



what's **inside**

- 2 CIE identifies projects
- 3 IYR
- 4 SWM system
- 5 Community projects



IRRI will manage future changing scenarios successfully—DG

Dr. Cantrell (left) inducts the new IFSA board of directors and members.

Director General Ronald Cantrell said IRRI would be successful in managing its future notwithstanding the changing scenarios in funding and staff structures.

Speaking during the 38th general assembly and induction ceremonies of IFSA last February 19, Dr. Cantrell noted the changes that took place during the 1980's such as globalization, computer,

electronic communication, and biotechnology, among others, where before stability was the key word.

"That's not true now," he said, because these changes bring about

responsibilities. Private sector organizations "die a very quick death" for adapting changes that have no impact for changes' sake. Public sector organizations die a "very slow death" for adapting the same approach.

"We are in the process of trying to

● to page 8 . . .

Management issues regular appointments to core project employees

IRRI Management issued regular appointments to all current core project staff effective 2003 January 31 without changes in salary and benefits. Therefore, NRS core project employees "now enjoy an indefinite term."

"In order to rationalize the NRS appointments structure, Management has decided to issue to all current core project staff Regular appointments, effective immediately," Director General Ronald P. Cantrell, said.

"Core project employees who have passed their probationary employment will have an appointment with an indefinite term and may be terminated

only for just and authorized causes as provided for under the law and the *Personnel Policies and Procedures for the NRS*," Dr. Cantrell said.

"We have now converted almost 200 staff to regular status. I think all concerned will enjoy their enhanced employment status and reduced paper flow (no more appointment papers to complete periodically)," Ian Wallace,

director for Administration and Human Resources, said.

"As a result of this change, most of our NRS will enjoy either regular status or else will be appointed to a special project with clearly-defined goals and a precise ending date. For example, someone might be hired until 2003-12-31 to computerize the operations of VIS. Once the project has been completed, the employee's appointment ends," Mr. Wallace explained.

● to page 11 . . .

CIE identifies 2003 priority projects

The Council of IRRI Employees (CIE) has identified six priority projects for 2003 during its planning workshop at IRRI on January 31.

These are the following: Information campaign on workers' rights, the registration of CIE in the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), a review of employees' salary structure and guidelines, review and upgrade the existing health benefits under Philamcare, review the institute's current professional growth policy, and grievance policy watch.

The other priority projects are a fund raising campaign for the Volunteers Assistance Program (VAP), an employee day, amend the CIE constitution and bylaws, and establishing a day care assistance program for employees with

small children.

Chairman Tom Clemeno said the CIE would tap *Sandiwa*, the four sectoral organizations (IFSA, AISAS, SINOP, and AIRESS), and the institute's electronic public folder in its information campaign on workers' rights.

The CIE registration in DOLE is very important because this will give a legal personality to the council, Mr. Clemeno said.

The CIE will hold a dialogue with management when it proposes alternative proposals for salary administration and request management for additional funding to boost the professional growth

and development of employees.

The workshop also discussed some of the employees' common negative perceptions about the CIE and its apparent lack of credibility and independence due to management's funding support. However, some employees still look up to CIE, according to other workshop participants.

"The perception by our co-workers of CIE is very disheartening to those who are tasked to run it. The present council takes it both as a challenge and an opportunity to serve the best interest of NRS," chair Tom Clemeno said.

"Our first major task is to have a legal personality. We also need to increase employees' awareness on workers rights in an international organization like IRRI. The institutionalization of existing benefits and entitlements need immediate attention. Other concerns such as salary review, HMO concerns, CBL amendments, review of professional growth and grievance policies will also need to be addressed during the year. We will also continue to support the VAP, employee day, and other institute activities," Mr. Clemeno said.

Mr. Clemeno stressed that Management's continued provision of operational funds was part of the council's transition from the then Council of IRRI Employees and Management or CIEM.

"If we are really to represent the employees as an association, we must raise funds to support its operations. We can also request the sectoral organizations to provide funds to CIE," he said.

Ian Wallace, the director for Administration and Human Resources, said, "IRRI provides CIE with a small annual budget. Last year, most of the funds were spent on running the CIE office, meals and snacks, as well as expenses related to the musical event held in December in Chandler Hall. Smaller amounts were spent on legal fees, flowers, a book, and transport."

Training

Basic and Conversational English Course (English for Beginners)

2003 March 3–April 25, 5:15-6:45 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

This course is a combination of basic English and conversational practice activities. Most of the activities are designed to develop the participants' strategic conversation skills and communicative competence. Activities are adapted to each participant's level of communication.

Effective Presentation Workshop

2003 March 11-12, 8:00AM – 5:00PM, Burma Room, Training Center

Sponsored by the HR Services and the Training Center, in cooperation with the IRRI Toastmaster's Club, priority slots will be given to staff from the research divisions who will present papers in the forthcoming workshops and seminars of the Crop Science Society of the Philippines (CSSP); Pest Management Council of the Philippines (PMCP); and the Asia-Pacific Weed Science Congress (APWSC); and other scientific meetings this 2003 April and May.

Dearly departed



Antonio Morales, an assistant scientist II at the International Programs Management Office (IPMO), passed away on 2003 February 21 after a lingering illness. His body was cremated on February 26. Mr. Morales joined IRRI in 1979 as a senior research assistant I. His wife Aurora and children Alvin, Adrian, Allison, Antonio Jr., and Allen Francis survived him. *(The family thanks IRRI and the staff for all the support, prayers, and financial assistance that were extended to the family. – Ed.)*

Pal Singh bids IRRI farewell

Systems agronomist Virendra Pal Singh of CSWS bade IRRI farewell recently to lead the South Asia programs of the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) in Nairobi, Kenya.

IRRI presented Dr. Singh a plaque of appreciation for his years of service as water management specialist, problem soils specialist, farming systems agronomist, GIS specialist, as a leader of the rainfed rice research in eastern India, and for his pioneering work in characterizing rainfed rice environments for extrapolation of rice and rice-related technologies.

Dr. Singh was also cited for his “pivotal role in IRRI’s collaborative activities with NARS and NGOs in South Asia and his sincere efforts and friendly approach in developing close relationship with the farmers, researchers and policy makers of the region.”

Dr. Singh was the coordinator of the Ford Foundation-funded farming systems research in eastern India and

the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)-funded Flood prone project in eastern India and Bangladesh.

IRRI also lauded Dr. Singh’s successful efforts in continuing the validation of technologies for farmers through the IFAD-funded proposal on “Accelerating Technology Adoption to Improve Rural Livelihoods on the Rainfed Eastern Gangetic Plains” which he wrote while at IRRI.

The award was presented during the planning meetings of Working Group 1 (drought-prone lowlands) and Working Group 5 (Indian plateau uplands) of the Consortium for Unfavorable Rice Environments (CURE) at IRRI on February 18-21.

“With his enthusiastic efforts, this project has made significant progress in technology transfer and the impact on farmers’ livelihoods. It is an unwilling loss for IRRI to see Pal leaving the Institute. But we are happy that Pal is taking up new challenges and a greater responsibility at our sister center ICRAF,” Ren Wang, Deputy Director General for Research, said.

Mahabub Hossain, head of the Social Sciences Division, has assumed the responsibility of coordinating the IFAD project and IRRI’s effort in pursuing new IFAD funding for a project in East India on rainfed rice and the rice-wheat production systems, Dr. Wang said.



Dr. V.P. Singh (second from left) is shown receiving a memento from Dr. I. Bhuiyan of the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute during a farewell party organized by scientists who attended the CURE workshop in India on 2003 January 24-25.

IRRI expecting busy IYR

Plans for the recently declared International Year of Rice (IYR) in 2004 are already getting underway with IRRI set to play a leading role. Most major rice producing nations are likely to organize a wide range of activities, which are also expected to help boost IRRI’s fund raising efforts.

Duncan Macintosh, head of the Visitors and Information Services, is IRRI’s focal point for the IYR.

Michael Jackson, the director for Program Planning and Coordination, will be in Rome on 2003 March 6-7 to attend the International Coordinating Meeting (ICM) at the Food and Agriculture

Organization (FAO) Headquarters to present the institute’s potential activities relating to the IYR.

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institute’s potential activities relating to the IYR.

The ICM aims to create an international organizing committee that will support and implement the IYR at the international level.

“FAO, IRRI, and other major stakeholders have been working to promote the awareness of the vital importance of rice to food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable agriculture development,” Louise O. Fresco, FAO assistant director general (Agriculture Department), said.

“In this regard, special efforts have

gone towards the United Nations for realizing a UN Declaration for an International Year of Rice in 2004," Ms. Fresco said.

The UN General Assembly declared the IYR on 2002 December 16 after the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), during its 31st session in 2001, approved a resolution that called for a UN declaration of the IYR. The Philippine delegation sponsored the resolution.

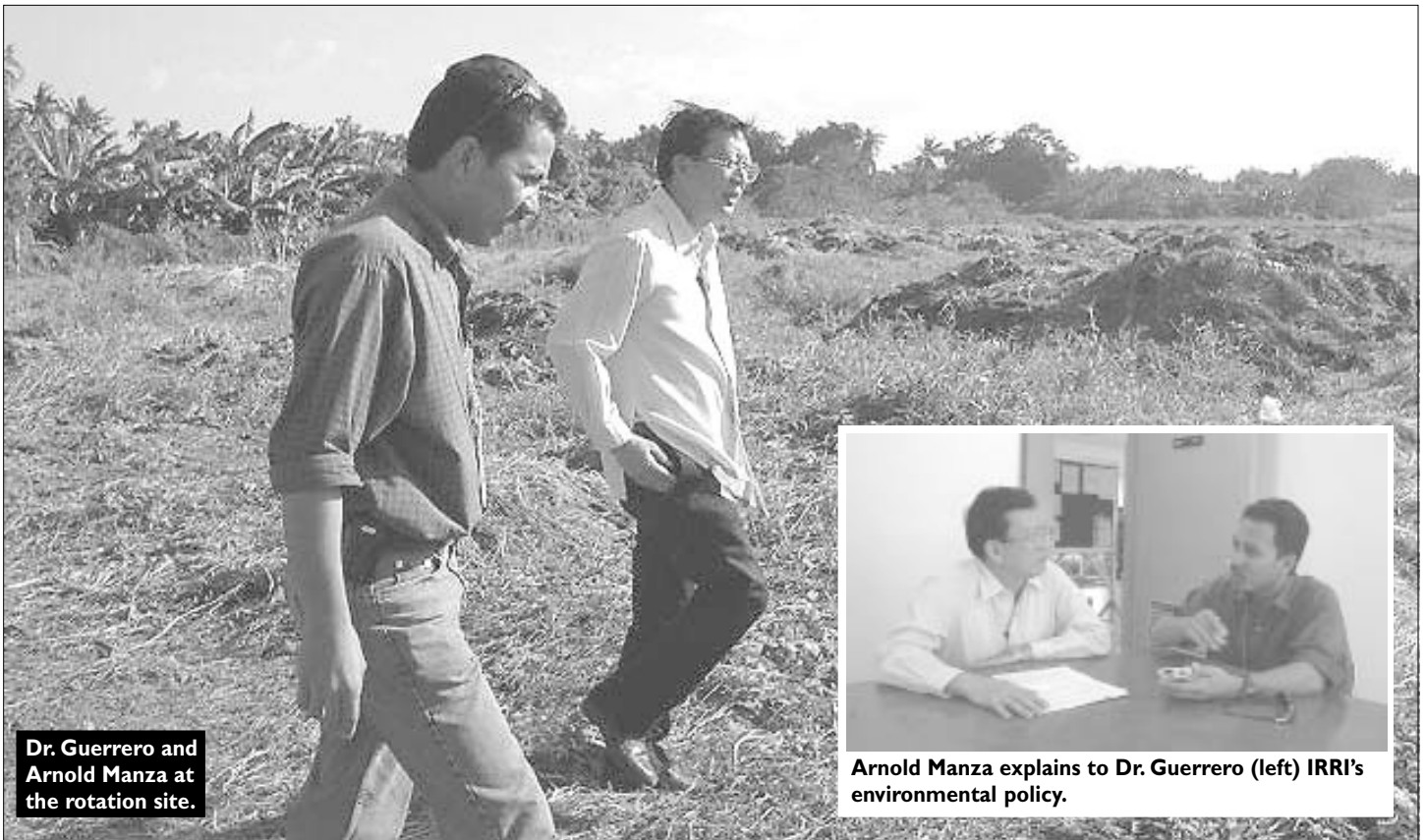
The declaring the IYR, the UN noted that "rice is the staple food of more than half of the world's population" and affirmed the need to heighten awareness of the role of rice in alleviating poverty and malnutrition.

The UN also reaffirmed the need to focus world attention on the role that rice can play in providing food security and eradicating poverty in the attainment of the internationally agreed

development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Agenda.

The UN invited the FAO to facilitate the IYR in collaboration with governments, the United Nations Development Programme, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, other relevant organizations of the UN system, and nongovernment organizations.

SWM system and facilities impress LBSCFI official



Dr. Rafael Guerrero III, chair of the Los Baños Science Community Foundation, Inc. (LBSCFI) environment committee, said he was "impressed and excited" at IRRI's solid waste management (SWM) system and facilities during his visit on February 17.

Dr. Guerrero told *Sandiwa*: "This is a revelation and a very interesting system because solid waste management at IRRI can be done anywhere. What we need is discipline especially at how IRRI uses rice straw. If we can eliminate burning, our farmers can save on fertilizers and help preserve our environment."

"I am happy that IRRI is showing the way. I hope that others may follow by its examples. But we have a long way to go. Because we are in an academic community, if we can't show by examples to our students, how can we do it?"

Experiment Station senior manager Arnold Manza showed

to Dr. Guerrero IRRI's soil rotation and controlled dumpsites and its solid waste management facilities at the IRRI housing.

They also visited *Pook Kalikasan*, a solid waste management site run by UPLB and the Waste and Resource Management, Inc.

Dr. Guerrero is the executive director of the Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research and Development (PCAMRD), a Department of Science and Technology council which plans, coordinates, and monitors all research and development projects dealing with the country's aquatic and marine resources.

Community projects benefit 3 barangays

Three barangays, one in Los Baños and two in Bay, benefited from training, livelihood projects, and medical mission funded by IIRRI at the start of 2003. The Visitors and Information Services implemented these activities under the IIRRI Community Projects.

Twenty leaders from Barangay Maahas in Los Baños successfully completed and passed the Neighborhood Emergency Services Team (NEST) training conducted by the Manila-based Emergency Resource Center, Inc. (ERC) on January 27-31.

IIRRI also donated two sets of medical kits and a spine board to the barangay. Chair Arnulfo Soriano thanked IIRRI for its continued support by sponsoring the training. "May this not be the end of our lasting relationship but a beginning of our commitment to public service," Mr. Soriano said.

Sixty-two patients benefited from the medical mission in Barangay Sta. Cruz in Bay on January 30. Electrocardiogram tests, blood sugar and cholesterol determinations, medical consultation, and blood typing were the services

rendered by IIRRI at a cost of ₱34,000.

Occupational health and safety nurse Cris Dawinan, medical consultant Dr. Licinius Gonzales, and community projects assistant Lito Platon spearheaded the medical mission in cooperation with the following:

Dr. Marius Moran, president of the Philippine Medical Society (Los Baños chapter), barangay health workers from Paciano Rizal, Tranca, and Sta. Cruz in Bay, Aida dela Rea of the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists (Laguna chapter), medical representatives Sherlene Mendoza and Ruschell Aguiloz of Pfizer Philippines, and four representatives from the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA).

The PICPA representatives are Imelda Silang, Leny Medenilla, and

Leonor Herradura of IIRRI, and Tony Deza of the International Livestock Research Institute.

The second medical mission for 2003 was held in Barangay Tranca in Bay on February 27.

On January 22, 45 participants from the Municipal Social Welfare and Development of Bay and Barangay Tranca learned candy making during a hands-on seminar conducted by Dr. Olive del Rosario of the UPLB Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST).

Tranca barangay chair Delfin Punzalan and Francisca Ramos, principal of the Tranca Elementary School, thanked IIRRI for sponsoring the livelihood program and for donating a school bell during a *Rotary at Your Service* radio program interview over Radyo DZLB 1116 kHz last February 9.

Meanwhile, the 15 women from Barangay Sta. Cruz who participated in a vinegar fermentation seminar last January 18 "harvested" their first products last week. Dr. Erlinda Dizon of the IFST conducted the seminar.



Aida de la Rea of PAMET blood type a patient as Tony Deza of PICPA looks on.



NEST participants pose before the IIRRI fire truck before their fire drill.



Cris Dawinan turns over IIRRI's donation of a spine board and two medical kits to Barangay Maahas chair Arnulfo Soriano (third from left). Assisting him are ERC trainers Vicente Lagunday (left) and Kim Fernandez.



Barangay councilor Buenaventura Mercado cuts the cooked bukayo (coconut candy) as Dr. Olive del Rosario, barangay secretary Angie Dimapilis (second and fourth from left), and other participants look on.



Dr. Erlinda Dizon (left) of the IFST demonstrates to barangay councilor Rufielyn Gravador how to ferment vinegar from coconut water.

You have work, but do you have life?

By Sylvia P. Avance

Grace reports to the office even on weekends to get rid of the piles of paperwork that need to be signed by her boss, to check e-mails, and to finish typing reports. She can't even remember the last time she went out for a picnic with her husband and children.

Allen has consistently been given a "Superior" rating for the past five years. His girlfriend of 10 years has recently broken off their engagement because she claims that he has no time for her.

Lusyl is attending a management committee meeting that will probably extend up to seven in the evening. Meanwhile, her five-year-old daughter is crying in school, waiting for Mom to fetch her. It is already 5:30 p.m.; the lady guard is trying to call Lusyl's office, but nobody answers the phone.

I have never attended a Parent-

Teacher Conference (PTC) in my daughter's school since this has always been in conflict with my work schedule. Last 2002 October, she told me that she had already requested her older brother to attend the PTC and that immediately after the PTC, her brother treated her to a "blow-out", to celebrate her getting good marks! I felt guilty, and like Grace, I asked myself when was the last time I had real fun with my family?

Are you one of us?

These true-to-life situations give a face to the latest hot issue in the

workplace today, Work-Life Balance. This burning issue points out the need to assess our priorities in life and where we stand in terms of economic pursuits, professional fulfillment, and making choices between work and life.

What is Work-Life Balance?

Basically, these are the wedge questions for most of us workers: How much money for your work? How much time for the family? How much public glory? How much time for reflection?

You will agree with me that we work to support life. But over the past years, this paradigm has become increasingly difficult to achieve mainly because of pressures brought about by fast-paced changes in information technology, globalization, increased competition, recent trends such as dual career, single parenthood; and the higher cost of living.

With these, we spend longer hours at work to cope or to achieve our goals. This results in having less time with the family, greater difficulty in caring for children or elderly relatives, less time for rest and recreation, and even no room for professional growth. Thus, work is no longer able to support life; it even brings stress to life.

Successful and agile organizations in the global arena today have already considered adopting programs that will help "employees to integrate their work and personal lives by adopting imaginative and flexible approaches which benefit both themselves and the business." Generally, Work-Life Balance is a management initiative to help their employees work better in a "supportive, flexible, and considerate workplace".

I have read several articles and books on how highly successful individuals have managed to balance family life and their career. Here are some points and examples I would like to share with you that may inspire you and may help you think about work/life balance.

- **Work-Life Balance results in satisfaction.** We need to clarify

IFSA President's Report for 2002

By Julian A. Lapitan, Outgoing president



The main accomplishments and activities of IFSA in 2002 were as follows:

Funding - 170 out of 180 members paid their annual dues. The dues covered expenses for activities and some debts of the previous IFSA administration.

Retrenchment program - IFSA initiated CIE's letter to the director general on the recommended multiplier and possible ways to increase it.

MP3 and CIE amendment - Our critical position on the MP3 issue was adapted and endorsed by the CIE.

Fellowship program - Recognition of retrenched members, scholars, and their parents.

Galataz leadership and management workshop - More than 50 IFSA members including representatives from AISAS, SINOP, AIRESS, and AFSTRI were exposed to contemporary leadership and management issues and practices.

Regular and special BOD meetings - Discussed and offered solutions to various concerns faced by IFSA particularly during the retrenchment program.

first what are important to us and choose our priorities. From here, we can make a decision on whether we can have an “either-or” or a “both-and” for our living and life.

- **“The only way to find true ‘balance’ is to make your passion and your work one and the same”.** I borrowed this quote from Mark Albion, who earned three degrees at Harvard University and at age 31 was considered a marketing wunderkind at the Harvard Business School. He had unlimited resources, personal wealth, and public glory there, but he left Harvard when he felt that he had to find other ways to enrich other people’s lives.
- **“Keep it Simple”.** Elaine St. James, who is considered the spiritual leader of the simplicity movement, in her book *Simplify Your Life: 100 Ways to Slow Down and Enjoy the Things that Really Matter*, and in three other sequels of this book, offers the following tips:
 - *It’s about time.* Free up one hour a day for 30 days and use that time to reflect on simple questions like: what is it that is most complicating my life? Am I working too hard? Am I working at a job I don’t like? Are all my kids draining all my energy? Then start thinking about how and what you can cut back.
 - *Less is more.* This may mean changing how you work, not how much work you get done. It may mean not attending every meeting to which you were invited, so that you will have more time for more important projects. This will result in having more time for family priorities.

— *Just say no.* No one can maintain more than three priorities. If you have a family, that’s a priority. If you have a job that you care about, that’s a priority.

Another one may be your health or spirituality. These should be enough. Having one more is overcomplicating our lives. Figure out what your priorities are; say no to others.

— *Possessions are nine-tenths of the problem.* Go through your material possessions once a year and get rid of stuff that you have that don’t add to the fullness of your life. Better yet, don’t acquire stuff in the first place. Before buying something material, put it first in your list and wait for 30 days. After 30 days, ask yourself: Do you still need it?

— *What really matters is...what*

really matters. Take time out from your work to think about and decide what you want to do in your career, in your family life, with your civic obligations.

Colleagues, if you call me in the office next week and the following week, and nobody answers the telephone after the second ring, and my computer is off and you can’t send me e-mail or e-pop-sorry, I’m out of work for two weeks. I have six days excess vacation leave and I am taking another 5 days off for my multiple day continuous leave. My daughter is directing Romeo and Juliet in her school’s play festival and my son needs someone to edit his thesis on a topic about how children of OFWs cope with absentia parents. I’ll probably be a costume designer and make-up-artist-cum-editor for two weeks.

By the way, I am in the office until 7:00 p.m. before I leave for this vacation. You may call me if you want to inquire about training activities.

Rotary sponsors Serenata concert at IRR

The Rotary Club of West Bay is sponsoring a concert entitled *Serenata* at Chandler Hall, IRR on March 4.

The concert will feature young pianists Alexandra Miñoza, April Dawnena Merced, and Oliver Salonga, vocal artists Anna Dinah Migallos and Feona Turalde, flutist Crystal Milarose Rodis, and the Musika Ibarang, all of the Philippine High School of the Arts (PHSA) at the National Arts Center in Los Baños, Laguna. Pianist Frances Niduaza, PHSA musical coordinator, will perform with them.

They will perform music by Frederic Chopin, Leo Delibes, Antonio Vivaldi, Benedetto Marcello, Stephen Adams, Claude Debussy, and Filipino composers Nicanor Abelardo, and Francisco Buencamino, among others.

All performers are awardees of the National Music Competitions for Young

Artists (NAMCYA) in their respective categories.

Proceeds from the concert will help finance the various projects of the club for Rotary year 2002-2003 such as adapt a school program, medical missions, scholarships for deserving students, sports tournament, and the *Rotary at Your Service* radio program over Radyo DZLB in Los Baños, among others.

The *Serenata* concert is also in preparation for the PHSA group’s participation this year in invitational concerts in Vienna, Austria, Salzburg, Germany, and in Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Foreign gov't officials, farmers, study exchange group visit IRRI

Senior government officials from the Department of Agriculture and Livestock (DAL) of Papua New Guinea (PNG) visited IRRI on February 27 as part of their rice study tour of the Philippines sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The PNG officials were director Siva Supiramaniam, coordinator Nariyoshi Odashima, and member John Jabe of the Food Security Branch, DAL; and Department of Agriculture advisors Pascal Feria of Madang province, Geopin Bilong of Morobe province, and Edward Ril of East Sepik province.

They visited the International Rice Genebank and were briefed on IRRI rice varieties, seed production, processing, and storage, upland and lowland farm machineries, and the Rice

Knowledgebank, among others.

Last February 20, Deborah R. Malac, chief of the Biotechnology and Textile Trade Policy Division of the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State, visited the institute. Economic officer Robert Kemp of the US Embassy in Manila accompanied Ms. Malac during her visit to IRRI.

Twenty-one Filipino-American farmers, 13 of whom are members of the United Church of Christ-USA, also visited IRRI on January 31 as part of their tour

of agricultural institutions in Los Baños. The Church Among the Palms of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines hosted their visit to the Nature and Science City of Los Baños.

Forty-five farmers from the municipalities of Burgos and Bagulin in La Union province headed by Col. Emiliano L. Perez, chief of staff of Congressman Tomas M. Dumpit, also visited IRRI's farm facilities on January 26. Burgos Mayor Jess Panta and Naguilian barangay chair, Col. Wilfredo Dumpit, accompanied the farmers.

Meanwhile, a five-member group study exchange team from Gunma and Niigata Prefectures in Japan is scheduled to visit IRRI on March 3 under the auspices of the Rotary International District 3820.

● to page 9 . . .

● Scenarios—DG . . . page 1

manage these changes. We have been fairly successful in the past. If you look at our funding base and the number of employees, IRRI has declined. But if you look at the output that we have, IRRI has managed that change very well. I have no reason to suspect that it will be any different in the future. I think we will be successful," Dr. Cantrell said.

Dr. Cantrell challenged IFSA members to look into its organizational structure. "Do you have the same structure or are you doing the same things that you were doing 20 years ago? The greatest mistake that can be made is to value stability so much that you don't examine the way you are doing things. Look at how you go about your business. I place the greatest value on contributions to this organization. I am very confident that you will make the right decisions in the future," he said.

In his welcome address, outgoing president Jojo Lapitan said the theme *IFSA and IRRI in 2003* emphasized "the need to further strengthen our partnerships. We should continue joining hands with all sectors of the institute to

overcome the rough roads that we expect this year and the years to come."

"We have encountered a lot of challenges last year during the re-trenchment program. But we never wavered to some activities that improved our relationships and enhanced our professional growth in spite of some discouragements from some members who did not share our views," Mr. Lapitan said.

"We have experienced some bad times at IRRI. But this should not deter us from pursuing what our institute was founded for. We should join hands

with our director general, other officials, and staff of IRRI. As IFSA members, we have so much to contribute," Mr. Lapitan concluded.

In his response, IFSA president Carlos Huelma said the past staff retrenchments at IRRI "gave us the maturity and strength in body and in mind to be effective and efficient scientists."

IFSA will promote its partnership with other organizations that involve community development projects and the protection of the environment, continue upholding excellence in rice

● to page 9 . . .



Dr. Jackson (left) officiates the induction of new members.



Mayor Jess Panta, Col. Emiliano Perez (fourth and fifth from left), and farmers from La Union province are impressed at the mechanical transplanter during their visit to IRRI. Dr. Edwin Javier (left), Dr. Noli Vera Cruz, and Experiment Station manager Tom Clemeno welcomed them.

● Foreign . . . page 8

Educator Charles Cullen Stratton III, environmental protection engineer Kenji Saito, hotel executive Yuichi Shimegaki, government employee Hisae Arai, and Miki Kobayashi will comprise the team. The Rotary Club of West Bay will host the team's visit to IRRI.

SINoP hikes for a cause

Members of SINoP will hike at Mt. Makiling on March 8 bringing along with them school supplies, old clothes, and a bookshelf for donation to the Bagong Silang Elementary School at Barangay Bagong Silang in Los Baños.

Eves Reyes, SINoP president, is also inviting interested IRRI staff to join the hike for a cause. The trek to Mt. Makiling starts at 6:30AM in front of Riceland cafeteria.



New members get their IFSA pins from Mark Nas and Carlos Huelma (partly hidden).

● Scenarios—DG . . . page 8

research, and promote the general welfare of the Filipino scientists at IRRI. "We will continue to build on that foundation and pursue our vision," Mr. Huelma said.

Inducted by Dr. Cantrell as IFSA board of directors and organization unit representatives were the following: Carlos C. Huelma, president; Tomas P. Clemeno, vice president; Josephine H. Narciso, secretary; Darlene L. Sanchez, treasurer; Teresita V. Rola, public information officer; Mark Nas, auditor; Carlos L. Casal Jr., Estella M. Pasuquin, Ofelia S. Namuco, and Rolando O.

Torres, members; and Julian A. Lapitan, ex-officio.

Mike Jackson, director for Program Planning and Coordination, said in inducting the new members: "You are joining a strong and robust organization in the institute. Over the years that I was associated with GRC, I had the chance to work with many members of IFSA. In my new position, I still have that opportunity of working with you. You will see the names in our program of those who worked very hard with me in October last year. It is that spirit of contribution to the welfare of the institute that I salute and congratulate

you for applying to be members of this very robust organization."

Inducted were Victor Alarcon (CPS), Marietta Baraoian, Alicia Bordeos, Epifania F. Garcia, Reina Suzette Madamba, Maria Ymber Reveche, and Ellenita Silab (EPPD), Socorro Carandang and Rosa Paula Cuevas (PBGB), Minerva Macatangay (GRC), Sheila C. Verdan (ITS), and Ma. Teresa Reyes and May Ann Sallan (BBU).

During the new members' orientation seminar at D.L. Umali conference room on February 14, IFSA past chair Domingo Tabbal admonished the organization to be proactive and not reactive by developing active and committed officers and members.

"IFSA must also endeavor to gain the recognition and respect of the other organizations and IRRI management," Mr. Tabbal added. He also explained the role of the Council of IRRI Employees as an umbrella body of four sectoral organizations—IFSA, SINoP, AISAS and AIRESS.

Mr. Tabbal led the CIE from 1996 to 1998 and served as a representative of the then Department of Agricultural Engineering and Department of Irrigation and Water Management to the Council of IRRI Employees and Management.

Valentine sale a huge success

The Association of IRRI Secretaries and Administrative Staff (AISAS) generated ₱14,000 during its annual Valentine sale at IRRI last February 14. AISAS will use the amount for its scholarship program, president Ely Tabaquero announced.

Different kinds of goodies, flowers, cakes, ornamentals, among many others, were sold. "Thanks to the concerted effort of AISAS members and

the IRRI community, we were able to realize our fund raising target. A million thanks to all people who patronized the bazaar," Ms. Tabaquero said.



New employees, resignations at IRRI

Six new employees joined IRRI during the last two months. They are Jonathan O. Masalonga of Finance (Treasury section), Mercy R. Dy of PBGB, Jovy P. Gador, Bonifacio de Ocampo, and Jesus S. Fugen of ITS, and May Ann B. Sallan of BBU.

Mr. Masalonga worked as a data encoder before becoming a secretary at the Treasury section.



Masalonda



Dy

researched in managing field trials for producing seeds of parental lines and hybrids.

Ms. Dy, research technician II, will assist researchers in managing field trials for producing seeds of parental lines and hybrids.

Ms. Gador worked on an emergency basis last year before becoming a regular telecommunication operator while computer technicians Mr. De Ocampo and Mr. Fugen will assist staff on the smooth operation of their desktop computers



Gador



De Ocampo



Fugen

genealogy database, among other duties.

Meanwhile, the following employees resigned from IRRI in January and February: Evelyn

Liwana of PBGB, Luralyn M. Ramos of BBU, Erlinda B. Gonzalez of ILRI, Marlene M. Chang of ITS, Joan L. Belsonda of HRS-ER, Nestor G. Fabellar of SSD, and Rita B. Luna of TC.

and network equipment.

As a database administrator II, Ms. Sallan coordinates with other divisions in curating the rice



Sallan

Comments on employment regularization

“This is quite an excellent move to correct what could be a loophole in giving project appointments to employees whose functions and funding do not merit to be called a special project. These people are those who were hired to do regular job and were core funded. This means regular funding. Thus, they really deserve to have regular appointments,” Renato Reaño of PBGB said.

“This management move provides security of tenure, which is one of the provisions under our labor law. Staff who have been issued regular appointments like GRC ladies were very happy *kasi daw hindi na sila kakabakaba* (because they are no longer worried) every time their terms are nearing completion,” Mr. Reaño said.

Fe Danglay of GRC said: “For me, it’s good that Management decided to regularize all the project core employees. At least, we will not be bothered thinking whether or not Management will renew our appointments again. I am hoping that those project core employees who got their regular appointments are not candidates for the next retrenchment as what I have heard.”

With so many issues being faced by IRRI nowadays, Management’s decision to regularize current core project staff is a healthy move, according to Lou Herrero of CSWS. “This will avoid actions against the institute by its critics. In abiding to labor law and stabilizing the position of NRS staff, the decision is good for both the institute and the employees,” she said.

Giving regular appointments to core project staff was a favorable move by IRRI Management. This I can say when I saw the happy faces of my former core project colleagues when they got their regular appointments. This initiative is a good motivation to staff. It gives assurance of a longer and a more secure employment as well, Liberty Almazan of CSWS told *Sandiwa*.

Joe Roxas of PBGB said, “The

decision inspires us to work some more.”

Rodolfo Toledo, another PBGB staff, said, “I think this is an unsolicited but very positive move on the side of Management. Although these are uncertain times, it gives a semblance of security to the affected people. It gives them some degree of a peace of mind.

Al Benavente of VIS said the decision gives employees an opportunity to plan their career path and future at IRRI. “It gives employees high moral and confidence in their work as the decision ensures their tenure,” he said.

“The appointment status of our staff is now more defined. Being included in this regularization made me feel happy and secured. I do not have to worry now of project renewal and the signing of an appointment on a regular interval. I consider it as an additional reward after 10 years of working at IRRI,” Socorro Carandang of PBGB said.

Outgoing JCC chair reviews some history and accomplishments

On 1 March, Gene Hettel, head of CPS, turned over the reins of the Job Classification Committee (JCC) to Bas Bouman, water scientist in CSWS. After 3 years and 1 month as the chair and a committee member since the body’s inception in early 1998, Mr. Hettel had been, until 1 March, the longest serving IRS for this activity that involves the review and classification of all the Institute’s NRS positions, levels one through six.

● Management . . . page 1

There are now two main kinds of NRS employment at IRRI, namely, regular and project. Project employees have a fixed term and may be funded from any source unlike regular employees.

Following this announcement, employees will no longer receive a renewal appointment letter at regular intervals except for salary and benefit adjustments. However, “continued employment is subject to satisfactory performance and availability of funds,” Dr. Cantrell said.

“I would like to congratulate you as you join the ranks of IRRI Regular employees and wish you continued success at the Institute,” he said.



Hettel

“Back in 1998, the committee of six NRS and three IRS literally started from scratch,” said Mr. Hettel. “At that time, we were charged with reviewing and classifying around 865 NRS positions that existed then. But first, we had to develop a job-rating plan that was tailored to IRRI’s unique set of NRS positions, which spanned across both research and non-research disciplines. After much discussion, we also settled on how many nonmanagerial position levels there should be. We decided on six.”

“Back in 1998, the committee of six NRS and three IRS literally started from scratch,” said Mr. Hettel. “At that

With the assistance of the consulting agency, Watson Wyatt, and staff in HRD (particularly Fe Aglipay), a 13-factor job-rating plan was developed that covered skills and knowledge, responsibilities, and working conditions.

“With only some minor changes and adjustments over the years, that rating plan is pretty much the one in use today,” said Mr. Hettel.

“Since the entire process was new to all of us back then, there were some ‘bumpy spots’ on the ‘road to success’ as we had to deal with appeals from OU heads and some misconceptions about what the JCC was really doing,” Mr. Hettel

pointed out.

“However, as time brought experience, the road smoothed out and the JCC became a ‘well-oiled machine’ that continues to function admirably today.”

The JCC’s excellent performance is due primarily to the wealth of experience that is still on the committee.

According to Mr. Hettel, even though, officially, members should be serving only 3-year terms, in reality the JCC still has some founding NRS members aboard including Emmy Ballesfin of MMS and Jun Madrid of CSWS, not to mention Ato Reano of the GRC (who also stepped down from the committee on 1 March) and Bert Barrion, formally of EPPD who left the Institute late last year.

“We knew from the start that, to function appropriately, this particular committee needed special expertise that came only with experience and I

thank and congratulate particularly the dedicated NRS members who have served so well and for so long,” said Mr. Hettel.

He added that he is pleased with the current make-up of the JCC under the new leadership of Dr. Bouman and including new members Albert Atkinson (TC), Pepito Cabauatan (EPPD), and Joel Janiya (CSWS) and veterans Corinta Guerta (DPPC and vice chair), Jun Madrid, Emmy Ballesfin, Edwin Javier (GRC), and Manuel Vergara (TS).

In January and February, the JCC reviewed and evaluated more than 20 new positions that were created during the Institute’s reorganization that stemmed from the retrenchment exercise in 2002.

The committee will continue to classify any new positions that may come along as well as review requests from OU heads to reclassify existing positions.

According to Mr. Hettel, it is important to keep in mind that, when considering the reclassification of an existing position, the committee does not look at the education, accomplishments, and merits of the incumbent staff member in the position.

“The JCC is interested only in the details of the job description itself,” he said. “In fact, the committee does not even want to know who the incumbent is, if at all possible, to avoid any positive or negative bias.”

Mr. Hettel reminded OU heads that moving the classification level upwards for a position is not the appropriate mechanism to reward a staff member for good work.

“Hopefully, such salary-based rewards will be possible at the Institute with the implementation of a viable merit system—when funding permits,” he concluded.



IRRI Voluntary Assistance Program

EMPLOYEE SALARY DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION

Employee name _____

ID No. _____

Organization unit _____

Telephone no. _____

This authorizes Treasury to deduct on payroll period _____

_____ day(s) sick leave credit/s

The amount of _____

PhP _____

As my donation to the VAP.

Signature _____

Date _____