Been to the student office recently? If so, you may have encountered new or unexpected co-workers there.

Undergraduate teaching as well as Ph.D training are surrounded by increasing piles of rules and regulations. Being the campus department with the most extensive undergraduate teaching commission, necessitates an efficient and service-minded administration that is crucial for successfully accomplishing the task. There is also a trend towards more integrated courses involving several departments, which requires coordination of many teachers’ contributions and a high standard of information logistics.

Meanwhile the new co-worker, Sofia Pettersson, was recruited, and started at the beginning of October. This also allowed Lise-Lotte Lundblad to be on leave for 6 months working as administrative official for the biomedical program.

“Soon you’ll have your entire genome in one hand and your medical history in the other. And you’ll give both to your doctor.” This quote from the Stanford Newsletter presents one vision of the future. Is FyFa part of this future? Will the research and education we do here make an impact on the future? I really believe so. This is reflected in the new issue of FyFa News. It has been a fruitful year for the department, and I hope you all can sense that. Let’s keep that spirit alive. I sincerely hope you will all take some days off at the end of the year to enjoy our wonderful winter.

Why not take a moment during the holidays to reflect over what we are striving for. Will it lengthen life? Improve quality of life? I hope you all agree. Thanks to all of you for a stimulating and joyful 2010 and with wishes for a happy 2011.

Stefan
He has been chairman at the department, been a member of the nobel assembly and the nobel committee and chaired it in 2007 and 2008. He is a highly cited pharmacologist with an h-index of 81.

He has been driven by curiosity and his thirst for knowledge - in many areas. His most important discovery during his career was the finding that the central actions of caffeine are due to antagonism of the actions of adenosine at its receptors. Specifically $A_1$ receptors that mediate inhibition of excitatory neurotransmitter release and $A_{2A}$ that plays a key role in the basal ganglia.

His interest in caffeine and adenosine started already with his thesis work. – In my thesis work, I isolated adipose tissue and with perfusion I studied how the sympathetic nervous system controlled both circulation and metabolism. I discovered that nerve activity released an inhibitor of metabolism and a vasodilator and after the thesis I showed that it was adenosine.

Bertil thinks one of the best thing with being a researcher is that one has trained oneself to a prepared mind so that one can both recognize the unexpected and debunk flummery. He thinks the research environment at KI has changed since he defended his thesis. -Research is more industrialized and bureaucratic these days. When it comes to possibilities for young researchers today he thinks the situation is different compared to when he was a post doc. – When I started, medical research was still expanding and there were lots of possibilities. The young scientist today probably has to be more focused on advancing his or her own career. This may not be the best for science. When asked for advices to junior researchers today he emphasizes having a post-doc period in different environments and to use these experiences to make one's own synthesis.

– It is also important to find out what you really want to do and do that, and to find out about people and research outside your own field of science. Collaborations are very important. – If you want something done, find the best people. Hopefully you have something to offer them back.

As professor emeritus, he will not stop working with research. – I will continue to interact with local and international colleagues, summarizing a lot of unpublished work and adding some new data with the help of a small group and continue to write review articles. Hopefully I will also be able to learn the techniques of bioinformatics and use the huge data sets available to extract new types of data.

Text: Erika Rindsjö
Photo: Janet Holmén

The most important characteristics to succeed in academics according to Bertil:

- Clear thinking
- Ability to look at a problem from more than one angle
- Ability to see which problems are both important and soluble
- Good communication skills
- Ability to tell a good story

In november this year Bertil Fredholm received his thanks from the Karolinska Institutet on the occasion of his transition to professor emeritus. I took the opportunity to interview him in connection with this. He defended his thesis back in 1970 at Karolinska Institutet, and after a post doc in the US he became professor in 1977.

December 1st. As many times before Peter Wolf has guaranteed the continuity of administrative skills and is the backbone of our tradition of providing the important administrative service to students and teachers.

During the recent period of some turbulence with new people taking over the administrative tasks and trying to keep ongoing routines running, it may not have been quite clear whom to ask for help concerning certain courses. Things will brighten up pretty soon and everything will click into place. The situation has also shown the advantage of having a “non-person” related e-mail address to the student office. Therefore, apart for the address already in use (fyskursexp@ki.se ), communication concerning pharmacology courses is from now on: farmkursexp@fyfa.ki.se

Text: Prof. Mats Rundgren
VR - 2010 - FyFa's SHARE

In this year’s race for money from the Swedish Research Council, four FyFa researchers were able to receive funding for their projects. Even though only four projects were granted money, the total amount of money attracted by FyFa was almost 22 million SEK. Unfortunately, no junior research position (forskarassistent) was awarded to the department this year. Sophie Erhardt received 4.6 million SEK for her work on neuroimmunological involvement in psychiatric disorders like schizophrenia and depression. Lars Ingvar Eriksson received 3.6 million SEK for his work on respiratory control and cognitive function in anesthesia and intensive care. The work will map the effects of anesthesia on key functions in breathing control and control mechanisms in the nervous system for consciousness and cognition. Magnus Ingelman-Sundberg received the largest funding, nine million over five years for his work on pharmacogenomics and epigenomics of drug metabolism and drug response. Håkan Westerblad received 4.6 million for his work on the interplay between Ca²⁺ and reactive oxygen species in skeletal and cardiac muscle under normal conditions and in association with disease processes. Apart from these project grants, Gunnar Schulte received funding for the European WNT meeting 2010.

Text: Erika Rindsjö

COMMUNICATING SCIENCE AT VÅR GÅRD IN SALTSJÖBADEN

They discussed how science is portrayed in the media and how to best communicate research to a broader audience. We continued with a poster session where each group at the department presented their research or activity using images. Thanks to everybody’s efforts the posters turned out very well and the price for the best looking poster went to the Schulte group. Finally we ended by enjoying an excellent three course dinner. The posters will be available on the FyFa internal webpage and if you want the printed copy of your poster, just stop by Ellinor Kenne’s office in the physiology building. Text & Photo: Ellinor Kenne

The evening was closed with a lovely dinner and mixed seating for the sake of communication.
MEETING REPORT - WNT 2010

This year's European WNT meeting was held at Karolinska Institutet organized by myself, Alexandra Schambony (Germany) and Vitezslav Bryja (Czech Republic) and additional researchers forming an international organization committee. The meeting was originally planned as a small network get-together but grew in size and quality. Almost 200 participants from Sweden, Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Czech Republic, Mexico, Chile, USA, Canada, Japan, China, and India gathered between the 27th-30th of October 2010 enjoying 50 high-class lectures at the newly renovated Berzelius lecture hall at KI and dinners combined with presentation of about 115 posters at the MF Aula. The opening lectures were held by Dr Hans Clevers, The Netherlands and Dr. Akira Kikuchi, Japan providing an introduction to the role WNT signaling in development, disease and physiology. After the intense scientific program the conference was closed with an informal dinner at the Nobel Museum in the Old town, which presented an attractive setting for our international guests. We are thankful for the generous support for the meeting by Scandinavian Physiological Society, the Swedish Research Council, the Wenner Gren Foundations, the Company of Biologists, STINT, Sektionen för läkemedelslära, Merck Serono and EMBO.

Text: Gunnar Schulte Photo: Stefan Zimmerman

FYFA REVIEWS OF THE YEAR 2010

Anniversary issues in Exp Cell Res and BBRC contain articles from Fyfa Recent Progress in Molecular Sciences: Reviews from Karolinska Institutet at its 200-year Anniversary. Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications (BBRC)

Special Issue Celebrating the 60-Year Anniversary of ECR and the 200-Year Anniversary of the Karolinska Institute. Experimental Cell Research (ECR)


