

# AG illustrated

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## Dr. C:

### He's All About the Students

By Jamie Creamer

Every summer, throngs of incoming Auburn University freshmen—and their parents—arrive at Camp War Eagle harboring preconceived images of college professors as cold, aloof, even intimidating figures.

Then they meet Dale Coleman.

A veteran faculty adviser for the three-day orientation program, Coleman quickly puts a whole lot of minds at ease. In his sincere, upbeat, down-to-earth style, the associate professor of animal sciences gives professors a normal-human-being touch.

“Dr. C is incredible,” says Camp War Eagle director Mark Armstrong. “He dispels a lot of myths these students come in with about professors. There is not a more approachable man than Dr. C. The students see that, and they start to look at faculty in a whole new light.”

Whether leading a “what to expect at AU” session before a few hundred Camp War Eagles or helping an animal sciences major handle a personal crisis, Dale Coleman is all about the students.

Says Coleman: “They’re why those of us who teach are here.”

That attitude is what motivates Coleman, after 10 years of encountering somewhere in the neighborhood of 30,000 incoming Auburn University freshmen all total through Camp War Eagle, to still get as pumped up about all eight sessions of the annual summertime event today as he did at his first.

*(continued on page 5)*

WELCOMING SMILE—Dale Coleman, known by many as Dr. C, is one of the first—and friendliest—faculty members that incoming freshmen meet on Ag Hill.

### Sister Act: Boozers Taking Ag Global

By Jamie Creamer

In recent summers, folks in Auburn could mark their calendars by Taylor and Whitney Booser.

If it was Thursday, the Chilton County sisters would be in the parking lot next to Price’s Barbecue House on South College, peddling fresh-picked Booser-grown peaches, blackberries and blueberries from the back of their pickup truck.

But this summer, the two stellar College of Agriculture students left those truck-farming duties and Thursday Auburn sales to their mom, Sonya, and sister Morgan.

This summer, Taylor and Whitney went global.

They left May 31 for a two-month stint in Greece as AU College of Agriculture delegates in the TransAtlantic Precision Agriculture Consortium student exchange program.

The sisters—two of some 27 College of Ag students who were overseas this summer as part of college-sponsored study-abroad programs—chronicled their overseas adventures and experiences, including highlights of the biofuels research project they worked on, in an entertaining online journal that can be enjoyed at [www.ag.auburn.edu](http://www.ag.auburn.edu).

Says Taylor: “I hope other students will see it and it will encourage them to take advantage of the incredible opportunities that are out there.

“The experience is incredible.”

The Boozers didn’t grow up on a farm per se—Taylor only launched the fruit-growing operation in the summer of 2003 as a way to raise money for college—but agriculture has been an integral part of their lives. Their father,

*(continued on page 5)*



OVERSEAS EMMISSARIES—Taylor Booser Hatchett (left) and Whitney Booser, sisters from Chilton County, are serving as unofficial overseas emissaries for the College of Agriculture this summer as they work and learn in Greece. Their daily journal entries, which chronicle their travels and adventures, can be found at [www.ag.auburn.edu](http://www.ag.auburn.edu).

the college of agriculture at auburn university

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Richard Guthrie

# Roosevelt Streetdiary

For many of our College of Agriculture faculty, educating students is truly a labor of love. That's certainly the case for Bill Hardy, associate dean for our college whose first love—teaching—is now calling him home.

Bill, who has served as associate dean for instruction since 2000, will step down from that post on Aug. 15 to return to his home department (agricultural economics and rural sociology).

He joined our faculty in 1972 as an assistant professor of agricultural economics, working his way through the ranks of associate professor to become a full professor in 1983. During his 35 years at Auburn, he has taught courses ranging from micro- and macroeconomics to agricultural law and also served as coordinator for teaching enhancement activities for the University from 1992-1994.

In addition to his academic training (he earned his bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees from what is now Virginia Tech), Bill also is a lawyer, and his knowledge of the law has been invaluable in his teaching.

As associate dean, he helped guide the college's Student Services division and scholarship program, among many other duties, and has done an exceptional job in all his capacities.

But all this time that he has been working in administration, Bill has missed the classroom and the one-on-one work of educating our students. When he announced his decision to go back to teaching, we in the dean's office were sad to lose him, but happy that he is returning to something that means the world to him. Lucky for us, he will still be connected through his department in Comer Hall, so his expertise will not be far away if we need him in the future.

Our very best wishes go to Bill as he makes this transition. Our loss in the dean's office is a huge gain for our students.

On another note, I look forward optimistically to another good year for agriculture at Auburn University. Enrollment for fall 2007 is projected to increase significantly and appropriations from the Alabama Legislature are substantially higher than for the past year. All in all, 2007-2008 is looking good!

## Education from a Distance

### Poultry Science Making Great Strides in Distance Education

By Jessica Chesnut

There is growing recognition that sitting in a classroom listening to an instructor lecture is not always the most practical way to learn.

An individual can be constrained by many things, such as a job or distance from the campus, yet this does not mean receiving an education is impossible. Distance education allows learning to take place even when a teacher and student are separated by time and space.

Auburn University's Department of Poultry Science offers this opportunity through one online course and another online workshop.

Patricia (Pat) Curtis, professor of poultry science, created a food laws and regulations course that is offered online. Curtis brought the course with her when she moved from North Carolina State University five years ago.

At AU, the course began as an online workshop. Approval to make the course part of a distance education program was not received until two years after Curtis moved to Auburn.

Doubts on how rigorous an online food laws and regulations course would be compared to the same course in a traditional classroom setting slowed the approval process.

Curtis' argument for the online course was founded on her belief that students need to gain experience using interactive methods. Laws are constantly being created or changed in the government; therefore, to stay up-to-date on the most current laws, students must be comfortable using technology.

"We want to use technology, but not for technology's sake," says Curtis. "We want to use it for the student's sake."

The technological literacy of students using the online course is extremely varied, but Curtis says that the distance education program aims toward that diversity. By offering diverse activities, students with different learning styles can still participate in the online course.

Marcia Kloepper, the learning support technician for distance education in the poultry science department, works with Curtis on the technological side of the distance education program. Curtis prepares the content for the program while Kloepper provides technical support to the students.

When preparing the course for student use, "we [Kloepper and Curtis] try to look at what issues the student will face," says Curtis.

Many students are inexperienced with distance education courses, yet Kloepper says this should not stop students from seizing the opportunity to participate. She also says that this program is a good way to prepare for all future learning experiences, not just distance education programs.

Students who have utilized the availability of the food laws and regulations course include Auburn University undergraduate and graduate students, some of which include poultry science, business and pre-law students.

In the past, other universities such as North Carolina State University, Wayne State, Clemson University, the University of Maine and the University of Wisconsin-River Falls have partnered with the poultry science distance education program to use the food laws and regulations course.

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## "Aubie" Comes to Auburn

### Cherokee County Freshman Carrying On Family Tradition

By Jessica Chesnut

Deborah Auburn Bradley never had any doubt about where she was going to attend college or what she was going to study.

After being raised around her family's egg processing plant, Weiss Lake Egg, and with the nickname "Aubie," going to Auburn University to study poultry science seemed only natural.

Aubie's connection to Auburn runs deeper than a name. For more than five years, Weiss Lake Egg has donated blood eggs to Auburn University to be used in FFA poultry judging contests. Also, in the past, Auburn University poultry classes have toured the facilities.

There are only five egg processing plants left in the state of Alabama. Many of the small family owned plants have gone out of business.

"I love being raised around a family business," says Aubie, who will begin her freshman year at Auburn University in fall 2007. "One of my fondest memories is walking around the plant with my daddy and doing everything he did."

Weiss Lake Egg began as Bradley Egg Farm in 1968, established by Ralph Auburn Bradley, Aubie's grandfather. In 1972, Bradley Egg Farm became Weiss Lake Egg.

The plant was originally located on U.S. Highway 411 in Cherokee County. On Sept. 26, 2006, a new plant was opened closer to the Bradleys' home.

The new plant was a Bradley family summer project. Each summer, the family works together on a large-scale project. In the past, they have built new hay sheds, houses for family members and a horse training barn.

Once the new plant was completed, it took the Bradleys four days to move.

Jeff Bradley, Aubie's father, runs the plant side of the operation. Ken and Debbie Lowe, Aubie's uncle and aunt, own Southern Pride Farms where Aubie's uncle Mike Bradley cares for the chickens.

Southern Pride Farms has three houses of laying hens that supply Weiss Lake Egg with a large portion of the eggs it processes. The houses are located directly beside the plant.

Two of the houses hold 100,000 birds, and the third holds 120,000 birds. There are plans to begin building a fourth house in the next two years.

Eggs laid by the Southern Pride Farms hens roll onto a conveyer belt that automatically carries them to the processing plant. It takes 17 minutes for the eggs to reach the plant.

Weiss Lake Egg packages for three different labels: Sure Fresh, Fresh Land and Weiss Lake Pride. On a typical day, with all 12 packaging heads (machines used to package the eggs in cartons) running, 300 cases can be processed in an hour—some 60,000 dozen can be processed in eight hours. Eggs are shipped out six days a week.

Dirt detector sensors mark the dirty eggs and separate them.

The new plant has helped make processing the eggs easier and more productive and having high-tech chicken houses has also increased efficiency.

"Our chickens are staying at the Hilton. If you can't get it [hens with high productivity] out of them, it ain't going to happen," says Debbie Lowe.



FAMILY VALUES—Aubie Bradley and her father, Jeff, are just two of several Bradley family members who help run Weiss Lake Egg Company, a small but highly efficient egg processing business in Cherokee County. Aubie is headed to Auburn this fall to major in poultry science and, she hopes, eventually return to the family business.

Weiss Lake Egg has been a great training ground for Aubie, who feels her firsthand experience in the poultry industry will be a great benefit to her when she begins poultry classes at Auburn. Weiss Lake Egg is more than a business to Aubie. It is like a second home—a place where family gathers to support one another. She still remembers one Easter morning at the old plant working with her family. A couple loads of eggs had not gone out the previous week, and the order had to be filled.

"Everybody was there," says Aubie Bradley. "It was just nice to know that we could pull together as a family and get it done."

(DISTANCE ED, from page 2)

Some of the topics covered include federal, state and local food laws; environmental regulations; labeling of food products; and Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations.

The first online course Daniel Moseley, an undergraduate student in poultry science and the recently elected president of the Poultry Science Club, took was food laws and regulations.

"It is a very interactive class," says Moseley. He also says that it is not hard to stay caught up with the work if a person does not procrastinate.

Local students take midterm and final exams in Room 211 in the Poultry Science Building; however, there are many sites where exams can be proctored for students from other locations.

Students communicate with Kloepper via email and text boxes.

In addition to submitting one assignment and quiz per week, students must post weekly comments on a discussion board. Students alternate weeks posting a one- to two-page essay on the board for which other students then make comments.

Jessica Butler, a graduate student in the poultry science department says, "I enjoy that I can do it [take a course] on my own time." Instead of following the pace of an entire classroom, students are free to set their own paces.

Curtis says, "I like to try to find ways to make learning fun for students or at least make it easier to do."

One way Curtis and Kloepper tried to make food laws and regulations more interesting was by giving out free iPods. A small test project was performed one semester to incorporate audio into the food laws and regulations course.

Five iPods were given to students. The iPods contained a wide content range such as audio files from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, chicken jokes and inspiring quotes.

Eventually, Curtis and Kloepper would like to incorporate podcasting into the food laws and regulations course. Podcasting would allow students to receive late-breaking news releases about food laws and regulations.

Another program offered under Curtis is an online workshop for students and industry personnel that covers federal Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point regulations.

The most rewarding part of working with the distance education program is "the creativity and utilizing the new technology," says Curtis.

Distance education programs are "growing," she adds. Auburn University's Department of Poultry Science is part of that growth.



Tour participants admire a waterfall at Iberá Farms in Carambei near Ponta Grossa in Brazil.

## Study Tours Offered to South America

By Jessica Chesnut

The Office of International Agriculture is instrumental in bringing international perspectives and experiences to Auburn University's College of Agriculture. In today's global society, partnerships with developing foreign countries are essential for Auburn students as well as Alabamians because participants acquire broader perspectives on the issues the world faces, a deeper appreciation of their own cultural heritage and an increased enthusiasm for learning.

Auburn's OIA has led tours to and hosted tours from other countries.

Diego Gimenez, Alabama Cooperative Extension System animal science specialist and Extension's Hispanic/Latino coordinator, has been working with the OIA leading the College of Agriculture Study Tours since College of Agriculture Dean Richard Guthrie asked him to become involved in 2003.

"I appreciate the opportunities and support Dean Guthrie has given me," says Gimenez, who is also an associate professor of animal sciences at Auburn.

These tours are typically attended by Alabama beef cattle producers. In the past, attendees have come from areas such as Barbour, Dale, Dallas, Hale, Lee, St. Clair and Tuscaloosa counties.

In 2003, the tour group went to both Argentina and Brazil. However, in March 2007, Gimenez led a tour that went only to Brazil. The Brazilian tour was extended to include areas around the city of Campo Grande in Mato Grosso do Sul as well as Ponta Grossa in Campos Gerais do Paraná.

While in Campo Grande, the group toured places that dealt with livestock production such as a beef packing plant, leather processing plant, a beef cattle experiment station, part of the Ministry of Agriculture and Universidade Católica Dom Bosco's animal science and food science departments. They also attended the 2007 Expogrande, one of the largest agricultural and livestock expositions in Brazil.

The tour of Ponta Grossa focused on grain production, soil conservation practices and the important role cooperatives play in Brazilian farming economies. Local farms such as the Frank'Anna Farm and Ibera were visited to let the group experience how Brazilians produce grain. Gimenez says OIA is trying to give tour groups a taste of the "different flavors" of agriculture in the world.

The group also had many opportunities to sightsee, including a tour of Iguacu National Park, which features the Iguacu Falls, one of the Seven Forgotten Natural Wonders of the World, and the Itaipú Dam, one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World.

Gimenez has been involved with international agriculture directly or indirectly since 1966. One of the most rewarding trips he has experienced through the OIA was in 2003, when he accompanied Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industry Commissioner Ron Sparks on his first trip to Cuba, Gimenez's homeland.

For the first time in 42 years, Gimenez returned to his native country. On this trip, he met with Cuban President Fidel Castro, the man he tried to overthrow in 1961 during the Bay of Pigs, an act that resulted in Gimenez's imprisonment for two years.

His experiences in international relations and travel have made Gimenez an ideal guide and host for OIA. Gimenez attributes his positive experiences to the "great staff" at the OIA.

The OIA continues to work toward establishing these mutually beneficial partnerships with foreign countries and Auburn University's College of Agriculture in an effort to offer diverse educational backgrounds.

For more information on OIA or College of Agriculture Study Tours, access the Web site at [www.ag.auburn.edu/adm/oia/](http://www.ag.auburn.edu/adm/oia/) or contact Gimenez at [gimendm@auburn.edu](mailto:gimendm@auburn.edu).

(COLEMAN, from page 1)

Coleman, a full-time teacher who coordinates the Department of Animal Sciences' teaching and advising programs, was recruited to work Camp War Eagle as a faculty honoree in 1997.

"For some reason, they asked me to repeat the second year, and I kept staying with it," Coleman says. "Now, I'm just a fixture."

At every Camp War Eagle session, once the general meetings are over, Coleman gathers up the typically dozen or so "campers" who are animal sciences majors, leads them to Ag Hill and, as academic adviser, guides them through the course selection and fall registration processes.

Coleman's relationship with animal sciences majors is unusual because it goes "full circle," so to speak.

"I meet these students coming in at Camp War Eagle with their smiling faces and their parents, then I have them again as freshmen in the orientation to animal sciences and intro classes, as juniors in reproductive physiology and seniors in careers in animal sciences," he says. "And finally, I'm on the (AU) Graduation Committee, so I see them on the floor (of Beard-Eaves Memorial Coliseum), once again, with their smiling faces and their parents."

And through those years, many of those students find themselves in Coleman's office, bouncing ideas off of him, or crying on his shoulder, or venting, or celebrating. And he always finds time.

"I was raised to believe that every person, whether he's 8 or 80, is an individual who deserves respect and deserves to be treated like an individual who really matters," Coleman says.

A Westcliffe, Colo., native, Coleman grew up on a cattle farm at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

He received a bachelor's degree in agricultural education from Colorado State University in 1977, then, at the urging of a couple of his professors—both West Virginia University alum—he went to WVU and earned his master's and his doctorate in large-animal reproductive physiology.

It was at WVU that he met his wife, Elaine.

"We had a calculus class together," Coleman says. "I was in the back, trying to figure out what page we were on, and she was up front answering all the questions, so I said, 'I need to get to know that girl.'"

They've been married 25 years, the first two years of which they lived in two different states while he completed his doctorate and she attended veterinary school at Ohio State University.



DR. C'S NEW RECRUITS—Dale Coleman's longtime involvement with AU's Camp War Eagle program has allowed him to be the official greeter for College of Ag incoming freshmen. As with this group of 2007 campers, he wins them over to the college from day-one.

The Colemans moved to Auburn in 1984, where he took a position as state dairy specialist with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and she was offered an internship in small-animal surgery and medicine at the AU College of Veterinary Medicine. (She's now on the faculty there.)

In 1992, he left his Extension post to serve as student services coordinator for animal sciences, a position that was 75 percent teaching, 25 percent research. As the years passed, though, that evolved into a 100-percent teaching appointment.

In addition to his teaching and advising roles and working Camp War Eagle, Coleman is faculty adviser for Block and Bridle and faculty secretary for the AU chapter of Omicron Delta Kappa, national leadership honor society.

"I make involvement in campus-wide organizations a priority, because I enjoy it and because I think it benefits the College of Agriculture," Coleman says. "I firmly believe our faculty need to have a presence across campus so folks will know we exist."

CS

## 2008 Ag Study Tour Set

The College of Agriculture's 2008 agricultural study tour is scheduled for March and actually will be two tours, one featuring a week in Argentina and another in Brazil. Participants can opt for either or both.

For details, go to <http://www.ag.auburn.edu/oia/studytours>.

If interested in participating, please contact tour organizer Diego Gimenez now at [gimendm@auburn.edu](mailto:gimendm@auburn.edu) or 334-844-1520.

OIA Sponsoring Student Trip to Sicily  
see page 19 for details

## Uruguay Farmers Visit Alabama



In May 2007, Auburn University hosted a presentation for 13 producers visiting from Uruguay. The program included presentations by Auburn faculty as well as tours of local cattle operations.

Wayne Greene, professor and head of the AU Department of Animal Sciences, met Marcelo Gigena, a producer in Uruguay, at a convention in Uruguay. Gigena later contacted Greene to see if preparing a program at Auburn for 2007 was possible.

In addition to touring several cow/calf operations, the group went to Valley Stockyard in Decatur as well as Jim Brady's catfish operation in west Alabama.

Not only was it a great learning experience for both parties, this program was also a chance to look for future opportunities that could mutually benefit Alabama and Uruguay, says Diego Gimenez, who helped coordinate the tours.

Animal sciences department head Wayne Greene and professor Diego Gimenez (standing, from left) and Lee County cattleman Jimmy Collins (standing, center) visit with a group of 13 Uruguayan cattlemen touring Alabama.

(BOOZER, from page 1)

College of Ag alum Bobby Boozer, was a long-time Chilton County Extension agent and is now state fruit and vegetable specialist for Extension.

Despite such ag connections, however, it wasn't a given that either of the two eldest Boozer children would follow their dad's lead—he holds bachelor's and master's degrees from AU in agronomy and soils—and opt for an agriculture-related career.

In fact, Taylor admits that she arrived at Auburn University in the fall of '02 with no clear vision for her future.

"I started out in the College of Agriculture only because of all the scholarships that were available," says Taylor. "I honestly figured that after a couple of years, I'd have decided what I wanted to do and changed colleges."

That train of thought was why she chose agronomy and soils' science track as her major—because of the basic foundation in science the curriculum offered.

"I figured I could get all of the chemistries and biologies I would need and could switch from there to anything," she says.

But a funny thing happened during her freshman and sophomore years.

"The college won me over," she says. "I loved my classes and my teachers and the students, so after two years, I wasn't about to go anywhere else."

She earned her bachelor's in December 2005 and immediately entered graduate school. Selected as one of the top 10 master's students at Auburn University in 2006, Taylor is on track to receive her master's in plant pathology this December.

When Whitney joined her sister at Auburn in the fall semester of 2004, she, too, went the agronomy and soils/science track undergraduate route, but with a definite career goal in mind: She'd had her sights on entomology since she was in the eighth grade.

"We had to do a report on somebody in a career we thought would be interesting, and I chose one of my dad's friends who's an entomologist because I liked how the word sounded," Whitney says. "But after I interviewed him for my report, I decided right then that that was what I wanted to be."

The Ag Ambassador—who, like her sister before her, is a member of the Agronomy Club and the soil-judging team—will graduate with a bachelor's degree in spring 2008 and plans to enter a master's program in medical entomology at a yet-to-be-determined university. From there, she says, she'll be wide open to a job virtually anywhere.

"I love Chilton County and my family, but I've always wanted to travel and live other places," says Whitney. "I'm more inclined to leave."

More inclined than her sister, who's an admitted homebody. In fact, Taylor and her husband just bought a house in Calera, not 15 miles from the Boozers' hometown of Thorsby. Hatchett starts medical school at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in August, and Taylor's keeping her fingers crossed that she can find "an Extension-type job" in the area when she graduates.

But someday, when Hatchett's an M.D.—preferably practicing in the Chilton County area, Taylor says—she's hoping to return to her truck-farming ways, with her dad as her partner.

As for the dad, his two eldest children say he has been surprised by their decisions—and that of their brother, Jacob, who'll be a freshman at AU this fall—to major in agronomy and soils.

"I don't know many people on this earth who love doing what they do as much as Dad," Taylor says. "I think he enjoys seeing us so excited about something he's so passionate about."

For more information on the TransAtlantic Precision Agriculture Consortium that the Boozers participated in this summer, go to [www.nespa.org/tapac/](http://www.nespa.org/tapac/).



Taylor Boozer

News from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System—“Your Experts for Life.” For more information on these or other Extension-related stories and projects, visit [www.aces.edu](http://www.aces.edu).



**SECOND CROP**—Tomatoes are just one of several greenhouse crops being produced in a tilapia study.

## Alternative Energy a Big Factor in Fisheries’ Future

By Jim Langcuster

Jesse Chappell proudly and readily attests to the explosive growth of Alabama fisheries production within the last few decades.

But Chappell believes that fisheries must remain innovative to compete with rising economic aquaculture giants in Asia, Latin America and elsewhere.

One way they are doing this is to raise warm-water fish in greenhouses where the temperature of the environment can be controlled year round.

This idea, however, requires finding ways to control costs, such as the expense of supplying energy to run the houses. He and other Auburn researchers began looking for alternative sources of energy that had potential to be cheaper than more conventional sources—the electric power grid and LP gas.

They settled on corn power—one in which a burner for heating the house is run off corn kernels.

Chappell says this approach offers growers several distinct advantages. In addition to being a renewable energy source, it’s also versatile.

Right now, Chappell is spending more than \$4 per bushel for the corn to run the burners that are heating two demonstration greenhouses on the Auburn University campus. But that’s only because he doesn’t have the wherewithal to grow the corn on his own. On the other hand, many farmers do—and that’s the beauty of using corn as the alternative energy source.

He estimates that with only seven acres, producers conceivably could raise enough corn to heat five greenhouses, which could be used to grow not only fish but also other potentially lucrative crops.

In fact, as part of his demonstration, Chappell has not restricted his project to raising fish—in this case, tilapia. In the adjacent greenhouse, researchers with AU’s Department of Horticulture also are culturing two varieties of tomatoes and leatherleaf ferns using the same corn-fired burner as the heating source. Funding for the project, sponsored by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, was provided by the Alabama Department of Community and Economic Affairs and Auburn University’s Black Belt Initiative.

Even so, the energy source doesn’t have to be limited to corn. Chappell says wood pellets, switchgrass and biodiesel by-products—all of which Alabama has or likely will have in abundance in the foreseeable future—could serve equally as well.

He believes the approach could prove highly profitable for small-scale growers, particularly in west Alabama, who are interested in slashing operating costs and supplementing their fisheries operations with other sources of income.

“What I’m doing out there in the greenhouses can be done by anybody in Alabama today,” Chappell says.

But this is only the beginning. Chappell says he’s visited larger facilities where between 800,000 and 1 million pounds of tilapia per acre are raised in houses that conceivably could be heated with alternative energy sources.

Whatever the case, Chappell says some type of this operation ultimately will prevail in Alabama. As far as he’s concerned, it’s a matter of necessity.

“Our production costs have to come down,” he says, and he’s convinced alternative energy will play a big factor in this effort.



Gaines Smith

## Smith Named Director of Extension

Gaines Smith has been named the director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, removing interim from his title. The announcement was made in May by then AU president Ed Richardson.

“Dr. Smith has led the Alabama Cooperative Extension System with determination and distinction. In addition, he has served as a valued advisor to me concerning agricultural issues,” said Richardson. “I have been most impressed with his ability to establish a positive and substantive working relationship with Alabama A&M University. Gaines is certainly deserving of this recognition as Auburn University has been well served.”

Smith’s career in Extension stretches back more than four decades. He worked as a county agent in Jefferson County before moving into administration as a district agent in Selma.

Smith, who had served as interim director for almost six years, expressed his appreciation for the recognition.

“It’s been an honor to lead this organization no matter what my title was,” said Smith. “My job has been made easier because of the hard work of the Extension professionals at both universities and across the state.”

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is the primary outreach organization for the land-grant mission at Auburn University and Alabama A&M University. In addition to its presence on the two university campuses, the system maintains offices in all of Alabama’s 67 counties and employs more than 800 professionals and staff.

## Fresh Grown In Alabama



Kristen Postell, left, of Chattanooga, Tenn., and Karen Gathany of Huntsville model the two new T-shirts available from the Extension System.

“Fresh Grown in Alabama” is the message being touted with a new design from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Originally developed for an Extension nutrition program effort, the design is now featured on T-shirts.

Jean Weese, Extension food scientist, says the design was first conceived to support a Healthy Lifestyles grant from the Alabama Agricultural Initiatives on Natural and Human Resources.

“We wanted to include a strong graphic element as part of the program,” says Weese. “The program’s goal is to encourage Alabamians to increase the amount of fresh produce in their diets.”

Bruce Dupree, an Extension artist, says the design is now also featured on T-shirts available to the general public.

“The design is reminiscent of the labels used years ago on wooden fruit crates,” he says.

The T-shirts are \$12. They can be purchased at The Market at Ag Heritage Park farmer’s market on the AU campus this summer or by calling Extension Communications at 334-844-1592.



### Make a Beeline for Information

The Alabama Beeline is an online newsletter written quarterly by Jim Tew, beekeeping adviser for Auburn University and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. The newsletter is a dependable, timely way to communicate with Alabama beekeepers. Topics covered include current concerns and problems faced by beekeepers in the state. Special editions will be released as needed to address new concerns. It can be found at [www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/B/beeline/BeelineSummer07.pdf](http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/B/beeline/BeelineSummer07.pdf).

## Alabama Bees Still Buzzing

Alabama beekeepers are cautiously optimistic about the status of honeybee populations in the state. According to recent studies, honeybee colonies in 28 states, Canada and Britain have reported large losses to colony collapse disorder. Alabama and Louisiana are the only two southern states that have not reported significant problems with the disorder.

Some experts estimate that as many as a quarter of the estimated 2.4 million commercial colonies across the United States have been lost since fall. In Alabama, conditions actually seem to be good.

Jim Tew, an Ohio State University honeybee entomologist who works with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, says Alabama appears largely unaffected by CCD.

“So far, we have not seen CCD in Alabama,” says Tew. “That’s great news for Alabama beekeepers, but they should not let their guards down.”

Tew says while scientists are still trying to determine what is causing CCD, beekeepers need to use sound management practices to keep their hives as healthy as possible.

“Beekeepers should check their colonies every two to three weeks during the summer,” says Tew. “Colonies should be checked for diseases as well as insect pests. Keepers should also keep an eye on the queen’s performance. Right now, the continuing dry weather is making it challenging for some bees to gather enough nectar. Beekeepers may need to feed their bees in order to keep the hives healthy.”

Honeybees are crucial to the pollination of a number of Alabama crops, including many tree fruits such as apples, peaches and pears. Blueberries, blackberries and strawberries also are highly dependent on honeybees for pollination.

Buddy Adamson, the bee and honey commodity director for the Alabama Farmers Federation, says honeybees are a vital part of Alabama agriculture.

“A healthy honeybee population is essential not only for Alabama beekeepers but for many crop producers, especially our fruit and vegetable growers who depend on honeybees for help producing a high quality crop,” he says. “I am hopeful that a solution can be found soon.”

Adamson estimates that honeybee pollination in the state has a value between \$50 and \$100 million.

According to recent survey data, there are more than 2,500 beekeepers in the state, and they can be found in all of Alabama’s 67 counties.

In 2006, more than 790,000 pounds of honey valued at \$1.1 million dollars were produced in Alabama.

For more information on beekeeping in Alabama, contact your county Extension office to buy Tew’s book, “Backyard Beekeeping.”



**IN THE SWING OF THINGS**—This intrepid golfer was one of more than 120 golfers from around the state who participated in the third annual Alabama 4-H Golf Classic held in June at FarmLinks Golf Course in Sylacauga. In addition to playing a tough game of golf, participants also visited with coaching greats Pat Dye, Joe Kines and Larry Blakeney and heard how 4-H guided these three sport icons to help develop successful careers. While donations are still being counted for this year’s Classic, the first two events collected nearly \$40,000 to support Alabama 4-H.

**ROCK THEIR WORLD**—Thanks in part to donations to Alabama’s 4-H Foundation, more than 1,100 Alabama youngsters attended a three-day 4-H Summer Camp at the Alabama 4-H Center in June, participating in such activities as the climbing wall (pictured at right), using global positioning systems and hands-on introductions to reptiles. They also canoed, fished, made arts and crafts, swam and played volleyball, archery, basketball and mini-golf. Fees for 4-H Summer Camp are \$65 per child, a cost that is subsidized by the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation from donors who believe in giving kids a chance to be kids. To learn more about making a donation to the foundation, contact Beth Lawrence at 334-844-2247 or [atkinba@auburn.edu](mailto:atkinba@auburn.edu).



## Farmer’s Resource: Extension’s Drought Web Site

Drought continues to take its toll across Alabama. Livestock producers are considering selling portions of their herds. Row crop and forage producers may lose entire crops.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System, through its county Extension agents and subject matter specialists, is helping producers make the best management decisions during this crisis.

One tool for farmers is a new Extension Web site, <http://www.aces.edu/issues/drought/>. The site includes a variety of information focusing on all areas of agricultural production as well as weather information and other topics.

Visit regularly to find the latest drought information from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.



News and information from the College of Agriculture's academic departments. More information on the departments and their activities is available from the contacts listed below:

Agricultural Economics & Rural Sociology  
Curtis Jolly, Interim Chair  
334-844-4800  
www.ag.auburn.edu/agec

Agronomy & Soils  
Joe Touchton, Head  
334-844-4100  
www.ag.auburn.edu/agrn

Animal Sciences  
Wayne Greene, Head  
334-844-4160  
www.ag.auburn.edu/ansc

Biosystems Engineering  
Steve Taylor, Head  
334-844-4180  
www.eng.auburn.edu/programs/bsen

Entomology & Plant Pathology  
Art Appel, Chair  
334-844-5006  
www.ag.auburn.edu/enpl

Fisheries & Allied Aquacultures  
David Rouse, Head  
334-844-4786  
www.ag.auburn.edu/fish/

Horticulture  
David Williams, Head  
334-844-4862  
www.ag.auburn.edu/hort

Poultry Science  
Don Conner, Head  
334-844-4133  
www.ag.auburn.edu/poul

## Faculty and Staff Accomplishments

**Glenn Fain**, formerly with the USDA Agricultural Research Service Southern Horticulture Laboratory in Poplarville, Miss., has joined the horticulture department faculty as an assistant professor. Fain will be teaching and has Extension responsibilities working with Alabama's landscape industry.

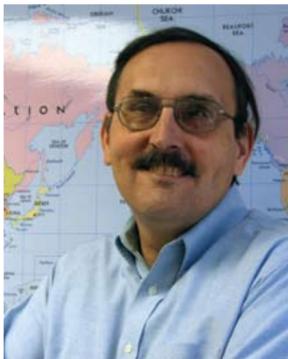
**Kwon Kyoo Kang**, associate professor in the Department of Horticulture at Hankyong National University in South Korea, has begun a year as visiting scientist in the Department of Horticulture. He is conducting research in horticulture professor **Fenny Dane's** lab on the identification and characterization of genes involved in stress resistance of *Brassica rapa*.

**Bob Ebel**, associate professor of horticulture who worked closely with the *sastuma* project, has taken a position at the University of Florida.

**Lane Sauser**, chief financial officer for the College of Ag and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, attended the 2007 HERS Bryn Mawr Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration, which was held in June and July on Bryn Mawr College campus, near Philadelphia. Each summer since 1976, the HERS (which stands for Higher Education Resource Services) Institute has provided a month-long residential program presenting an intensive leadership and management development curriculum for approximately 70 women faculty and administrators. **Patricia Duffy**, professor of agricultural economics and rural sociology, attended the institute in 2006. Look for a story on their experiences in the fall issue of *Ag Illustrated*.



▲ **Werner Bergen**, professor of animal sciences, was chosen as an American Society of Animal Science Fellow for 2007.



▲ **Joe Molnar**, professor of agricultural economics and rural sociology and coordinator of the Office of International Agriculture, was recently elected president of the Rural Sociological Society. In this position he will serve a three-year term beginning as president-elect for one year, then ending his service as past president in 2010.

**Conner Bailey**, professor of agricultural economics and rural sociology, will receive the 2007 Excellence in Research Award from the Rural Sociological Society at its annual meeting in August in Santa Clara, Calif. The award is in recognition for outstanding rural-oriented research.



▲ **Kathleen Dowdell**, lead administrative assistant in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, recently was recognized for 30 years of service to the department.

**Deacue Fields** and **Valentina Hartzarska**, both in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, received tenure and were promoted to the rank of associate professors.

**Bill Deutsch**, research fellow in fisheries and allied aquacultures and head of the Alabama Water Watch program, received the 2007 Discovering Alabama Conservation Education Award in May. The annual award is for outstanding statewide leadership in conservation education and is presented by the Alabama Association of Conservation Districts and Discovering Alabama in cooperation with the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee.



▲ **Oladiran Fasina**, assistant professor of biosystems engineering, was recently recognized for his leadership in developing a new international standard on biomass energy during the international meeting of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers in June. In part because of this work, Fasina was awarded two prestigious awards—the Presidential Citation Award and the Standards Development Award—from the ASABE. He also will be traveling to India this summer to work on bioenergy research with **Ravinder Oberoi**, a faculty member from India who visited Auburn during in 2006 as one of U.S. Department of Agriculture's Norman Borlaug Fellows.

**Kyung Yoo**, biosystems engineering professor, participated in the sixth annual Rainwater Catchment and Management Symposium in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, in July. He discussed Brazil's long-standing research and outreach activities that are helping rural communities develop more secure supplies of water for domestic consumption and irrigation.

**John Fulton**, assistant professor of biosystems engineering, and **Christian Brodbeck**, a biosystems engineering research engineer, recently accompanied Paul Mask, Alabama Cooperative Extension System program leader for agriculture and natural resources, to the European Conference on Precision Agriculture. All three presented papers on Auburn's precision agriculture research and extension programs at the conference in Skiathos, Greece. After the conference, they visited the University of Padova in Padua, Italy, where they met with other representatives of the TransAtlantic Precision Agriculture Consortium, which promotes student and faculty interchanges between U.S. and European Union universities and is supported by grants from the U.S. Department of Education and the European Union.



▲ **Yifen Wang**, biosystems engineering assistant professor, was invited to Beijing, China, in July for a meeting of the Beijing Olympic Food Safety and Security Committee. Wang has served on this committee for the last two years. This group is advising the planners of the 29th Olympiad in areas of food safety and food security to ensure that both athletes and visitors at the 2008 Summer Olympics have a safe and healthy food supply.

**Robin Huettel**, professor of plant pathology and nematology in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, has been elected to serve as president-elect of the Society of Nematologists. She will serve in that capacity for 2007-08 and as president

## Student Accomplishments

**Elias Bungenstab**, a graduate student in animal sciences, was recognized as an Outstanding International Graduate Student through the AU Office of International Education and Office of Diversity & Minority Affairs.

AU student members of Associated Landscape Contractors of America traveled this spring to Michigan State University to compete in the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual PLANET Student Career Days. Students from 49 U.S. colleges competed in landscape design, plant identification and maintenance equipment operation competitions. AU placed 13<sup>th</sup> overall, and many of the students placed in the top 10 in their events. ALCA members also completed a successful spring plant sale, which helped cover the cost of their travel to Student Career Days.

Eight students and two faculty members from the horticulture department participated in the garden study tour of northern France in May supported in part by the Henry P. Orr Fund for Horticultural Excellence. They visited more than 21 gardens and historic sites and learned about plants, garden design and French culture.

**Cheryl Boyer**, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Horticulture, was selected as one of the 10 Outstanding Doctoral Students for 2006-2007 by the AU Graduate Student Council.

**Julie Guckenberger**, a master's student in horticulture, placed third in the Norman Childers Masters competition at Southern Region American Society of Horticultural

Sciences in February. She also placed third in the poster section at the AU Graduate Student Research Forum in March.

Horticulture student **Connor Trott** participated in a study-abroad program in northeast Italy this summer. She is working on a precision agriculture project with the University of Padua.

Seventeen horticulture undergraduates spent almost seven weeks in England this summer with the AU horticulture study-abroad program. During the term the students take five classes for academic credit toward their AU degree at Myerscough College in England and also participate in tours of private and public estates and gardens led by the Myerscough College faculty.

Auburn's War Eagle Pullers competed in the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual International Quarter-Scale Tractor Student Design Competition organized by the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers.

The event, held in Peoria, Ill., provides students an opportunity to design, build, show and pull with a small-scale tractor. The War Eagle Pullers team included several biosystems engineering students, including the co-captains **DeAnn Smith** and **Ginger Peters**, and team members **Corey Kichler**, **Ajay Sharda**, **Adam Crocker** and **David Bailey**. **Dallas Whorton**, a student in building science, also was on the team. The team finished a respectable 18<sup>th</sup> overall in the competition, 14<sup>th</sup> in pulling. One highlight was a 6<sup>th</sup>-place finish in the maneuverability event with Adam Crocker at the wheel.

The team was supported by the Solon and Martha Dixon Founda-



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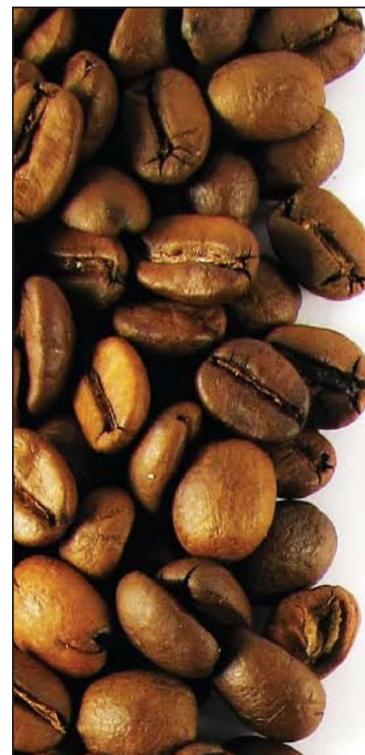


Adam Crocker, a junior in biosystems engineering, competes in the maneuverability competition of the quarter-scale tractor competition.

tion and the biosystems engineering department. Sponsorship, whether financial or in-kind, from individuals, foundations or companies is always needed by the team. Contact biosystems engineering at 334-844-4180 if you are interested in supporting the War Eagle Pullers.

**Milton Nettles**, a chemical engineering student from Monroeville and attending the University of Alabama, is conducting research this summer in biosystems engineering as

part of a National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduate Students at Auburn University. The highly competitive National Science Foundation-funded program is designed to give high-quality undergraduate students experience in conducting research. Nettles, who is working under the direction of biosystems engineering assistant professor **Oladiran Fasina**, is looking at ways to develop newer, safer food packaging products.



## Hot Java! Coffee Sales Benefiting War on Hunger

Temperatures may be hot right now, but that won't stop true coffee lovers from brewing up their favorite java, and Auburn has a source of jvas that are proving to be hot commodities.

The Auburn University Committee of 19, a student leadership group created at Auburn in 2004 to help raise awareness of both international and domestic hunger issues, is selling coffee to help raise money for the university's War on Hunger.

**David Buys**, a member of the Committee of 19 and a graduate student in the AU College of Human Sciences, initiated the project last year working with an Alabama roasting company, Higher Ground Roasters in Leeds.

The War On Hunger Fair Trade coffee blend, which is available at the weekly Auburn University campus farmers' market for \$10 a bag (ground or whole bean) and daily on campus in 210 Spidle Hall, is also now available at Whole Foods Market in Birmingham.

Also available is a new medium-roast decaffeinated blend called the "Hunger Relief Blend," and Higher Ground's dark roast House Blend for those hard-core coffee connoisseurs who want an extra kick in their cups.

For more information on the coffee and how to order it, contact College of Agriculture Committee of 19 Representative **Marla Madan** at [madanmk@auburn.edu](mailto:madanmk@auburn.edu). To learn more about Fair Trade and about Higher Ground Roasters, visit [www.highergroundroasters.com](http://www.highergroundroasters.com).

## College of Human Sciences

June Henton, Dean

334-844-4790

[www.humsci.auburn.edu](http://www.humsci.auburn.edu)



**HEALTHY SNACKING**—Claire Zizza, assistant professor of nutrition and food science in the College of Human Sciences, whose study on the nutritional needs of senior citizens has been getting international attention, shows off some healthy snacking options.

### CHS Study Shows Healthy Snacking Benefits Senior Citizens

For many people, snacking is a no-no. For senior citizens, however, it may be a yes-yes, provided the snacking choices are healthy.

Claire Zizza, an assistant professor of nutrition in the AU College of Human Sciences, has been making the news recently with results of a study that looked at the eating habits of senior citizens and showed that healthy snacking may be a very good thing for people age 65 and older.

The study's results garnered extensive media attention (including press coverage in China, Greece and Italy) when they were published in the May 2007 issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. And for good reason. The results are pointing to better ways for senior citizens to manage their diets, which is becoming more and more vital to an aging population.

According to Zizza, maintaining good nutrition becomes more challenging as people age because health problems, medications, changes in taste buds and other factors can suppress appetite and result in weight loss among older adults.

Zizza's research is based on data collected across the nation from 1999 to 2002 by the National Center for Health Statistics. By using the NCHS data, Zizza and her fellow researchers (AU nutrition researcher Francis Tayie and U.S. Department of Agriculture economist Mark Lino are co-authors of the journal article) found that snacks were an important source of older adults' daily calories and nutrients.

The take-home message is that older adults who notice a loss in their appetite or weight may need to add some snacks to their daily menu. However, people should avoid "empty calories," Zizza says, and instead choose healthful snacks like fruits, vegetables, yogurt, tuna and whole grains.

Zizza will continue to look at other nutrition issues related to senior citizens and other demographic groups and she is sharing the results of her findings by speaking to senior citizen and caregiver groups about healthy snacking.

### Abernathy Wins Sullivan Award

Mary Martha Abernathy, a senior in human development and family studies, recently received a 2007 Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award. The award recognizes individuals within the university community who have exhibited excellence in character, service to humanity, outstanding scholarship and other qualities.

Abernathy has served as head orientation leader for Camp War Eagle and as philanthropy chair for the Mortar Board Society, where she was a student leader in activities for the Make-a-Wish Foundation, Prevention of Child Abuse, Domestic Violence Intervention and the Women's Leadership Conference. She is also a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta, Phi Eta Sigma and Kappa Omicron Nu honor societies.



**SPRING SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS**—June Henton (right), dean of the College of Human Sciences, stands with two of the keynote speakers who made presentations at the CHS Women's Philanthropy Board 5th annual Spring Symposium in May. More than 250 people attended the event, which featured AU alumna and president of Old Navy Dawn Robertson (CHS class of '77; pictured at left) and renowned author Janet Bodnar, deputy editor of *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine* (center). During the symposium, the WPB awarded five scholarships to CHS students totaling \$25,000. In addition, Donna Sollie, Margaret Craig-Schmidt and Paula Peek were awarded the first-ever WPB Faculty Awards totaling \$9,000. The 2007 Fall WPB Luncheon will be held Oct. 5 and will feature AU alum Alabama State Treasurer Kay Ivey.

## College of Sciences and Mathematics

Stewart W. Schneller, Dean

334-844-5737

[www.auburn.edu/cosam](http://www.auburn.edu/cosam)

### Botanical Research Enters the Information Age with the Deep South eFlora

Auburn University's College of Sciences and Mathematics has initiated an ambitious high-tech project to study the unique and diverse flora of the Deep South. The project, entitled the Deep South Plant Specimen Imaging Project, began in April with a two-year, \$200,000 grant from the National Science Foundation.

Auburn, and current project partners Florida State University, Troy University, the University of South Alabama and the University of Southern Mississippi, will create high-resolution digital images of 100,000 plant specimens to be made available on the Internet to students and scientists all over the world.

COSAM's John D. Freeman Herbarium houses the collection of plant specimens that will play a leading role in the project. Under the direction of biological sciences assistant professor Les Goertzen, the herbarium, which is part of Auburn University's Natural History Museum and Learning Center, has already begun the digital transformation by databasing the label information for its 70,000 specimens.

By summer 2008, the project is scheduled to have produced 100,000 annotated digital recordings of plant specimens from across the eco-region.



**PITCHER PERFECT**—The white-topped pitcher plant, *Sarracenia leucophyllum*, is one of many plant species unique to the Deep South being included in the eFlora project. Photo courtesy G.W. Folkerts.

### Saving Pets from the Storm COSAM Scientist Working on Pet Evacuation Issues

As Alabama prepares for the possibility of another active hurricane season, one COSAM researcher is studying the effects of these disasters not only on humans, but on their pets as well.

Philip Chaney, associate professor of geography, is launching a project to study how coastal residents and officials deal with pet evacuations. The project was born from issues with pet evacuations during Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The grant is funded by the National Science Foundation through the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and is called a Quick Response Grant. Everything is approved and waiting, so if a hurricane were to occur, Chaney would put a call in to the center, and the account would be activated. The grant then provides up to \$4,000 to cover travel to the region.

Chaney believes that his findings will aid in the understanding of response and behavior of the evacuees, and will be effective in assisting emergency management agencies, as well as all evacuees, in their preparedness during the evacuation process.

## School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences

Richard Brinker, Dean

334-844-1007

[www.sfws.auburn.edu](http://www.sfws.auburn.edu)

### 2007 Water Resources Conference Hosted at AU

On June 14-15, 2007, the Auburn University Water Resources Center hosted on the Auburn University campus the 2007 Water Resources Conference. This event drew more than 200 participants including AU faculty, state policymakers, representatives from federal agencies and industry and experts from other southeastern universities to discuss and facilitate critically needed, visionary changes necessary to protect freshwater quality and quantity throughout the state and nation.

The conference focused on four primary topics: water policy, watershed issues, irrigation and water conservation. Among the subjects addressed were ways to secure the nation's water supply, human health issues related to water, the influence of climate on water supplies, the interrelationship of alternative energy and water and the sustainability of ground and surface water supplies.

Speakers included representatives of the EPA National Homeland Security Research Center, U.S. Forest Service, Global Water Policy Project, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Clean Water Partnership, as well as water experts from Alabama, Georgia and North Carolina. An Alabama Water Policy Panel also convened to discuss future projects and areas of focus.

The conference was coordinated by the Water Resources Center, a division of Natural Resources Management & Development Institute at Auburn University.

To find out more, visit [www.nrmdi.auburn.edu/water/conference/2007](http://www.nrmdi.auburn.edu/water/conference/2007).



**THE WORD ON WATER**—School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences Dean Dick Brinker (left) was on hand for the first annual AU Water Resources Conference held in Auburn in June. Also attending were Steve Taylor (center), head of the AU biosystems engineering department and director of the AU Bioenergy and Bioproducts Center, and Larry Fillmer, director of the Natural Resources Management & Development Institute. Graeme Lockaby, SFWS associate dean for research and director of the AU Water Resources Center, planned the meeting, which drew some 200 participants.



## College of Veterinary Medicine

Tim Boosinger, Dean

334-844-4546

[www.vetmed.auburn.edu](http://www.vetmed.auburn.edu)

### CVM Names 2007 Distinguished Alumni

The Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine has named three of its graduates as the 2007 Wilford S. Bailey Distinguished Alumni for their contributions to animal welfare, the profession and their communities. The recipients, honored May 8 during the college's commencement ceremony, are Annelda Baetz of San Antonio, Texas, Clyde Taylor of Starkville, Miss., and Wayne Roberts of Enterprise.

"They have been inspirations to colleagues, students and clients alike," says CVM Dean Timothy Boosinger.

Baetz earned her veterinary degree in 1947 from Alabama Polytechnic Institute, now Auburn University. She was the only woman in her class of 27 and was only the third woman to graduate with a veterinary degree from API. She practiced from 1948 to 1986 in San Antonio and is a charter member of three animal control associations, including the National Animal Control Association. In 1978 she was a consultant on dog control to the United Nations and the World Health Organization.

Roberts, a 1967 AU veterinary graduate, opened Westgate Veterinary Hospital in Enterprise in 1969 and treated horses, livestock and pets until 1984, when he began concentrating on pets. In 2003 he sold the practice to two younger colleagues, but he continues to work part time. He has served as president of the Southeast Alabama Veterinary Medical Association and the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association, which named Roberts the Alabama Veterinarian of the Year in 1995.

Taylor, a 1960 AU veterinary graduate, was one of the 17 founding faculty in 1976 for Mississippi State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. He earned a master of public health degree in 1964 from Tulane University and then worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. After time in private practice and as a poultry consultant, he joined the Mississippi State University faculty. He retired from Mississippi State and the Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service in 1996. He also served 20 years in the Air National Guard, retiring as a lieutenant colonel.

The AU award is named in honor of veterinary parasitologist Wilford Bailey, who died in 2000. He held a 50-year appointment at Auburn after receiving his veterinary degree in 1942, serving in positions from instructor to university president.

## And the Winners Are.... "River of Words" Art and Poetry Contest Winners Announced

The Alabama River of Words environmental poetry and art winners for 2007 have been announced and include six Alabama students who were national finalists.

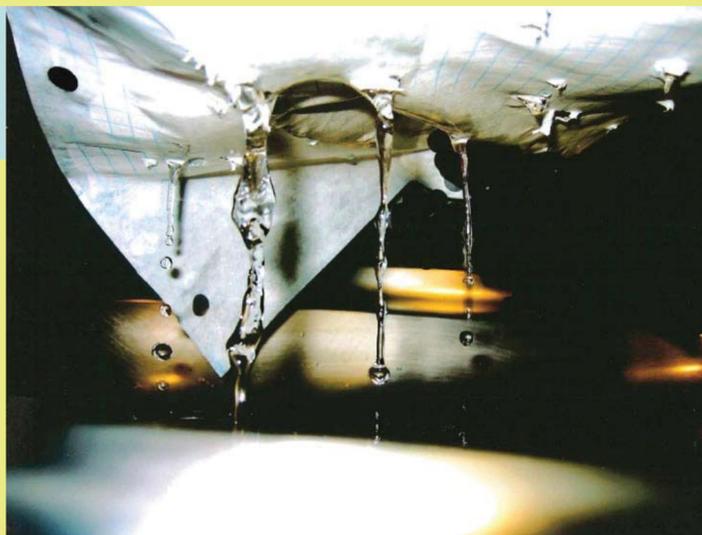
River of Words is a free, annual environmental poetry and art contest open to any child in the world, ages 5-19. Sponsored nationally by River of Words, in affiliation with The Library of Congress Center for the Book, it is sponsored in Alabama by the Alabama Center for the Book in partnership with the Auburn University Environmental Institute, Auburn University Libraries, Alabama Water Watch, Auburn University College of Agriculture and Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station.

The contest invites students to explore the natural and cultural history of the rivers, lakes and streams of Alabama and express through poetry and art what they discover. Some 450 submissions were sent in for the 2006 contest.

First-place winners for Alabama's state competition are: (kindergarten-2) Gabrielle Lefranc, Lakewood Elementary, Phenix City; (grades 3-6) Lauren Caudle, Madison Academy, Madison; (grades 7-9) Jordan Davis, The Altamont School, Birmingham; (grades 10-12) Alex Yu, Florence High School, Florence.

First-place winners in the poetry section for Alabama are: (kindergarten-2) Kayleigh Green, Lakewood Elementary, Phenix City; (grades 3-6) Daniel McMahon, Advent Episcopal School, Birmingham; (grades 7-9) Jon Powers, Cleveland High School, Cleveland; (grades 10-12) Erin Johnson, Jackson County 4-H, Scottsboro.

Grant Dohrenwend, age 14, of Madison; Elana Ellington, age 15, of Mobile; Sara Feldman, age 13, of Birmingham; Karmen Gaines, age 13, of Bir-



**RAINING PAPER**—This photo, entitled Raining Paper by Jordan Davis of Birmingham, won first place in the grades 7-9 category of the 2007 Alabama River of Words contest.

mingham; Haylee Henry, age 8, of Thorsby; and Brittain Williams, age 15, of Birmingham were finalists in the national-level art competition.

The complete list of winners can be found at [www.riverofwords.auburn.edu](http://www.riverofwords.auburn.edu).

Next year's contest information will be available in September. For more information about the contest contact the Center for the Book at 334-844-4946.

# SCIENCE BRIEFS

## Painting Plants to Thwart Thrips

Some of the young tomato plants in AU horticulture assistant professor Wheeler Foshee's test fields are a bright red; others are burgundy, purple, even orange.

They've all been spray painted as part of a study that Foshee hopes will protect the plants from the destructive tomato spotted wilt virus.

That virus, a major threat to both commercial and backyard tomato crops, stunts plant growth and reduces the quality and quantity of fruit. It is spread by flower thrips, tiny sucking insects that are drawn to the yellow blooms on tomato plants.

Foshee's research is based on the theory that, if thrips are attracted to yellows and whites, there may be other colors they avoid.

Using a water-based paint that doesn't harm the young plants, Foshee and graduate research assistant Scott Croxton have sprayed plants a wide range of colors. In this, the second growing season for the study, bright red and purple appear most likely to repel thrips and, subsequently, protect plants from the virus.

The researchers also are experimenting with colored plastic mulches and are finding, again, that red and purple are effective in warding off thrips and tomato spotted wilt.

## Fishing for Answers from Anglers

Some 6,000 anglers who hail from here to Alaska and who bought fishing licenses in Alabama last year could help move the state's recreational fishing industry to the next level.

In a study at Auburn University, AAES ag economists Diane Hite and Deacue Fields are surveying all of the above-mentioned fishing enthusiasts to find out about their current fishing habits and, more important, what features they're looking for in a fishing site.

The features the respondents are asked to rank range from size and type of fish to availability of shade and restrooms to proximity of restaurants and hotels.

Using the survey results, Hite and Fields will develop an economic model to illustrate how pond owners who charge fees for fishing could significantly boost their income by sprucing up and enhancing their facilities. In addition, this model will show how, via the multiplier effect, a rise in recreational fishing would benefit the state's whole economy.

The study is funded through the Black Belt Aquaculture Initiative, a Legislature-approved effort that aims to support and expand Alabama's aquaculture industry and to provide catalysts for economic development in west Alabama. The study's results, however, will apply to pond owners statewide.

## Spreading Litter Better

An AAES study under way in Alabama's poultry-heavy Sand Mountain region ultimately will help poultry producers improve their management of land application of broiler litter to pastures so as to better protect water quality in nearby streams and lakes.

Alabama's poultry industry produces 2 million tons of chicken litter annually. Growers spread most of it over pastures because it is a valuable organic fertilizer and soil conditioner. Overapplication, however, leads to a

soil buildup of phosphorous, which subsequently finds its way to bordering waters. Excess phosphorous in water can cause depleted oxygen levels, thus affecting aquatic organisms.

In this study at the AAES's Sand Mountain Research and Extension Center, AU biosystems engineers Puneet Srivastava, Kyung Yoo and John Fulton; animal scientist Frank Owsley; and agronomists Joey Shaw and Wes Wood, along with USDA agricultural engineer Tom Way are investigating the mechanisms behind how phosphorus accumulates in soils and how it moves—through surface runoff or groundwater—to adjacent water bodies.

Once those processes are better understood, the currently used litter management tool known as a phosphorus index can be improved and producers will be able to better plan how and where to apply litter.

Also in the project, to help deter overapplication of litter, the researchers are creating a geographic information system-based poultry litter transportation analysis system that will link producers who have excess litter to farmers who need it.

## Laying Groundwork for New Zoysias

Bermudagrass may well be the most common grass for Alabama lawns now, but zoysia soon could be giving Bermuda a run for its money.

In field trials conducted at the Auburn University Turfgrass Research Unit and at FarmLinks Golf Club in Sylacauga, AAES agronomist Beth Guertal is testing 13 zoysia cultivars—all of which are commercially available already but are as yet largely unproven in Alabama—to determine how they will perform here.

Guertal is evaluating these cultivars in terms of such factors as shade and traffic tolerance, disease resistance, color, density, texture and uniformity and is comparing their performance with that of Empire and Meyer zoysias, the two most common zoysia cultivars grown in Alabama.

State sod producers, eager to present more zoysia options to customers, are paying for the study through the Alabama Turfgrass Research Foundation.

## Relaxin and the Reproductive Tract

Could a hormone that's present in a nursing sow's first milk be important to the long-term reproductive health of her female offspring?

That's a question Auburn University animal scientist Frank Bartol looks to answer in a study that has just been awarded a three-year, highly competitive U.S. Department of Agriculture grant.

The hormone, called relaxin, is produced by animals and humans during pregnancy and is known to support the birth process.

Bartol and co-investigator Carol Bagnell of Rutgers University have found that relaxin, long believed to function primarily as a hormone of late pregnancy, is in the bloodstream of newborn pigs that nurse immediately after birth. That indicates that relaxin is passed from mother to offspring in milk. The scientists also have shown that relaxin can affect reproductive-tract development in newborn female pigs.

This study aims to determine the extent to which relaxin and other milk-borne factors are required to ensure that female reproductive-tract tissues develop properly in order to function normally in adulthood.

Bartol is conducting his research at the new AU Swine Research and Education Complex, a \$3-million facility financed largely through the 1999 agricultural bond issue. It includes labs, farrowing and breeding units, a 180-pig nursery and a 360-pig grow-finish building.

peaches



**PEACH OF A DAY**—Peaches as well as many other fruits and vegetables will help make Aug. 11 a peach of a day when the 2007 Farm, Home and Wildlife EXPO is held, noon to 5 p.m., at the Chilton Research and Extension Center in Clanton. This free event offers a chance to taste-test figs, peaches, apples and more, as well as participate in farm and garden tours, a petting zoo and hear presentations on everything from southern pea planting to raising caged fish to fire ant control to cooking tilapia. For more information contact the Chilton Research and Extension Center at 205-646-3610.



**ROCK-SOLID INFORMATION**—Students from the Macon County school system got a little hands-on learning about their environment—the rocks and minerals in their environment, to be exact—this spring when the AU Environmental Institute held environmental education field days at the E.V. Smith Research Center in Shorter. Students learned about soil testing, nature photography, geology and much more during the field days, which were also held in Wilcox and Butler counties. Pictured with two of the Macon County students is Kelly Hardesty, a graduate student in geology who helped with the sessions. The goal of the field days is to educate school-age children about science and the environment. The event was funded by grants from the Mid-South and Ala-Tom resource conservation and development councils.



**GARDEN GRAFFITI**—Horticulture research assistant Scott Croxton spray paints tomato plants in a thrips-prevention study.

## Student Services endowment update

By Deborah Solie  
College of Ag Student Recruitment Officer

My previous Ag Illustrated article, "Be a Part of the AgriCULTURE: The Next Generation," focused on the need for donor support for our college's student programs. We've already had great response from potential donors to this new funding opportunity and our student services team is excited about all of the opportunities the future holds. But more help is always welcome!

With funds generated by a student services endowment, we can provide our students with the tools necessary to succeed personally and professionally. There are also opportunities for individual sponsorships, such as career fairs, leadership retreats for students and other special events.

My time spent on Ag Hill has shown me what family and support truly mean to our students, staff, faculty and alumni. As we all work together to continue this tradition into the future, your support can make all the difference.

Anyone interested in donating to this worthy cause can contact Chris Gary at 334-844-1136, Mark Wilton at 334-844-1198 or the College's Development Office at 334-844-1475.



RECRUITING NEWS—Deborah Solie, student recruitment officer for the College of Ag, is helping spread the word about an endowment that may help bring new students to Ag Hill.



WE WILL NOT FORGET—College of Ag Associate Dean Bill Hardy stands with Operation: Passion members Sara Moore, seated, and Jordan Towns as they sell Virginia Tech memorial T-shirts. Moore and Towns are both seniors in animal sciences.

## Show of Support AU Students Rally to Support Virginia Tech

In times of trouble most of us would literally give someone the shirt off our back. Putting a shirt on their backs is how Auburn students are trying to support faculty, staff and students at Virginia Tech.

Following the tragic shootings on the Virginia Tech campus last spring, colleges across the nation rallied to send support in the form of condolences, prayers and even dollars. At Auburn, the effort included selling T-shirts and donating the proceeds to Virginia Tech.

Students raised some \$1,000 during spring semester and sent the money, as well as some of the T-shirts, on to Virginia. A portion of the money was sent to the family of Emily Jane Hilscher, one of the victims of the shooting who was an animal and poultry sciences major with plans to go to vet school. She also was a member of the Virginia Tech equestrian team. The remainder of the money was donated for general use.

The organizers of the T-shirt sales have formed a group known as Operation:Passion, which includes AU students Jordan Towns, Jerri Caldwell, Sara Moore, Natalie Craven, Mike Huggins, Kim Pope, Patrick Jackson and animal sciences professor Betsy Wagner, all of whom who either helped in transporting or distributing the shirts.

A local screenprinting company, MasterGraphics, also gave the students a discount for producing the shirts.

Outgoing College of Ag Associate Dean Bill Hardy, himself a Virginia Tech alumnus, helped the students organize the fundraiser and he notes that he is not alone in his connection with Virginia Tech. Twenty College of Agriculture faculty members have at least one degree from Virginia Tech. In addition, another victim—Jocelyne Couture-Nowak, who taught intermediate French, was the wife of Jerzy Nowak, the head of the Virginia Tech horticulture department.

The AU poultry science department and the Poultry Science Club also made donations totaling over \$1,200 to the Emily Jane Hilscher Memorial Fund, a fund established by the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Science.

## Career Network Forming What can I do with a major in \_\_\_?

These words are often heard among incoming college students as they try to decide what major they should pursue. It's a question—and answer—that can be a defining moment for students as they struggle with the transition from high school to college and ultimately into a career. These days, with so many opportunities available to students, making an informed decision is more difficult than ever.

"I advise students with questions about their major all the time," says Brian Brown, student services coordinator for the Department of Horticulture. "One of the best tools our horticulture students have is the network of alumni who assist current students and speak about their experiences in our classes."

The college is taking a page from horticulture's book and has recently formed a Career Network. This network will consist of College of Agriculture alumni and industry professionals. The goal of this network is to provide students with practical information about careers.

"Students need detailed information about what careers are available and the steps they themselves took to make their career possible," says Ann Gulatte, a seven-year veteran of the dean's office who deals with students on a daily basis.

Volunteers in the Career Network can help in any or all of the following ways: conduct informational interviews with students and/or alumni, host job shadowers, share internship and career leads with the College of Agriculture network, participate in regional or campus programs, hold employer information sessions on campus and help with the college's recruitment efforts.

This network has the potential to benefit all of the college's students, as well as alumni, by providing opportunities for networking.

To participate in the College of Agriculture's Career Network, call Megan Ross, coordinator of the network, at 334-844-3201 or email her at [mhr0001@auburn.edu](mailto:mhr0001@auburn.edu).



PARENT CONNECTION—Megan Ross (pictured at right), administrative support associate in the College of Agriculture's Student Services Office, shows Melissa Stewart, the mother of a prospective College of Ag student, information about a new Parents Council, an organization recently formed to better connect parents with the College of Ag family.

## College of Ag Parents Council Established

The College of Agriculture's Student Services Team acknowledges and appreciates the dreams, desires, expectations and concerns that parents frequently have for their sons or daughters about to attend Auburn. This time represents unique transitions for both children and parents.

With an expected membership of 200 by fall 2007, the College of Agriculture Parents Council was created in the summer of 2007 to establish a partnership between parents and the college for the benefit of CoAg students.

Through establishment of a College of Agriculture Parents Council, the college desires to partner with parents in encouraging and equipping each student with the essentials required to achieve success during their academic experience.

The Parents Council is comprised of parents of current College of Agriculture students. It is envisioned that the Parents Council will become a community of parents who have one thing in common—they have children attending Auburn majoring in agriculture.

The council's mission is to serve the college and the parents of current students by providing an ongoing means of communication between the college and parents.

"We want to provide the best service we can to our families and their children majoring in agriculture," says Don Mulvaney, coordinator of the college's Leadership and Student Development program. "We recognize that parents of college-age children are interested in helping their children in the transition of leaving home to begin pursuit of their academic journey at Auburn."

Parents Council membership is an opportunity for parents to strengthen their connection and commitment to the College of Agriculture. The council will provide a variety of opportunities for parents to maintain contact with the dean's office and provide input about services and programs, receive publications and updates on activities of student life and foster relationships through co-ordinated activities such as tailgates, parent weekends and more. Through a variety of activities, council members will be able to promote parental involvement in, and support of, the college.

As the need arises, the College of Agriculture Parents Council will conduct work through sub-committees that focus upon activities related to the college's recruitment efforts, development of various parent-oriented publications, development of the college through fundraising support, and planning of family-oriented events. If you wish to become a member of the College of Agriculture Parents Council, contact the dean's office at 334-844-2345.

The Student Services team is dedicated to impacting student's lives in meaningful, positive ways through their academic experience and provision of professional development opportunities.

## Dean's List

A total of 54 (6.8 percent) students in the College of Agriculture made the Dean's List for spring semester. To be recognized for this honor a student must have been registered for at least 14 credit hours with a grade point average of at least 3.75 for the past semester. Twenty-six (3.3 percent) of those students who are being recognized had a perfect straight "A" average. Dean's List students for the semester are:

### Agricultural Communications

Sarah Adams  
Jessica Chesnut  
Emily Tice

### Agricultural Economics

Jennifer Barbero  
Victoria Collins  
Marlene Newton  
Bart Smith  
Jessica White

### Agronomy and Soils

Joshua Martin

### Animal Sciences

Meaghan Gonsalves  
Shelby Agnew  
Tessa Downey  
Christina Gilbert  
Kourtney Hundertmark  
Lyndsay Jackson  
Megan Kendrick  
Anna Newton  
Amy Patterson  
Sarah Pauels  
Rebecca Rifkin  
Paul Rubinstein  
Carolyn Smith  
Emily Byers  
Christi Chesnut  
Adam Cooner  
Natalie Craven  
Thomas Farrior  
Talia Gillespie  
Sarah Graham  
Ashley Jones  
Sarah Merck  
Robin Pumphrey  
Patrick Sullivan  
Samantha Wright

### Horticulture

Faulkner Bell  
Delaine Borden  
Loreal Brooks  
Clarence Craft  
Richard Dean  
Whitney Griffin  
Bethany Heck  
Whitlyn Miller  
Caitlin O'Neal  
Brantley Snipes  
Zachary Yelton

### Poultry Science

Caleb Palmer  
Shealy Williams  
Tiffany Cable  
Leslie Hooie  
Charles Thompson  
Jessica Chesnut  
Toni Deason  
Ann Haggard  
Josiah Roberts  
Kimberly Triplett

## In Memory Of...

### Scholarship to Celebrate Life of Fisheries Alumnus

By Jamie Creamer

Dave Partridge was one of Graves Lovell's best buddies.

They met at Auburn University back in 1994, when Lovell was a freshman wildlife sciences major working as a student employee in the AU Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures and Partridge was a graduate student in fisheries management and ecology.

The two struck up a friendship. In fact, they hit it off so well that Lovell invited Partridge to be his roommate at his dad's farm near Opelika.

Both passionate outdoorsmen, they spent probably more than their fair share of time out enjoying nature.

"We did a lot of hunting and fishing," Lovell says. "I taught him how to hunt, and he taught me how to fish."

Their friendship didn't fade, either, after both left Auburn—Partridge for a job as a fisheries biologist with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Lovell, after returning to AU for a master's in fisheries management, in a comparable position with the state of Alabama.

For Auburn fisheries professor Mike Maceina, the opportunity to really get to know Partridge didn't come until after Partridge was working in Georgia.

"I had him in a couple of my classes when he was a student, but after he went to Georgia, we started working on a couple of projects together, and over the years, I got to know him well," Maceina says. "Whatever Dave did in life, he did it with enthusiasm, energy and a smile."

This past February, the 41-year-old Partridge was killed on a snowy night in his native Iowa when his vehicle struck a deer.

On hearing the tragic news, Lovell and Maceina almost immediately came up with the idea of a scholarship in their friend's memory. They approached Partridge's parents, D.G. and Rosemary Partridge, with the proposal, and they embraced it.

"We initially thought about setting up the scholarship through our professional (fisheries) society and making it available to students in Alabama or in Georgia, but Dave's parents wanted it to be done through Auburn," Maceina says. "They said Dave thought so highly of Auburn that they wanted it to be specifically for Auburn fisheries students."

A native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Partridge got a degree in 1988 in business management from the University of Northern Iowa, but the ace angler realized even before he had sheepskin in hand that he should've majored in fisheries. So he returned to school, this time at Iowa State University, and got a bachelor's in fisheries and wildlife biology.

From there, he worked for a few years as a fisheries technician with the Illinois Natural History Survey, then decided to pursue his master's degree. And nowhere would do but Auburn.

"He believed Auburn University was the best place to go for fisheries," Mrs. Partridge says. "He was really proud to say his master's was from Auburn."

While at Auburn, Partridge's major professor was Dennis Devries.

"He was a great student, with a great personality, and did a really solid master's thesis that led to a nice publication in 'Transactions of the American Fisheries Society,'" Devries says. "He helped other students on their projects and was a pleasure to have in the lab and associated with our program."

Maceina describes Partridge as an avid outdoorsman, conservationist and naturalist, and as someone who is now and will continue to be missed by many.

"Dave was one of those unique individuals that impacted everyone he knew," Maceina says.

"Dave was simply a great person to be around, and being associated with him, either at work, in the field, or doing something in the woods or on the water, was always a good experience."

The Partridges have contributed \$25,000 to establish the David Partridge Memorial Award Endowment in the Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures. The scholarship will be awarded annually to a student working toward a master's or a doctorate degree in fisheries management, fisheries ecology or fisheries conservation/biology.

"The scholarship is intended to help the recipients continue in the career path and ideals that Dave exemplified," Maceina says.

To contribute to the endowment, make checks payable to the Auburn University Foundation, and write "David Partridge Memorial Award" on the memo line of the check. Send to Office of Development, ATTN: Chris Gary, 317 S. College St., Auburn AL 36849.

To make a contribution online, go to <https://develop.auburn.edu/ways/>.



**FISHING BUDDIES**—Dave Partridge, pictured above with a proud catch, was a fisheries and allied aquacultures alumnus who was killed earlier this year in an automobile accident. He is being honored through a new scholarship instigated by Partridge's long-time fishing and hunting buddy, Graves Lovell, and fisheries and allied aquaculture professor Mike Maceina.

## The Art of Giving

An Auburn University College of Agriculture scholarship endowment in memory of a family member or friend can be created with a minimum of \$25,000 payable over five years, or through a future gift (a bequest) from your estate.

Once an endowment is established, a portion of the investment income is available for scholarships, while the remainder is reinvested. The current endowment spending policy allows the university to spend 3 percent to 6 percent of the average market value of the endowment for the previous three calendar years.

With your gift or pledge to create an endowment, you will be eligible for recognition in one of Auburn University Foundation's donor societies, which acknowledge outstanding contributions of \$25,000 or more or planned gifts to Auburn University Foundation and its many programs.

For more information, contact College of Ag Development officers Mark Wilton at 334-844-1198 or [wiltomt@auburn.edu](mailto:wiltomt@auburn.edu) or Chris Gary at 334-844-1136 or [garychr@auburn.edu](mailto:garychr@auburn.edu).

## alumni updates

News from our alumni and friends out in the world...send us yours at [AgComm@auburn.edu](mailto:AgComm@auburn.edu).

### Alisha Turnbull Carpenter

Upon graduation in 2003 I took a job with the USDA's Farm Service Agency. I am a farm loan officer with the agency. I married Jamie Carpenter who graduated in 2002 with a degree in agri-science education. He took a job as a soil conservationist with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. We added to our family on April 12, 2006, with the birth of our first baby girl, Grace.

### Harvey Howze

I work as management information systems helpdesk coordinator for the Mississippi Department of Corrections and live in Brandon, Miss.

### Debi Fortner Breedlove

While I didn't major in ag (she graduated in March 1975 in journalism with Mickey Logue as her adviser), I worked as a work-study student in the Department of Research Information (now Ag Communications) for two years and did my journalism internship in that office with E.L. McGraw, Gene Stevenson, Roy Roberson and, yes, the recently retired Terry Rodriguez. I now work as outreach coordinator for the health sciences division at Wallace Community College in Dothan.



## Cruisin' with the College

Want to hang out with your College of Ag buddies and feel an ocean breeze in your face?

If so, make plans to join the inaugural College of Agriculture cruise, open to all alumni and friends and set for Feb. 2-7, 2008.

The five-day cruise will set sail from Mobile aboard Carnival's Holiday ship visiting Costa Maya and Cozumel with college classmates and new acquaintances of all ages. In doing so, you will help the College of Agriculture raise scholarship money through Carnival Cruise Line's Matching Program.

Cost, based on double occupancy and depending on accommodations, ranges from \$365 to \$525 per person. For more information or to register, visit: <http://kytravels.com/Auburn/>.



Joe Yeager

## Yeager Wins Sullivan Award

Joe Yeager, professor and department head emeritus in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, recently was presented Auburn University's highest award for humanitarian service—a 2007 Al-gernon Sydney Sullivan Award.

Yeager, who retired in 1991 as a professor and department head of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, was presented the award along with two AU students—Mary Martha Abernathy, a senior in the College of Human Sciences, and Austin Ryan Walsh, a senior in economics and history.

The awards recognize individuals within the university community who have exhibited excellence in character, service to humanity, outstanding scholarship and other qualities. Auburn is one of several universities in the South that present the annual awards, which are named for a prominent 19<sup>th</sup> century humanitarian.

Yeager, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Auburn and a Ph.D. from Purdue, served 40 years on the faculty of the College of Agriculture, where he developed a national reputation as a leader in agricultural research and instruction. Besides leading efforts to improve academic programs in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Yeager hired the first female African American faculty member in the college.

He is also co-author of the book "Inside Ag Hill: The People and Events that Shaped Auburn's Agricultural History from 1872 through 1999." Proceeds from the book support a scholarship fund for students in agricultural communication.

In the community, Yeager remains active in his church and with civic organizations such as the Lion's Club and the Auburn Beautification Society.

# recipe

## Ratatouille

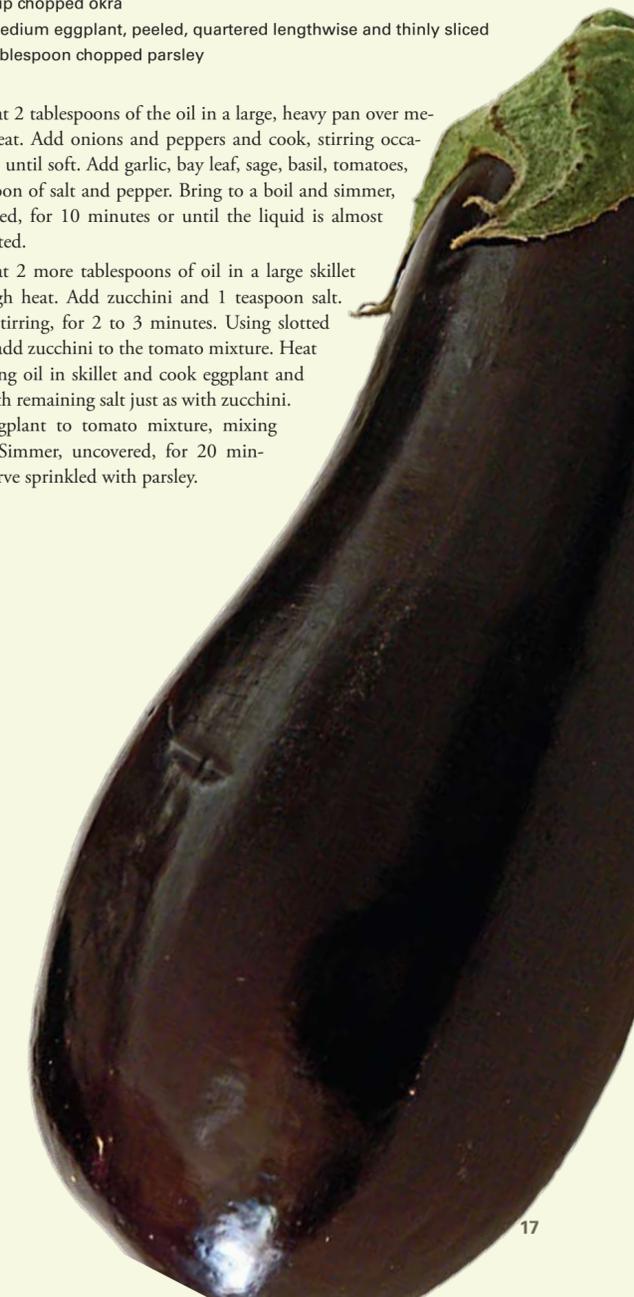
Summer is here and, along with the hot weather, there is also an abundance of summer vegetables. Richard Guthrie, our College of Ag dean and AAES director, has the perfect way to take advantage of the summer vegetable resources—his version of ratatouille. According to Guthrie, this recipe originated with a family friend, Sara Simpson of Vermont, whose late husband, Tim, was a classmate of Guthrie's in graduate school and remained a dear friend throughout Simpson's life.

Knowing how much Guthrie likes to cook, Sara Simpson offered him this recipe with a note stating "Richard, I wonder what you will do to change this recipe?" Guthrie did add his own twist to the recipe by tossing in a cup of chopped okra along with the eggplant.

- 1/2 cup olive or vegetable oil
- 2 cups sliced onions
- 3 green bell peppers, cut in strips
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon sage
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1 can tomatoes (1lb., 12 oz. size), drained and coarsely chopped
- 2 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 3 zucchini, thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped okra
- 1 medium eggplant, peeled, quartered lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large, heavy pan over medium heat. Add onions and peppers and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft. Add garlic, bay leaf, sage, basil, tomatoes, 1 teaspoon of salt and pepper. Bring to a boil and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes or until the liquid is almost evaporated.

Heat 2 more tablespoons of oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add zucchini and 1 teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring, for 2 to 3 minutes. Using slotted spoon, add zucchini to the tomato mixture. Heat remaining oil in skillet and cook eggplant and okra with remaining salt just as with zucchini. Add eggplant to tomato mixture, mixing gently. Simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Serve sprinkled with parsley.



Now through Aug. 30

**The Market at Ag Heritage Park**  
3-6 p.m.  
Each Thursday this summer  
Auburn

This grower-only market is held each Thursday during the summer at Ag Heritage Park on the Auburn campus, is open to the public and features fresh produce, baked goods, cheeses, honey and much more.

Contact: Dani Carroll  
334-749-3353  
carrold@auburn.edu

Aug. 4

**Summer Graduation Breakfast**  
Ham Wilson Arena  
Auburn University  
Auburn

Summer 2007 College of Agriculture graduates and their families are honored at his breakfast hosted by the AU Agricultural Alumni Association and sponsored by the Alabama Poultry and Egg Association.

Contact: Ann Gulatte  
334-844-2345  
gulatam@auburn.edu

Aug. 10

**Horticulture Alumni and Friends Reunion**  
**Southern Nurseryman's Association Annual Meeting**  
Georgia World Congress Center  
Atlanta, GA  
Contact: 334-844-4862

Aug. 11

**Farm, Home and Wildlife Expo**  
12-5 p.m.; dinner at 5 p.m.  
Chilton Research and Extension Center  
Clanton

This event will feature a wide range of presentations on everything from home gardening to wildlife. It is free and open to the public.

Contact: Jim Pitts  
205-646-3610  
pittsja@auburn.edu

Sept. 8-14

**2007 Horticulture Tour**  
"Markets, Motors and Mansions"  
Alabama Farmers Federation

This tour will carry participants to North Carolina to visit Charlotte and Asheville. Stops will include the Biltmore mansion and Hendrick Motorsports Complex. Space is limited and is on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration deadline is July 26.

Contact: Brian Hardin  
1-800-392-5705, Ext. 4217

Sept. 21

**College of Ag Golden Eagles Lunch**  
11 a.m.-1 p.m.  
Ag Heritage Park  
Auburn

The AU Office of Alumni Affairs and Auburn Alumni Association will host the Golden Eagles Reunion, which honors members of the class of 1957 and earlier graduates, on Sept. 20-22 in Auburn. The weekend includes a special lunch event for College of Ag alumni on Sept. 21. The lunch will be held in the Red Barn at Ag Heritage Park on the Auburn campus. Transportation from the AU Hotel and Conference Center will be provided.

Contact: Kelley Terry, 844-3209  
Elaine Rollo, 844-3204

Sept. 28

**Outdoor U!**  
3-6 p.m.  
Auburn

This event will feature outdoor-related career opportunities and majors for students. It will include booths highlighting hunting, fishing and camping equipment and informational booths as well as celebrity speakers. It is co-sponsored by Outdoor Life magazine, the College of Agriculture and the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences.

Contact: Deborah Solie  
334-844-8900  
das0002@auburn.edu

Oct. 16-18

**Sunbelt Ag Expo**  
Moultrie, GA

Billed as the largest farm show in the Southeast, this annual event attracts hundreds of exhibitors and thousands of visitors to the area each year. The College of Agriculture will be well represented by faculty, staff and Ag Ambassadors who will staff an informational display area for our college.

Contact: 229-985-1968  
info@sunbeltexpo.com

Oct. 23

**College of Ag Dean's Golf Tournament**  
Auburn University Club  
Auburn

This golf tournament is held in conjunction with the Lee County Auburn Club to provide scholarships to College of Ag students from Lee County.

Contact: Katie Hardy  
334-844-1475  
hardykc@auburn.edu

Nov. 3

**Fall Roundup/Taste of Alabama Agriculture**  
Ag Heritage Park  
Auburn

This annual event, billed as AU's largest tailgate party, will be held prior to the Tennessee Tech Homecoming football game.

Contact: Robert Hensaring  
334-844-3596  
hensara@auburn.edu

Nov. 8

**Fifth Annual Henry P. Orr Memorial Golf Classic**  
Farm Links Golf Course  
Fayetteville

All proceeds from this golf tournament support the Henry P. Orr Endowed Fund for Horticultural Excellence at Auburn University.

Contact: Katie Hardy  
334-844-1475  
hardykc@auburn.edu

# Dig It!

## Smithsonian Soil Exhibit Features Alabama Information

By Jessica Chesnut

You are walking into a room and then, suddenly, you're smaller than an earthworm and are underground. No, you have not fallen asleep. You have just entered the Smithsonian Soils Exhibit.

In 2008, the Soil Science Society of America with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History plans to open a soils exhibit. This exhibit is designed to inform the public about how vital soil is to all aspects of society.

The exhibit is tentatively titled "Soils: Worlds Underfoot," and is a \$2.5 million project.

Kirk Iversen, a soil scientist with Auburn University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Soil Dynamics Laboratory, is Alabama's state liaison with the SSSA. When planning for the exhibit began, it became clear that a grassroots effort was needed from every state to raise enough money. Each state was asked to raise at least \$10,000.

Alabama is currently ranked by contribution ninth in the United States and third in the Southeast with an input of \$15,000.

Major Alabama contributors include the Soil and Water Conservation Society, Alabama Association of Conservation Districts, Alabama Cotton Commission, Alabama Crop Management Association, Alabama Wheat and Feed Grain Committee, Auburn University and Soil Classifiers Association of Alabama.

The exhibit is a four-step project. The first stage will be a 5,000-square-foot onsite exhibit that will remain in the National Museum of Natural History for 18-24 months. Displays within the exhibit with titles like "What's Soil Got to Do with It?," "Get Soil Savvy!" and "Dig It!" will have information but also hands-on activities so viewers can get their hands dirty—literally.

The second stage is the traveling exhibit that will go to various museums across the United States for four-plus years. Stage three is a Web site with teacher materials that will be available indefinitely.

The fourth component is a soil monoliths wall, which will be in the Smithsonian Museum for seven-plus years. A soil monolith is a slice of soil, carefully extracted from the ground to be preserved and mounted on a wooden frame. All 50 states, the District of Columbia and several U.S. territories will have a soil monolith present.

Many states will feature their official state soil. Alabama's official state soil, "Bama," will be on display. Bama is located predominantly in west and central Alabama and is good for most agriculture and urban uses.

Many recognize soil is important to agriculturists, but fail to realize everyone is affected by soil quality—whether it is good or bad.

"Soil is something we can all share," says Iversen. "This exhibit will show soil not just from agriculture, but how all society uses it."

From baseball to art to microbiology to waste management to numerous other examples—soil makes an impact!

In the mid-1930s, umpire Lena Blackburne discovered "mud" from the Delaware River that could be rubbed on baseballs leaving no odor or black



color yet still take the shine from the cover of the balls. To this day, Lena Blackburne Baseball Rubbing Mud is the only rubbing mud used by major and minor league teams because its unique characteristics cannot be paralleled.

Jon Byler, the 3-D building technician in Auburn's Department of Art, says the art department buys minerals for projects that have been dug up locally and "some are better for different projects."

Soil microbiologists look at what role microorganisms play in the environment. "In a teaspoon of soil, there are one billion individual organisms and one million microbial (microscopic organism, principally disease-transmitting) species," says Yucheng Feng, an associate professor of soil microbiology. Many of the antibiotics used today come from these microorganisms in the soil.

Proper waste management is essential in an age of large populations and big business. "Good 'waste management' ends with good soil, good sun and good water," says Ted Tyson, an Extension biosystems engineer and professor.

One of the top goals behind this exhibit is to educate people on how to improve soil quality and usages. Both the exhibit and soils monolith wall will be located near the IMAX theater exit as well as the Hope Diamond exhibit—the most visited museum display in the world. This location will give the soils exhibit excellent visibility.

"We can enhance it (soil) or destroy it," says Iversen. You decide.

To make a donation to the Smithsonian Soils Exhibit, go to [www.soils.org/smithsonian/donate/](http://www.soils.org/smithsonian/donate/).

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▲ **BEARDEN'S BANNER**—Rebecca Bearden, a spring 2007 graduate of the College of Agriculture, served as the graduation marshal during the spring commencement ceremonies. With Bearden are College of Ag Dean Richard Guthrie (left) and outgoing Associate Dean Bill Hardy (right).

▼ **ROCCO THE ROOSTER**—A contest among fourth-graders in the Auburn City School System this spring has at last given the Department of Poultry Science's fine-feathered mascot a name: Rocco. Submitting the winning name was Shawn Butler, pictured at Rocco's right, a student at Dean Road Elementary.

◀ **GUTHRIE AWARDED FFA HONOR**—Richard Guthrie, College of Ag dean and Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station director, was awarded an Honorary State Farmer Degree at the recent FFA State Conference. With Guthrie is Troy Newton, Alabama FFA adviser and program coordinator for agriscience education in Alabama.



## Thanksgiving Abroad

### OIA Sponsoring Student Trip to Sicily

The Office of International Agriculture is sponsoring a student trip to Sicily during the 2007 Thanksgiving break (Nov. 16-24) to explore the region's food and farming systems.

According to Joe Molnar, coordinator for OIA and trip organizer, the tour is being planned in conjunction with the University of Catania in Sicily and will include visits to markets, farms and other features of the Italian food system. A highlight of the trip will be a visit to the Catania fish market, one of the largest fish markets in the world and one famous for its variety and freshness.

Students will also learn about the production of meat, olive oil, vegetables, fruits and herbs in Italy. And there will be cultural tours to art museum and historic sites and lectures on Sicilian history and geography.

Students can participate in the trip for the experience alone, but also can earn academic credit through additional reading assignments and completion of a term paper on a topic related to the field experience.

An informational meeting will be held Sept. 10 and deadline for a deposit is Sept. 30. Cost of the trip is \$1,600 with an additional \$300 needed for meals and other personal expenses. A minimum of six students must sign up for the trip to occur.

For more information, contact Molnar at 334-844-5615 or [molnaji@auburn.edu](mailto:molnaji@auburn.edu).

# "War Eagle" from Panama

## AU Fisheries Alum Heads Up Country's Aquatic Resources

By Jamie Creamer



**HEAD HONCHO**—Auburn fisheries alum Richard Pretto delivers a speech at a conference in the Republic of Panama. Pretto currently serves as general administrator of the Authority for the Aquatic Resources of Panama, a governmental agency that is in charge of all of that country's water resources. He earned his Ph.D. in fisheries and aquaculture from AU in the mid-1970s.

From his office in Panama City, Richard Pretto answers his phone.

"Hello—and WAR EAGLE," Pretto booms.

OK, so he was expecting the 9 a.m. call to be from Auburn.

Still, it isn't every day that you get to share a "War-Eagle moment" with a high-ranking official in Panama City.

And for the record, that's not Panama City, Fla.; it's Panama City, the Republic of Panama.

Pretto, who spent the mid-1970s in Auburn earning his doctorate degree in fisheries and aquaculture, heads the Authority for the Aquatic Resources of Panama, a governmental agency created just last year.

The agency has responsibility for and authority over all things water-related in the maritime country, from fisheries and aquaculture to coastal marine activities and aquatic environment preservation.

Pretto heads it all—not bad, for a fellow who, with a bachelor's degree in agriculture and a master's in entomology from Mexico's Monterey Institute of Technology, sort of stumbled into the world of aquaculture nearly 40 years ago.

It began in the early 1970s, when Pretto was director of the National Institute of Agriculture and looking for inexpensive sources of protein that would complement the Panamanian diet. While in Costa Rica for an entomology short course, he was introduced to a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization-sponsored project on tilapia production.

"I said, 'We could do this in Panama,' so I came back, dug a hole, filled it with water and put in a few male and female tilapia," Pretto says.

The fish were prolific, and soon Pretto had a pond teeming with tilapia.

A year later, the tilapia project got the attention of then-military strongman and de facto Panamanian leader Gen. Omar Torrijos who visited the school, accompanied by the U.S. Agency for International Development director for Panama.

"At the end of the visit, Gen. Torrijos said, 'I have been all over the country looking for a solution to the lack of protein in the Panamanian diet, and today I have found an answer here,'" Pretto recalls. "He said, 'I will not rest until there is a pond in every community.'"

The USAID, having witnessed the success of the tilapia project, determined that Panama was a country ripe for aquacultural development, and it enlisted the help of AU.

In 1972, R. Oneal Smitherman, an AU fisheries professor who was on the founding staff of Auburn's International Center for Aquaculture, went to Panama to design and build the country's first fish hatchery and fish laboratory. He also was asked to look for Panamanians who could come to Auburn to study aquaculture then return to their homeland to put what they learned into practice.

When leftists took control in Panama, and Pretto and his aquaculture project fell out of favor, Smitherman approached Pretto about coming to Auburn.

"I didn't know anything about aquaculture, but I had nothing else to do now that I was fired, so I said sure," Pretto says.

Pretto arrived in Auburn in 1973 and, with Smitherman as his major professor, became a top-notch student—at one point being recognized as Auburn's star international student in ceremonies at the United Nations.

When Pretto returned to Panama from Auburn, he was named Panama's director of aquaculture.

"I went to the hills and started to build ponds," he says. And these weren't ponds just for tilapia but for the culture of trout and other freshwater fish.

"We were digging holes again, but these were productive holes," Pretto says.

Under Pretto's leadership and guidance, aquaculture has grown from a few tilapia to a viable sector of the economy.

Now, as general administrator of the all-encompassing Authority for the Aquatic Resources of Panama, Pretto says the sky's the limit.

"In less than five years, this will be the number one institution in the country in terms of job generation and exportation," Pretto says. "And Auburn has been what has made the difference."

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