities, if needed, such as TPA supervision, support for crop production and rat control activities as a result of the recent restructuring program.”

**Rogelio Elbo**, an ES trained pesticide applicator, resolved to be multiskilled to take on other work-related duties. “*At syempre, pag may*

additional skill, *baka magkaroon ng dagdag na salary, kasi lumalaki na rin gastos pampamilya. Medyo mahirap na rin ngayon ang nagbapa-overtime* (Perhaps, with additional skills will come a raise in salary because household expenses are increasing. It is getting difficult to allow overtime work).”

**Bonifacio de Chavez**, an ES

equipment operator, shares Mr. Elbo’s resolution especially in tractor and equipment operations.

**Benjamin Garcia**, an ES research technician II (Rat Control), resolves to be prepared in additional assigned jobs. He wishes that all workers at IRRI will be happy this year and that his application for a driver’s permit be approved soon.

## IRRI scientists receive international awards

**K**.L. Heong of Entomology and Plant Pathology Division will receive the prestigious 2003 Charles A. Black award in Arlington, Virginia on 20 March from the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST).

The award honors Dr. Charles A. Black, professor emeritus of agronomy at Iowa State University and a past president, executive vice president, and member of the founding committee of CAST.

CAST is comprised of 37 scientific and professional associations based in Washington, D.C. It selects agricultural, environmental, or food scientists who have successfully communicated the significance of the results of their works to policymakers, news media, and the public.

“This is indeed a great honor... I see this more of an award to IRRI,” Dr. Heong said.

**Dr. Jagdish K. Ladha (right) receives the ASA Fellow Award.**

Soil nutritionist **Jagdish K. Ladha** and plant breeder **Sant Singh Virmani** also received last November the American Society of Agronomy

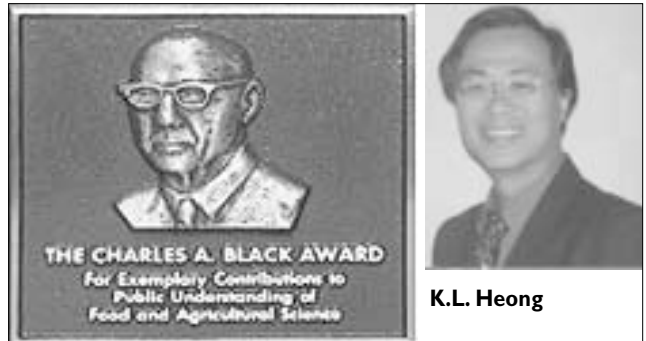
Fellow award and the International Service in Crop Science Award from the Crop Science Society of America, respectively.

Dr. Ladha is presently involved in rice-wheat research in South Asia. He works with the Rice-Wheat Consortium Project, an ecoregional initiative of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, aimed at enhancing the productivity of rice and wheat in

a sustainable manner. He is currently the editor-in-chief of the International Rice Research Notes (IRRN).

Dr. Virmani is deputy head of Plant Breeding, Genetics and Biochemistry. His work on hybrid rice technology under irrigated rice ecosystems of the tropics is helping both public and private sectors to attain one to one-and-a-half tons per hectare higher rice yields under farmers’ conditions.

**Dr. Sant Singh Virmani (right) receives the International Service in Crop Science Award.**



**K.L. Heong**



## IRRI perspectives on global issues sought

The visit to IRRI of 30 selected students and four faculty members from the US-based International Honors Program (IHP) of the Center for Alternative Development Initiatives (CADI) on 14 January exposed them to the programs and activities of the institute and country-specific programs dealing with global issues.

The trip to IRRI was aimed at getting the perspective of a premier Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) institution on global issues connected with globalization, ecology, sustainable agriculture, and area-based sustainable development, according to James Sharman, senior associate and IHP assistant coordinator.

CADI has been hosting the IHP program in the Philippines for several years now.

In welcoming the students and faculty members to IRRI, William G. Padolina, Deputy Director General for Partnerships, stressed the noncommercial operation of the CGIAR in its relationship with the private sector.

Dr. Padolina emphasized IRRI's

active program in helping improve the capacity building capabilities of 99 nations who depend on rice because of the knowledge-intensive nature of agriculture despite its survival on a \$20-\$25 million annual budget coming from donor governments.

The CADI group was introduced to the IRRI "Knowledge Bank" at the Training Center. They also visited the phytotron facilities, the agricultural engineering unit, the International Rice Genebank, the tissue culture laboratory, and some experimental plots. The students also held an informal discussion on transgenic golden rice research.

The CADI group is also traveling to England, India, New Zealand, and Mexico to explore the many facets of global issues mentioned earlier.

## ACE Philippines goes online

The Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE) Philippines has established an E-group—[aceph@yahoo.com](mailto:aceph@yahoo.com)—that will allow its affiliate members to have participatory online discussions on issues that will determine its future activities.

ACE Philippines will also review a draft constitution on 15 March prepared by a committee headed by Higinio Ables of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, College of Development Communication (UPLB/Devcom).

Twenty-eight persons from the Philippine Council for Agricultural, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), SEAMEO Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), UPLB, and IRRI attended the ACE Philippines preorganizational meeting on 16 January at the institute.

"At the next Intercenter Communication Workshop (ICW) scheduled for May or June, we plan to set aside time for an ACE affiliate business meeting during which we would like to: (1) ratify the new Constitution, (2) introduce a slate of officer candidates, and (3) determine if the ICW should become an official annual workshop/meeting of the ACE affiliate," ACE international director Gene Hettel said.

Mr. Hettel also reminded members to submit their communications project in the 2003 ACE Critique and Awards Program on or before 31 January.

A compact disc of ACE information and documents that include the proceedings of papers presented at the ACE international meeting this past summer in Georgia, and individual certificates listing the 56 charter members of the affiliate group was distributed to the preorganizational meeting participants.

ACE is an international association of communicators and information technologists. ACE members are writers,



### Dear departed

Sesinando "Ding" Guerta, motor pool dispatcher at Transport Services, passed away on 2003 January 27 at the age of 54 after a lingering illness. Ding joined IRRI in 1976 as an automotive mechanic. His wife, Corinta, manager at the office of the Director for Program Planning and Coordination, and children survive him. *(The family thanks IRRI and the staff for all the support, prayers, and financial assistance that were extended to the family. – Ed.)*

editors, photographers, graphic designers, videographers, electronic media producers, marketing and public relations practitioners, researchers, web developers, database programmers, distance education specialists, educators, and managers. They work in universities, government agencies, and research organizations in the public sector, as well as companies and firms in the private sector. ACE develops the professional skills of its members to extend knowledge about agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences to people worldwide.

ACE Philippines was launched at an

impromptu ceremony at IRRI on 6 September 2002. There are 56 affiliate founding members from the Asian Development Bank, Forest Products Research and Development Institute, International Center for Living Aquatic Resource Management, PCARRD, Island Publishing House, Inc., Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia, PhilRice, SEARCA, UPLB Devcom, and IRRI.

Ariel Javellana of the Communication and Publications Services (CPS) is the Philippine charter representative to ACE. The other members from IRRI are Victor Alarcon (multimedia developer),

Albert Borrero (CPS marketing manager), Meg Cardenas (multimedia editor), Johnny F. Goloyugo (information services specialist), Joe Ibabao (video specialist), Katherine Lopez (science editor), Manny Panisales (graphic designer), George Reyes (graphic designer), Tess Rola (science editor), Aileen del Rosario (photographer), Ginalyn Santos (web developer), and Patricia Santos (media asset specialist).

Gene Hettel of CPS is ACE international director and is instrumental in organizing the ACE Philippine charter organization.

---

## IRRI Library on a par with Belgian counterparts

**T**he IRRI Library is on a par with some of the libraries in Belgium because it uses the innovative online public access catalogue or INNOPAC, an integrated library management system. INNOPAC helps users find materials they need from the library.

This was the comment of acquisitions librarian Iris Marigold Operario, who returned from Belgium this month after attending a three-month short course on Scientific and Technological Information Management in Universi-

ties and Libraries: an Active Training Environment at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

"These libraries have state-of-the-art security systems that are essential to very busy academic libraries, but not to the IRRI Library, although we need more e-journal subscriptions. With this short course, I had the opportunity to interact with fellow librarians from 18 countries and lecturers from Western Europe."

Aside from formal instructions at the University of Antwerp and Catholic University of Leuven, Ms. Operario attended three international conferences on the virtual library, electronic publishing, and science and technology libraries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

She also made study visits to university libraries as well as to The Royal Library of Belgium and the Royal Tropical Institute Library in Amsterdam.

"What's so striking about the libraries that I visited was their grand architecture. Inside ancient buildings are very modern libraries. One new library that I visited in Leuven is in fact

an old castle with a roomful of medieval manuscripts controlled by high-tech facilities. The university libraries that I visited had few journals and books on display because most of them have electronic subscriptions. They have databases which the IRRI Library can only dream of," Ms. Operario said.

She described her training as "like getting a master's degree in three months without having to write a thesis", that covered various fields of library and information science such as Web publishing, library management, citation analysis, and thesaurus construction, among others.



**Iris Operario attended a class on citation analysis taught by Ronald Rousseau (left) at the Vrije Universiteit Brussels last November 2002.**

---

## Candy making at Tranca

**F**orty-five men and women from the Social Welfare and Development Office and Barangay Tranca in Bay, Laguna learned how to make *pastillas*, *bukayo*, coco jam, and *macapuno* candies after attending a candy making seminar, one of several livelihood programs being sponsored by the IRRI Community Projects.

The seminar was held on 22 January at the Tranca barangay hall under the supervision of Dr. Olive del Rosario of the Institute of Food Science and Technology, University of the Philippines Los Baños.

## Seminar for effective technical presentation

The Human Resources Services, in coordination with the Training Center and the IRRI Toastmasters Club, is sponsoring a two-day workshop on effective presentation on 11-12 March at the Training Center.

Internationally recruited staff, toastmasters from Toastmasters International District 75 (Philippines), and experienced members of the local toastmasters club are the resource speakers.

The workshop aims to enhance participants' communication skills (verbal and nonverbal), and provide them the opportunity to apply skills for effective technical presentation, and develop their confidence in presenting technical papers in public.

The workshop will consist of lectures, practical individual demonstration, technical presentation, and group evaluation covering the following topics: How to organize technical content and prepare for delivery, knowing your audience and handling nervousness, gestures, body language and vocal variety, power dressing, Powerpoint and overhead projector handling, and proper evaluation.

The initial session will include 24 nationally recruited staff from CSWS, PBGB, EPPD, and SSD. Priority slots will be given to those presenting papers in the upcoming conferences of the Federation of Crop Science Societies of the Philippines, Pest Management Council of the Philippines, Asia-Pacific Weed Science Congress, and other scientific meetings, according to workshop coordinator Jojo Lapitan.

Participants are required to prepare in advance a 10-minute technical presentation project. All the materials produced in the workshop will be included in the Rice Knowledge Bank with authors properly cited, Mr. Lapitan said.

Ian Wallace, director for administration and human resources, said the workshop is "a splendid initiative which will surely benefit all those who attend."

## Franciscan sisters, PHSA students carol IRRI staff



In the Christian world, the 12 days of Christmas ends with the Feast of the Epiphany, also called "The Adoration of the Magi" or "The Manifestation of God." Celebrated on the first Sunday of January, it is known as the day of the Three Kings—Gaspar, Melchor, and Baltazar.

The Bible tells us that these three kings or wise men saw, on the night when Christ was born, a bright star, followed it to Bethlehem, found there the Christ child, and presented it with gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Prayers and the singing of sacred music marked the Epiphany in olden times. What we call carols today are sung up to the very last day of the Christmas season—the Feast of the Epiphany.

The Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate of Novaliches, Quezon City, did just that at Chandler Hall in a gesture of goodwill and peace. Led by Sister Maria Eucaristica, they sang popular western Christmas carols that included *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, *The First Noel*, *Joy to the World*, *As I Kneel*, and *What Child Is This?* They also sang Tagalog carols such as *Stella Maris*, *Inang Diyos*, and *Abang Maria*.

Their rendition of *May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You* and the upbeat *Feliz Navidad* capped their 20-minute presentation.

The Franciscan Sisters of the

Immaculate are involved in the biofortification project of IRRI, in collaboration with the Institute of Human Nutrition and Food of the College of Human Ecology, University of the Philippines Los Baños.

Visiting IRRI for the first time, the religious group praised IRRI's pro-life activities and the involvement of women in rice research to feed the world's hungry population after being shown the video *Filling the World's Rice Bowl*, and visiting some experimental plots and the phytotron facilities. They also enjoyed feeding the fish at the pond, a favorite spot among visitors.

Meanwhile, the *Sanghiyas Pangkat Mananayaw* of the Philippine High School for the Arts presented an alternative but relevant return to the traditional way of caroling at Chandler Hall on 17 December.

Called *Sayaw Karoling*, "it marked the return to the original concept of caroling, not the big amount to be derived, but the spirit of giving to others. Through this academic art came

the realization that there are native dances that have relevance in this kind of celebration that the Filipinos should know.”

The PHSA dance group performed the following native dances: *Pastores a Belen* of Sorsogon, *Pulosang Floridablanca* of Pampanga, *Esperanza*

of Camarines, *Pandanggo Rinconada* of Camarines Sur, *Pandaguiado Buraweño* of Samar and Leyte, and *Sakuting* of Abra.

## IRRI strengthens computer literacy program in Bay and Los Baños

About 200 Grade 5 pupils of Bay Central School in Bay, Laguna will graduate next school year with basic computer knowledge, thanks to the 10 reconditioned computers donated by IRRI on 2002 December 18.

During the turnover ceremony, Deputy Director General for Partnerships William G. Padolina reiterated IRRI's commitment to the computer literacy program of the municipal government of Bay.

“We will donate computers to the different schools in Bay. We will strive to make the students computer literate when they leave their schools,” Dr. Padolina said. IRRI's computer donations are directed mainly in Bay and Los Baños.



In his response, Mayor Edwin Ramos said: “*Malaking bagay ang mga computers na ibinigay sa atin. Pakaingatan natin ang regalo ng IRRI. Salamat sa inyong puspusang tulong sa aming bayan* (The computers mean a lot to us. Let us take care of IRRI's gift. Thank you for your all-out support to our town.)”

“*Hangad namin na lalo pang magtagumpay ang IRRI* (It is our wish that IRRI will succeed more),” District School Supervisor Felicitas S. Coniconde said.

The school principal, Acena A. Panisales, said “pupils will leave the school with some know-how about computers. We expect a visit from you from time to time so that you may know that we are using the computers.”

“We will safeguard the computers,” commented barangay representative Victor Punio. Larry Miranda of the Department of Interior and Local Government also witnessed the computer donation.

**District school supervisor Felicitas S. Coniconde and school principal Acena A. Panisales (from left) receive a computer keyboard from Dr. William G. Padolina, symbolic of IRRI's donation of 10 computer units to Bay Central School. Bay Mayor Edwin Ramos (third from left) witnessed the turnover.**

### ●DG optimistic . . . page 1

post-AGM visit to IRRI of Mr. Ito, head of the multilateral funding division within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

IRRI also participated in Tokyo last 18 December in celebrating the completion of mapping the structural genome of rice. The signing of two memoranda of understanding by two organizations in the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture involved in genomics was a major highlight of the celebration.

The director general also went to Canada last year for a high-level meeting sponsored by the Minister for International Cooperation. The Canadian government agreed to increase the amount of funds for the CGIAR.

“All of these activities were very exciting and provides us an extremely valuable springboard to go forward in the future,” Dr. Cantrell said.

He also discussed the major pillars in the current CGIAR reform process. These are the following:

1. The holding of the AGM every two years outside of Washington, D.C.;
2. The changing of the Technical Advisory Council into a Science Council;
3. The establishment of a systems office where all organizational units that provide support to the CG system, donors, and centers would be organized into a single unit; and
4. Challenge programs that would

energize the CG system and provide a means to tap nontraditional sources of funds.

“We should get our message right,”

Dr. Cantrell said in identifying the technical issues facing IRRI. These issues include supply- and demand-driven research, natural resource management, donors' and national programs' perception of the institute, the future of hybrids, and IRRI's relationship with the private sector.

“The private sector has a future in rice in Asia. It can provide a new source of funds for research and can play an active role in technology transfer,” Dr. Cantrell said.

## “Tom C” chairs CIE, announces 2003 plans



T. Clemeno

R. Torres

J. Abengania

R. Oliveros

M. Jingco

L. de los Reyes

E. Reyes



C. Casal

E. Tabaquero

R. Laude

R. Chavez

O. Gonzales

A. Nuque

R. Santos

J. Marasigan

**E**xperiment Station manager Tomas P. Clemeno is the new chair of the Council of IRRIs Employees (CIE). Mr. Clemeno succeeded Kathy Lopez of the Communication and Publications Services.

The CIE is an umbrella organization of four sectoral organizations recognized by IRRIs management. These are the Society of IRRIs Nonresearch Professionals (SINoP), Association of IRRIs Secretaries and Administrative Staff (AISAS), Association of IRRIs Research Support Staff (AIRESS), and IRRIs Filipino Scientists Association (IFSA). The council represents the nationally recruited staff before IRRIs management on welfare, benefits, and grievance issues.

The other officers are Rolando Torres (IFSA), first vice chair; Jonathan Abengania (AIRESS), second vice chair; Ramon A. Oliveros (SINoP), secretary; Margaret Ann Jingco (SINoP), treasurer; Lea de los Reyes (AISAS), auditor; and Eva P. Reyes (SINoP), public relations officer.

The other council members are Carlos Casal, Jr. (IFSA), Eliza Tabaquero and Rosalie Laude (AISAS), and Ruben Chavez, Oscar Gonzales, Jose Marasigan, Ariel Nuque, and Rolando Santos (AIRESS).

During its first organizational meeting on January 14, Mr. Clemeno called for transparency in CIE relations with IRRIs management as well as the commitment and sense of responsibility of each CIE representative.

General plans were discussed during the meeting that included a two-day planning workshop this month, improved communication between employees and management, and amending the constitution and by-laws.

Mr. Clemeno also said that CIE plans to review the benefits of employees and how these are administered; discuss salary-related issues; implement livelihood programs for employee dependents; housing; continue the information campaign on Presidential Decree 1620 and worker's rights; support the voluntary assistance program (see related story); and health and safety programs.

He also appointed the chairs of various committees as follows: Mr. Nuque, benefits and welfare; Mr. Torres, professional growth; and Mr. Oliveros, grievance.

Mr. Clemeno, presently the manager of the Experiment Station, has more than 24 years of experience at IRRIs in the areas of research station management, genebank management and research, farm management, seed technology, rice production, crop protection, nursery management, training, and labor-management relations.

“Tom C,” as he is known, is a veteran officer of the council, having served as a professional sector-research sector representative to the then Council of IRRIs Employees and Management (CIEM) in 1985-1986 and 1992-1994, and as CIEM chair from October 1992 to September 1995.

Mr. Torres is an assistant scientist II at Crops, Soil and Water Sciences (CSWS) involved in research in agronomy, soil science, and rice-based cropping systems involving legumes and other upland crops.

Mr. Abengania, who has been with CIE for 10 continuous years, was one of the officers who helped amend the CIE constitution and by-laws and is former chair of its benefit and welfare committee.

Mr. Oliveros is presently an assistant manager II in the Office of the Deputy Director General for Partnerships. He brings to CIE his more than 8 years of experience in human resource management and administration.

Ms. Jingco is an administrative coordinator at the International Programs Management Office (IPMO). Seven-and-a-half years of her more than 20 years of service with IRRIs were spent in Cambodia where she established the administrative unit of the IRRIs-Cambodia Office.

Ms. De los Reyes works as an Electronic and Serials Librarian at the Library and Documentation Service. An active member of AISAS and SINoP, she is finishing her Master's in Library and Information Science at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Ms. Reyes works as secretary II at CSWS under the office of the IRRIs-Japan Collaborative Research Project. Not new to CIE, she served as secretary of the CIEM from 1996 to 1998 and as overall coordinator of the CIEM-coordinated Philippine centennial celebration at IRRIs in 1998.

Ms. Reyes was the public information officer of SINoP for three consecutive years until her election as president this year. She served as secretary during the early inception of the then IRRIs Secretaries Association, later becoming its president in 1992. Her secretarial and administrative experiences

Ms. Tabaquero, who is the new president of AISAS, is an administrative coordinator, while Ms. Laude, a computer science graduate from the Laguna College of Business and Arts, is a secretary at CSWS. They are both first timers in CIE.

Mr. Chavez is serving CIE for the second year. Presently a supervisor I at CSWS-Analytical Service Laboratories, he has been with IRRIs for 14 years doing plant and soil analysis, and operation and maintenance of laboratory equipment.

Mr. Marasigan is a research technician III at the Genetic Resources Center. A second-termer, he was the council's PRO last year.

Mr. Gonzales, a research technician III at PBGB, and Mr. Nuque and Mr. Santos of Transport Services, are all veteran council representatives, and have served in various CIE committees in previous years.