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Hey, Bubba!

For Trotman, 'A' Stands for Agriculture and Auburn

By Jamie Creamer

If John M. Trotman Sr. doesn't so much as glance your way when you call his name, it isn't because he's rude or up-pity. It's because he just plain forgets his name is John.

For longer than he can remember, everybody's called him Bubba.

"My daddy had four sisters, so he grew up being Bubba," Trotman says. "When I came along, he went to being Big Bubba, and I was Little Bubba."

The Trotmans were Pike Countians, their home in Troy and their farmland a couple of miles out from town. The elder Trotman made a living as a mule trader and a farmer, and Little Bubba—who, when he wasn't in school, could usually be found in the field alongside his daddy—made up his mind early on that farming was all he ever wanted to do.

The Trotmans had hogs, cattle, cotton and peanuts, and as he passed from adolescence into his teen years, Little Bubba became increasingly involved in the farm's operations.

"I never even thought about going to college," he says. "I knew I was going to farm, and I figured I'd learn everything I needed to know from Daddy."

But in the spring of '44, as he was out working with his daddy in the peanut field, an odd thing happened: This fellow

(continued on page 3)



John Trotman

You know it's true,
I bleed orange and blue.



Ben Griffiths

On the right track

Agronomy grad going home to be a 'real farmer'

By Jamie Creamer

For three summers back during his teen years, Ben Griffiths made good money working as first mate with his brother Rob on their charter fishing boat in Orange Beach. He enjoyed the job, but it could be hard work, both physically and mentally.

"Besides making sure everything with the boat was right, it was also my job to make sure the customers were always having a good time," he says. "That part isn't always easy, especially when you go out and the fish aren't biting."

Maybe there were times during those years spent on the boat when he toyed with the idea of following in the steps of Rob and his grandfather, Capt. Earl Griffiths, who had retired from the family farm to build his own boat and start his own marina.

But as his Foley High School graduation and career decision time arrived, Griffiths chose the land over the sea: He decided to be a farmer.

"I've been farming about all my life," he says. "It's what I really know and what I love."

"Fishing depends on two things: you, and whether somebody's gonna come along who wants to go deep-sea fishing," Griffiths says. "Farming depends on two things, too: you, and God. I decided I liked that combination best."

So as the 22-year-old graduates from Auburn University this month with a bachelor's degree in the agronomy and soils production track, the fifth-generation farmer will return to the Baldwin County farm in Sumnerdale that his great-great-grandfather laid claim to more than a century ago and put his all into keeping the highly diversified Griffiths Farms Inc. profitable.

On the 1,000-plus south Baldwin County acres that the Griffiths have in production, he'll be working alongside his dad, Bob, and brother William, the eldest of Bob and wife Kay's three boys. In addition to digging in full time to the physical work and decision-making—two aspects he's been a part of for years—he'll now be responsible for handling the books, relieving his great-uncle, Doyle Griffiths, from the volumes of paperwork and financial recordkeeping inherent in running a farm operation.

"Everybody that knows me says I'm tighter than the bark on the side of a tree, so I guess that's why they want me doing that," Griffiths says. "But in farming, you have to be tight or you'll lose everything."

Putting down roots in Baldwin County

Griffiths Farms' beginnings actually date back to 1896, when Ben's great-great-grandfather moved from the Chicago area to Baldwin County.

"He'd come over from England and settled in Chicago, but at that time, Baldwin County was being heavily advertised around Chicago as a great place to go, lots of farmland, so he headed down," Griffiths says.

(continued on page 5)



Roosevelt Street *diary*

The administrative team of the College of Agriculture and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station has gained two new players in the last few months. One is Dr. David Williams, who works principally with students and faculty in the college. The other is Dr. Zhanjiang "John" Liu, who works with faculty in the college and with faculty and administrators in other colleges and schools associated with the experiment station.

Dr. Williams was appointed to the position of interim associate dean for instruction in October 2007, following two years as head of the Department of Horticulture. Prior to becoming department head, he was professor and Extension specialist in the department. David has very quickly become engaged in the student affairs of the college.

Dr. Liu was named associate dean for research and assistant director of the experiment station, effective Jan. 1, 2008. Prior to accepting this appointment, he was alumni professor of fisheries and allied aquacultures and a national expert in animal genomics. John's principal area of research at AU has been catfish genomics.

Both of these newcomers "hit the ground running," as the old saying goes, and both have been welcomed wholeheartedly by faculty, staff and students. We are very fortunate, and I am especially pleased to have an opportunity to work alongside these outstanding professionals.



Richard Guthrie
Dean, College of Agriculture
Director, Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station

Letters from the Field

A Tribute to Auburn University

As I approach my 84th birthday and continue to reflect on the past I find that I must include Auburn University and the Wiregrass Research and Extension Center in a favorable way.

The first visit I can recall came around 1950 when I was a young county agent in nearby Seminole County, Ga. The Wiregrass Substation was the closest research unit.

Although "Georgia born and bred," I had no qualms about coming to Alabama. My mother was born in Alabama. Her father was an Alabama logger in the days when oxen were used. Even though my father was a Georgia farmer, I always have considered myself from both states. We moved to Houston County, Ala., in 1960.

Looking back about 1950, I well recall Mr. C.A. Brogden, then the superintendent of the Wiregrass Substation. He let us have some high-quality seed peanuts to plant in Seminole County, Ga. While helping me load the seed, Mr. Brogden would tell me to handle the seed easy, somewhat like eggs, otherwise they could get bruised.

That was the beginning, more than 50 years ago. The story here is that I have worked with every superintendent in Headland, except Mr. J.P. Wilson, who was the first superintendent. I have fond memories of working with Mr. Brogden, Jim Starling, Henry Ivey and now Larry Wells. Who else can say this?



Gene Ragan

That was just the beginning. There is no way to detail the support I have received from Auburn University through the years. This came not only as an agricultural communicator, but also as a cattle producer. The Auburn Bull Test and the Beef Cattle Improvement Association were valuable tools for potential success in the cattle business.

I can't begin to name all the active and retired employees that have helped me throughout the years.

I am most grateful for the assistance and honors from this land-grant college. I especially appreciate being inducted into the Auburn University Agriculture Alumni Hall of Honor. I wish there were some better way to say thanks.

Gene Ragan

Send us your opinions, memories, or comments. We'd like to include them in our new Letters from the Field section! Send them to Ag Communications and Marketing, Letters from the Field, Room 3 Comer Hall, Auburn, AL 36849; 334-844-5887; or smithcl@auburn.edu.

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(TROTMAN, from page 1)

he'd never laid eyes on before walked up and offered him a scholarship to play football come the fall at Alabama Polytechnic Institute—or Auburn, as most folks already were calling it.

The man was Wilbur Hutsell. Sure enough, he was a coach at Auburn—the track coach. Still, he was out on the football recruiting trail to help Auburn's new football coach, Carl Voyles, put together a team from scratch, more or less.

"Auburn didn't have a team in 1943, because all the young men who would have been playing were off fighting in World War II," Trotman says.

Granted, Trotman was a standout on his high school football team, a fleet-footed halfback. In fact, Hutsell had heard about Trotman from a guy he had just recruited from Luverne High School.

"Coach Hutsell asked him if he knew of any players around that he should talk with, and the boy told him he remembered somebody he played against when Luverne played Troy who could tackle pretty good," Trotman says. "So Hutsell tracked me down in the peanut field."

There was just one tiny problem. Hutsell was recruiting for the 1944 season, but Little Bubba, only an 11th-grader, still had his senior year of high school to go—technically, anyway.

What to do? Why, let Trotman graduate early, of course. So he spent that summer in school, at Troy State University and crammed in all the courses he needed for a high-school diploma. And in September 1944, the 17-year-old was at Auburn, an agriculture major and an official Auburn Tiger—all 5 feet, 9 inches and 172 pounds of him.

Taking the field

Trotman didn't make any sports-page headlines that year, but, then, neither did the team of mostly freshmen. They went 4-4, 0-4 in the SEC.

Still, how Trotman loved Auburn—the football, his fraternity and, of course, the ag courses, where he soaked up all the information he could take back to Pike County when he graduated and went in business with Big Bubba.

He had a stop-and-go-and-stop experience at Auburn. After winter quarter 1945, he did a stint in the U.S. Merchant Marine but completed that in time to return to Auburn for the 1945 football season, in which the team improved to 5-5 overall and 2-3 SEC.

Although he had no way of knowing it at the time, the Auburn *vs.* Miami game played down in Miami on Nov. 30, 1945, would wrap up his football-playing days. By the time the 1946 season kicked off, Uncle Sam had invited him to join the U.S. Army, and assigned him to an armored division at Fort Knox, Ky.

The fork in the road

When he got out of the Army in 1947, still a very young 20, Trotman could have returned yet again to Auburn to play more football and earn his bachelor's. But what he wanted to do more than anything was go back home to farm with his daddy.

"It would have been good to have earned that degree—and if it had been like it is today back then, I would've been crazy not to—but my daddy was a smart, smart businessman and farmer," Trotman says. "The things I learned from him, I don't believe I could have learned in a classroom."

"Anyway, I do believe he would've died a natural death if I hadn't gone in business with him."

The two Bubbas enjoyed three good, rewarding years of working together on their farming operation, which by then also included a 2,400-acre south Montgomery County farm that the elder Trotman had purchased right about the time the younger left for Auburn the first time.

But one day in 1950, without any warning, everything changed. Big Bubba, just 58 years old, died of a stroke.

"And I was 23 when Daddy died," Trotman says. "A 23-year-old, farming cotton and peanuts and running two dairies, a herd of 600 brood cows and a mule-trading business."

It could have become a barely break-even operation, or a mediocre one, or it could've gone belly-up. But apparently, Big Bubba was a master teacher, and Little Bubba a master student, because he did well. Very well.

Soon after his father's death, Trotman decided to move the farm's headquarters from Pike County to the south Montgomery County location.

In 1954, he established Trotman Cattle Company, an entity that, in the years that followed, became—and continues today to be—a nationally renowned cattle-broking business.

A people-lover

You know those kinds of people who just never meet a stranger? Bubba's one of them.

"I just love people," he says.

As soon as he'd halfway settled in a modest home on the farm, he got involved in numerous Montgomery community and civic activities and organizations.

It was at some such event that Trotman met Ellen Rogers, the granddaughter of the late Montgomery mayor William Gunter—for whom Gunter Air Force Base was named. It was one of those meant-to-be kinds of relationships, and in '55, he and Miss Ellen got married.

They had four sons—Randy, John, Charlie and Robert, known as Woody—and 38 happy years together, until her death in 1992.

Trotman joined the Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association, and it was through that organization that he met E.H. "Ham" Wilson, long-time executive vice president of the Alabama Cattlemen's Association.



BEFORE AND AFTER—Bubba Trotman holds a photo of himself taken during his 1944-45 football career at Auburn.

Wilson, recognizing that Trotman was a sharp cattleman and natural-born leader, encouraged him to run for positions in the cattle producers' organization. Trotman was elected president of the Montgomery Cattlemen's Association in 1960, the Alabama Cattlemen's Association in 1966 and of the National Cattlemen's Association in 1972—the first man east of the Mississippi to hold that position in 75 years.

And he wasn't president in name only. The man whom folks all over the U.S. came to know as "Mr. Cattleman" traveled the country, meeting with other cattle producers, promoting beef among consumer groups and frequenting the White House—especially during the Nixon Administration's price freeze on beef in 1973 and the nationwide beef boycott consumer groups initiated to try to bring beef prices down.

Return of football

In the last half of the 1970s, Trotman Cattle Company continued to flourish, despite a major distraction: Auburn football. Specifically, its all-SEC quarterback, Trotman. Charlie Trotman.

"Oh, that was exciting," Bubba says now. "You know, it's true, I bleed orange and blue, and that was one of the highlights of all my years. He made us all proud."

(Five or six years ago, on a home football Saturday in Auburn, Bubba, sporting a "30" AU football jersey and Charlie clad in his "6," had the honor and privilege of leading off Tiger Walk. Talk about thrilling.)

The decade of the '80s was a happening time for the elder Trotman, beginning with his induction into the Alabama Livestock Hall of Fame in 1981. The following year, he decided to throw his cowboy hat into the political ring and run for the office of Alabama commissioner of agriculture and industries. He lost that race to Albert McDonald, but the whole campaign experience had piqued his interest in politics.

In 1985, then-U.S. Sen. Jeremiah Denton, R-Ala., nominated Trotman to head the Alabama office of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, and President Reagan gave the nomination a nod. Trotman served in that post until 1990.

And here's a good time to let you in on something. You've been reading how Trotman has always gone by Bubba, but that's not exactly accurate. For the majority of his years, he went by "Bubber."

"It was when all the national stuff started happening that somebody said, 'Hey, you can't be in such-and-such position with a name like *Bubber*,'" he recalls. "So ever since then, I've been 'Bubba'—the *proper* way of saying it."

An AU tradition

When Trotman got that Auburn football scholarship in 1944, he started something of family tradition. Sons Charlie, of course, and Woody are AU graduates—and now president and vice president, respectively, of The Trotman Company, a Montgomery-based real-estate development business. Woody's wife, Kris, and John's twins, William and Andrew, are AU alums. Woody's oldest daughter, Ellen, will be a freshman at Auburn in fall 2008.

"We are true Auburn people," Trotman says.

The 81-year-old Trotman still lives in the large two-story home he and his late wife built on the farm in 1960. In fact, the farm is now home to five generations of John M. Trotmans: Johns Sr., Jr., III ("Trey") and IV, John Jr. and Trey work with Sr. on the farm.

"But I'm still real active, and I still call the shots," Trotman says. "Hopefully, anyway."

Paying Tribute

Widow Endows Ag Scholarship in Soulmate's Honor

By Jamie Creamer

For a lot of folks, making life's major decisions—choosing a career, for instance, or finding a mate—can be difficult, confusing, emotional, even agonizing. And sometimes, never resolved.

Imogene Mathison Mixson is **not** one of those people.

Deciding on a profession? For her, that was a piece of cake.

"I came into this world knowing that I wanted to be a teacher," she says. "Never did I ever have even the slightest bit of doubt about that."

And for 37 richly rewarding years, that's exactly what she did, teaching English at the high-school and college levels for several years and then moving into administration at two Wiregrass-area two-year colleges, including a couple of stints as interim president.

As for finding Mr. Right, that was easy for her, too.

"He called, we began dating and we immediately knew we were made to be together in life," she says.

His name was Whigham Mixson, a fellow whom she had known all her life. After all, they were both from the Dale County community of Skipperville and their families, Tom and Myrtis Mathison and Ralph and Foy Mixson, were the best of friends. But Whigham was several years Imogene's senior—when he was a sophomore in high school, she was just entering first grade—so the thought of any romantic relationship between the two never crossed anybody's mind.

She was breezing through grade school, in fact, as Mixson graduated from Dale County High School, enrolled at Troy State and then transferred to Auburn University. At AU, he was a stellar student, earning membership in the College of Agriculture's Alpha Zeta honor fraternity, Gamma Sigma Delta agricultural honor society and Phi Kappa Phi.

Closer to home

He graduated in 1949 with a bachelor's degree in agricultural science and worked for a few years with the Florida Livestock Board and, for a few more, with a North Carolina dairy farm. But both jobs were too far away from Skipperville for him, so when the opportunity came to buy a sizable chunk of land that was practically next door to his parents' place, he did not hesitate to stake his claim.

"He loved the outdoors and the land, and he wanted to get back home," says Mrs. Mixson, who, meanwhile, had graduated from high school in Ozark—as valedictorian, no less—and headed off to Troy State, known then as a "teachers' school," to obtain that long-anticipated degree in education.

Mixson returned to Skipperville and immediately went to work on his newly acquired property. Over the years, he developed substantial and successful cattle and forest operations that more than added up to a full-time job.

But Mixson had a powerful work ethic. Most of his farm work was done on weekends or before daybreak and after dark on weekdays. The nine hours in between, he worked at nearby Fort Rucker as a publications specialist for an aviation contractor.

"He was a very energetic person, and he would have something going 24 hours a day, if you didn't watch him," Mrs. Mixson says. "I think of that part of the Auburn Creed, where it says 'I believe in work, hard work,' and it talks about working wisely and skillfully. That was Whigham. In fact, he personified the entire Auburn Creed."

In 1955, not too long after Mixson had moved back to Dale County, Miss Imogene earned her teaching degree from Troy State and landed her first job as an English teacher at Dothan High School. And, over the course of three consecutive summers, she earned her master's degree from Auburn.

She left Dothan High in 1966 for what was then Enterprise State Junior College, where, in addition to teaching English, she served as chair of the English department. In 1972, while still on the ESJC faculty, she graduated from Florida State University as Imogene Mathison, Ph.D.

The start of something big

At some point during the time she was pursuing the Ph.D., Mixson, still an available bachelor, began seeing this young lady he'd known since she was born in a whole new light and asked her out.

Though it went unspoken, both of them knew from that first date that a wedding was in the future. But they did not exactly rush into marriage. Their courtship—which included many fall trips to Auburn on football Saturdays—lasted a good four years before their wedding on June 23, 1973.

A couple of months later, they moved into a brand new home about six miles northeast of Ozark, just minutes from both sets of parents.

Work, however, was another matter. From 1973 until he retired from Rucker in 1992, Mixson had a 30-mile round-trip commute to his job every weekday. Hers was 60 miles to ESJC, until she took a position, first teaching English and then in administration, at George Wallace Community College in Dothan in 1982, which was closer to 40.

The Mixson marriage was the made-in-heaven kind of union, and they both realized that and never took it—or each other—for granted. No matter how demanding their jobs were or how many church or community activities they were involved in, their time for each other always was top priority.



Imogene and Whigham Mixson

SYMBOLS OF LOVE—There's a photo in the wedding album of Imogene and Whigham Mixson that's always been Mrs. Mixson's favorite—her left hand over his, and on both hands, wedding rings. "To me, that picture has always been symbolic of our love for and commitment to each other," says Mrs. Mixson. A painting of the "hands" photo is incorporated into his gravestone in the Skipperville Community Cemetery (above).

"We counted our blessings every day, because we both had wonderful parents, good educations, great friends and neighbors, jobs that we loved and that allowed us to live comfortably and have enough to share," she says. "We were doing exactly what we wanted to do exactly where we wanted to be. And to live your life with someone you love and trust completely, how priceless is that?"

"If it sounds like a fairy tale, well, I guess it was."

Sharing the love

The couple had no children, but kinfolk—starting with both sets of parents—were a central part of their life. In 1983, on their 10th wedding anniversary, the Mixsons held an anniversary luncheon, or "love luncheon," as Mrs. Mixson dubbed it.

The luncheon became an annual celebration of love and commitment, of family and treasured relationships. The last gathering, in June 2007, marked the Mixsons' 34th anniversary.

Two months later, on Aug. 16, Mrs. Mixson lost her soulmate.

He was in the hospital awaiting a surgical procedure when he died unexpectedly.

"He was my best friend, my confidante, my supporter, my cheerleader," she says.

"When you live your life with someone you love and trust completely, one who really knows you and still loves you, and you take that element out of your life, it leaves a void that can never be filled."

Lifelong leaders

Back in 2006, Mixson paid tribute to his wife when he named her to the AU College of Education's Honor Roll in recognition of her 37 years of excellence as a teacher and administrator.

Now, Mrs. Mixson has paid tribute to her beloved, in the form of the David Whigham Mixson Endowed Scholarship in the College of Agriculture.

"I started thinking of what I could do to honor his legacy, and the College of Agriculture at Auburn immediately came to mind," Mrs. Mixson says. "He was a person who loved Auburn, and he especially had strong feelings for the College of Ag and consistently supported it through the Annual Fund."

"We both so strongly believed in helping and encouraging people to get an education," she says. "I know it was the right thing to do."

The David Whigham Mixson scholarship targets ag majors from the Wiregrass, from Barbour to Houston to Covington counties—including, of course, his lifetime home, Dale County.

"That was Whigham. In fact, he personified the entire Auburn Creed."

Donated Ant Bait Keeps Mounds to a Minimum at Park, Horse Unit



A BANNER MOMENT—AU's Fudd Graham, coordinator of the state's Fire Ant Management Program, hangs a new banner at Ag Heritage Park.

The next time you go to an event at Ag Heritage Park—be it the weekly summertime farmers' market, the annual Fall Ag Roundup or pre-game tailgating parties—see if you can figure out what's missing on the 20 acres of greenspace.

If you want to try to solve this on your own, then stop reading here.

But if curiosity's gotten the best of you, here's the answer: fire ants.

It's been that way since 2003, when AU entomologist and Alabama Fire Ant Management Program coordinator Fudd Graham struck a deal with Wellmark International, a leading manufacturer of pest control products. Graham convinced the company to donate enough of its Extinguish Plus fire-ant bait to treat the park's grounds twice a year, once in the spring before The Market opens and again in late summer, before football season starts.

It's been a win-win deal for both sides, Graham says. Auburn's enjoying outstanding fire-ant control at a popular venue for people events, and Wellmark's benefiting both from having a large site to demonstrate Extinguish Plus' effectiveness and from free publicity in the form of a banner that bears the company and product names on display at the entry to Ag Heritage Park.

The park project has been so effective that last year, when he learned fire ants had more or less taken over the 60-acre Auburn Equestrian Center, Graham struck a Wellmark-type deal with ag chemical company Valent. Now, Valent supplies its top-notch fire-ant bait, Esteem, to treat the horse unit once a year.

Both demonstrations are ongoing projects. Graham estimates that the donated chemicals save the College of Agriculture at least \$1,000 annually.

(GRIFFITHS, from page 1)

For the first 60 years or so, the Griffiths were big Irish potato farmers, profits from which, during the depression years, Ben's great-grandfather scraped together and bought the land that the family farms today.

When the potato market began to weaken, the Griffiths started shifting acreage into soybeans. By late 1954, soybeans were the farm's major row crop.

Soybeans and so much more

That isn't the case anymore. You'll still find soybean fields on Griffiths Farms—the family has stuck with the crop during good market times and bad—but soybeans is the only crop that has remained a constant on the operation.

"We'll grow about everything there is to grow that you can make money with," Griffiths says. "We're always looking at new things, studying their potential, and if we're farming something that isn't giving us a profit, we get out of it and go to something new."

In the past, they've grown produce, such as sweet corn and watermelons, and they always have their eyes open for other possibilities—niche crops along the lines of blueberries, palm trees and even mayhaws.

Their row crops these days, outside of soybeans, are wheat, corn and peanuts.

But a big focus on Griffiths Farms these days is sod.

Griffiths doesn't divulge much about their sod operation; all he says is that they're pleased with the venture. Oh, and also that, if you're ever in Biloxi, Miss., and drive by the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino on Beach Boulevard, check out the landscaping. That's Griffiths Farm sod.

College degree required

Though Griffiths has a wealth of experience on the farm there was never a question as to whether he'd get a college degree.

"My dad and mom—the most educated 'uneducated' people I've ever known—always instilled an appreciation for learning in us," he says. "And they made it clear that we were all going to go to college. That was unquestionable."

Also a given, at least in Griffiths' mind, was that he would go to Auburn and major in agronomy and soils, like brother William had done in the early '90s.

"His (William's) degree has been extremely valuable on our farm, in all kinds of decisions that we have to make every day," Griffiths says. "I may have grown up farming, but what's happened is that, at Auburn, I've learned more of the science behind what I've been doing all my life."

And he's learned it well. He graduates magna cum laude.

"He has been one of our best students academically," says agronomy professor David Weaver, who, besides teaching and advising Griffiths, has enjoyed what he considers the privilege of having Griffiths as a student worker.

On top of everything else, Weaver says, the slow-talking 22-year-old Griffiths is a leader.

"He's been president of the Agronomy Club, he's involved in Auburn Young Farmers and he's been a definite leader among students in our department, particularly those on the production track—'real farmers,' he calls them," Weaver says.

Too few 'real farmers'

That "real farmers" group is small, which is a source of concern for Griffiths.

"When my brother graduated from here in 1993, there were 60 undergrads in on agronomy's production track," he says. "Now, there are over 50 undergraduates in the department, but I think maybe five of us are on the production side, just five of us who are getting our degrees and going to work in agriculture."



TEACHER, MENTOR, EMPLOYER, FRIEND—The way Griffiths sees it, agronomy professor David Weaver, left, has worn all those hats for him the four years he's been a student at Auburn.

I may have grown up farming, but what's happened is that, at Auburn, I've learned more of the science behind what I've been doing all my life.

The Griffiths' operation, which includes land they own as well as more than a thousand leased acres, is a mere 10 miles from Alabama's beautiful beaches. Griffiths knows the dollars those visitors spend are crucial to the county and state's economies, but he worries about their impact on his profession.

Baldwin County sees double-digit jumps in population year after year. And more people means more houses, which have to be put somewhere.

"The problem is that land that's good for farming is also good for houses," Griffiths says.

"We realize that eventually, it may be 20 or 30 years down the road, we're going to lose all the land we don't own," Griffiths says. "And we don't own enough land to keep farming."

That's why the Griffithses have given serious thought to buying farmland elsewhere and then, when the inevitable happens, pulling up stakes and relocating.

"But that's going to be tough," Griffiths says. "We've been where we are for 112 years; you don't want to be the one who leaves."

Luckily, that scenario isn't imminent. For now, Griffiths is ready to get back to the farm—so eager, in fact, that he passed up an attractive proposal from agronomy and soils to pursue his master's degree. He's going home to be a "real farmer."

50/50 Split

AU Entomologist Excels in Classroom and Laboratory

By Jamie Creamer

Invariably, whenever Bill Moar tells someone he's with Auburn University, the immediate response is, "What do you teach?"

Nobody has ever come back with, "Tell me about your research."

And that's OK, because Moar in fact *does* teach, and has taught to some extent for all of the 18 years he's been a faculty member in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology in AU's College of Agriculture.

Moar came to Auburn in 1990, straight from earning his doctorate in entomology at the University of California, Riverside, with a 78-percent research/22-percent teaching appointment. The major focus of his research: *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt, a naturally occurring soil bacterium that produces crystal proteins toxic to many insects including crop pests, and now is genetically engineered into plants such as cotton and corn.

Bt had been Moar's concentration throughout graduate school, as he worked first with Bt-based insecticide formulations and, later, in the genetic engineering arena. By the time he graduated in 1990, he was well on his way to establishing a reputation in the U.S. and abroad as an expert in Bt science and technology.

But teaching came to demand more of his time in 1997, when he was tapped to fill an unexpected vacancy at the helm of a large economic entomology class. Six years later, he picked up a class—insecticides in the environment—and his appointment went 50/50 research/teaching.

Since taking on more of a teaching role, Moar has consistently earned high marks from students—or those who at least make an effort in class—not because his classes are an easy A (they definitely are not) but because he teaches with such fervor that he makes classes about bugs downright interesting.

A matter of style

"I teach blue-collar," Moar says. "I teach concepts in terms students can relate to. When I talk about insects building up resistance to chemicals from an inducible standpoint, I may compare it to how their own bodies adjust to consuming all of the natural toxins in the foods they eat on a daily basis."

Abra Lee remembers Moar's class vividly. She had entered Auburn in the fall of 1997 as a freshman in horticulture, but she didn't take school seriously.

It eventually caught up with her at the end of in spring semester 2001, when academic suspension sent her home packing.

When she returned to Auburn spring semester 2002, she decided to bite the bullet right off the bat and get economic entomology, required for all horticulture majors, behind her.

"I was absolutely dreading it, because I didn't like bugs and didn't care to learn one bit about them," Lee says. "But he (Moar) was amazing; it wound up being one of my favorite classes at Auburn."

"Dr. Moar is, like, a genius when it comes to entomology," she says. "I was always telling my friends cool things I learned in his class, till they'd tell me to shut up about it."

Though she enjoyed the class, she was a bit skeptical that her knowledge of entomology would ever pay off in "the real world." But it's a rare day in her job as aviation landscape manager for the 5,000 acres of greenspace at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport that she doesn't solve a problem or make a decision based on what Moar instilled in her in ENTM 4020.

Award-winning performance

In 2003, Moar's stellar classroom and lab performance earned him the Dean's Award for Teaching Excellence in the College of Ag, based on "his genuine enthusiasm for his subject and his ability to get his students interested, motivated and involved."

Two years later, the Auburn Alumni Association presented him its 2005 Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Award, citing his exceptional approach to teaching, his vast knowledge of the subject he was teaching, and his interest in, and availability to students.

"My classes aren't easy, and I don't do bell-curve grading," Moar says. I help students who try, want to learn and be competitive in the job market, not those who are there just to get it over with because it's required.

"But if I can convey my message to even a couple of 'Abra Lees' every semester, then I consider that semester a success."

Moar was born and reared in a blue-collar family in Portland, Oregon.

He attended two junior colleges then transferred to Oregon State University in Corvallis. He initially had toyed with the idea of getting a degree in horticulture, but when he entered OSU, he declared business his major.

He completed a year at the Corvallis campus, spent the next as an OSU exchange student in Germany and then returned to Oregon State, where, in 1983, six years after entering college, he graduated—but with B.S. and B.A. degrees in botany and a B.S. in entomology.



“But if I can convey my message to even a couple of ‘Abra Lees’ every semester, then I consider that semester a success.”

"I took entomology as a double major to make myself more competitive for jobs," he says, but no employment opportunities existed.

Still unsure as to what his future held, he decided to pursue a master's degree in entomology. He hoped to stay at Oregon State, but it was from the University of California, Riverside, that an opportunity arose to do graduate research on various aspects of integrated pest management, including the use of Bt as an insecticide.

To the next level

Moar earned his master's in entomology in 1986, but, again, no jobs. He was highly into his Bt research, though, so he decided to remain at UC Riverside, one of the leading universities in Bt work, and get his Ph.D.

Several months before he had accomplished that goal, he came across a job announcement for an entomology position at Auburn University in Alabama.

"I decided it wouldn't hurt to apply, and they called me for an interview," Moar says. "That was in November 1989—I still had half a year to go for my Ph.D.—and they offered me the job. I couldn't believe it. They were going to hold the position for me until I graduated."

So in the summer of 1990, Moar and his wife, Susanne, two lifelong Pacific Northwesters, and their 2-year-old daughter Stephanie packed up and headed for Auburn.

'Tis a decision the Moars have yet to regret.

"Coming here was like a breath of fresh air," Moar says. "We were like a lot of people: you come to Auburn as just a stop, and you stay here because you like it."

(continued on page 19)

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.

Alabama 4-H Opens LEED Environmental Center

More than 250 people gathered at the Alabama 4-H Center in late November as Alabama 4-H opened the first planned gold-certified Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) environmental education building in the eastern United States.

The facility sets a new standard in teaching Alabama's children about being environmentally responsible and energy efficient. The center offers Alabama's school children, 4-H youth, business leaders and others the opportunity to learn about the environment in a way not currently offered in Alabama.

U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby was one of several dignitaries who joined in the dedication of the \$5 million, 17,550-square-foot Alabama 4-H Environmental Science Education Center.

"This facility will instill in our youth the challenge of the future," he said, "and that is energy. How we meet this challenge will be something future generations will solve, and a facility like this will cultivate the minds of our youth."

Jack Odle, chairman of the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation, the fund-raising arm of Alabama 4-H, praised the facility as an investment in the future of Alabama and its children. He also thanked the more than 650 donors who contributed to the Campaign for Alabama 4-H.

Robert Jennings, president of Alabama A&M University, told the group that as the land-grant urban partner in Extension, urban youth will also gain valuable use of this new center. "Whether you live in the city, a suburb or on a farm, we feel the effects of a changing environment and learning how to protect natural resources based on sound science is something all of us must take advantage of," said Jennings.

The LEED Green Building rating system is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings established by the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

The facility was built with funds raised by the Campaign for Alabama 4-H through the Alabama 4-H Club Foundation, Inc. More than 700 corporations, foundations, organizations and individuals have supported the Campaign for Alabama 4-H giving \$5.7 million to date. Funds from the campaign also support a \$2 million, 20-room addition to the hotel lodge space at the 4-H Center, and the endowment of 4-H programs statewide.



NATURAL CHOICES – The new 17,550-square-foot Alabama 4-H Environmental Science Education Center was dedicated in November. Built to teach as well as demonstrate how to protect our environment, the center is located in a wooded landscape at the Alabama 4-H Camp in Columbiana and is the first planned gold-certified Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) environmental education building in Alabama and in the eastern United States.



TAKING FLIGHT – A highlight of the dedication of the Alabama 4-H Environmental Science Education Center was the release of four red-tailed hawks by the Southeastern Raptor Center, part of Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine.



The Alabama Cooperative Extension System and its two land-grant universities, Alabama A&M and Auburn, are partners in a groundbreaking new Web site, eXtension.org, launched nationally recently.

eXtension.org will be a gateway to answering many of life's little questions—from parenting to saving and investing, entrepreneurship to vegetable gardens. The brains behind eXtension.org are university faculty and researchers at land-grant institutions across the nation as well as field staff working with state Extension services.

The new Web site is a sort of "next-gen Google" where people can find information on a wide range of topics. If consumers can't find the information they are looking for, they can submit questions to experts through the Web site.

eXtension offers credible expertise; reliable answers based on sound research; connections to the best minds in American universities; creative solutions to today's complex challenges; customized answers to specific needs; trustworthy, field-tested data; and dynamic, relevant and timely answers. All resources are free.

The easy-to-navigate Web site has 16 resource areas called Communities of Practice. Each is typically a multi-institutional, multistate and multidisciplinary group that brings the "best of the best" educational resources to the public.

Professionals with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System are leaders in a number of these communities, including cotton, imported fire ants, caregiving, parenting and youth, science, engineering and technology. Alabama Extension professionals are also lending their expertise to the communications and information technology aspects of eXtension.org.

Alabama 4-H Golf Classic Planned for June

The Alabama 4-H Golf Classic will be held June 12 at FarmLinks at Pursell Farms in Sylacauga beginning at 7 a.m. The event features a double-shotgun start, four-person team scramble. Deadline to register is June 2. To register online go to www.aces.edu and click on the "Golf Classic" link. See more about FarmLinks at www.farmlinksgolf-club.com.

Farmers Desperately Seeking Cheap Nitrogen

Farmers already dealing with two years of record drought resulting in poor pasture and hayfield growth, now have another issue to deal with—spiking prices for nitrogen fertilizer.

Because of this, farmers are shopping around for cheap nitrogen. But, says regional Extension agent Henry Dorrough, buyers should beware: nitrogen sources are not equal and cheaper sources may end up costing more in the long run.

"Commercial fertilizers have an acidifying effect on the soil, meaning they tend to lower soil pH and increase the need for lime applications," he says.

Whatever producers choose to do, Dorrough stresses that soil testing is critical.

"It's important that you soil test to determine exactly what the soil requires," he says. "Don't put out nutrients that aren't needed."

To learn more about soil testing go to www.aces.edu/anr/soillab/.

Pocket Guide New Tool for State's Beef Producers

Alabama's beef producers have a new tool—the Alabama Beef Cattle Pocket Guide—available thanks to a collaborative effort between the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Cattlemen's Association.

Topics covered in the guide include a management calendar, forages, genetics, health, reproduction, carcasses and cuts and contact information of experts available to help Alabama producers.

Diego Gimenez, an Extension animal scientist who was the coordinating author, notes the publication was made possible by funding from the Alabama Beef Checkoff program.

"This booklet answers many of the questions producers have. It will be an excellent guide to help them manage their herds to their fullest potential," says Billy Powell, executive vice president of the Alabama Cattlemen's Association.

Gimenez adds that the publication also is a resource for young people active in Alabama 4-H and FFA youth livestock programs.

Copies of the free publication are available through county Extension offices or the Alabama Cattlemen's Association.

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, Chair
334-844-4800
www.ag.auburn.edu/agec

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

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

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

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

Horticulture
Joe Eakes, Acting Head
334-844-4862
www.ag.auburn.edu/hort

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

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

Faculty and Staff Accomplishments

Richard Guthrie, dean of the College of Agriculture and director of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, was honored recently by the Auburn chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame as the recipient of the chapter's Distinguished American Award. The award is presented to an outstanding American who has maintained a lifetime of interest in the game and who has, over a long period of time, exhibited leadership qualities and made a significant contribution to the betterment of amateur football in the United States. Guthrie, a member of the Auburn Football Lettermen's Club, will serve as vice president of that organization for the 2008 football season. He was a football letterman for Coach Ralph "Shug" Jordan in the early 1960s.

Omar Oyarzabal, poultry science assistant professor and chair of the College of Ag Diversity Committee, has landed a three-year, \$210,078 National Science Foundation grant to establish a Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program that in each of the three years will bring 10 undergraduate students from underrepresented minorities to Auburn University to participate in 10-week summer research projects involving sensor and biosensor development. Oyarzabal and AU Mechanical Engineering associate professor Jeffrey Fergus, co-principal investigator on the grant, have created a Web site detailing the program at www.ag.auburn.edu/nsfbiosensors/. Two of the 11 mentors available for the program are from the College of Ag, including Oyarzabal and animal sciences professor **Jack Wower**.



CELEBRATING THE FUTURE—The many accomplishments of Mary Lou Smith, right, were celebrated recently at her retirement party. Pictured with Smith are, from left, Marilyn Sanford, Deborah Dorman and Randall Goodman, director of the Shell Fisheries Center.

Mary Lou Smith, longtime administrative assistant in fisheries and allied aquacultures, retired in March. Smith is credited with training four department heads—Wayne Shell, Bill Rogers, John Jensen and David Rouse—as well as handling tens of millions of dollars in grants and contracts and many other accomplishments.

Rick Wallace, professor of fisheries and allied aquacultures and an Extension specialist at the AU Marine Research and Extension Center in Mobile, also retired this spring.

Chris Kerth, associate professor of animal sciences, has been awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant to spend a total of three of the next 12 months in Uruguay, presenting lectures and seminars and conducting research at the country's National Agricultural Research Institute in Tacuarembó. Kerth's research at Auburn focuses on grass-fed beef, a product that is among Uruguay's top agricultural commodities. His presentations in the host country will highlight his research on sensory analyses of and consumer attitudes toward grass-fed beef, as well as processing methods and product safety. He will be one of 800 U.S. faculty and professionals the Fulbright Scholar program will send abroad this year to lecture and research in a wide variety of academic and professional fields.

Wallace Berry, professor of poultry science, recently was awarded a community service grant from the Alabama Legislature for his work on cervical cancer research.

Curtis Jolly, head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, was selected to attend the Food and Agriculture Organization's Expert Consultation on Assessment of Socio-economic Impacts of Aquaculture in Ankara, Turkey.

John Fulton, assistant professor of biosystems engineering, was chosen by BSEN students as the Outstanding Faculty Member for 2008. He joined the Auburn faculty in 2004. His scholarly program at Auburn focuses on machine systems engineering and precision agriculture and forestry. Fulton's efforts as part of the AU Precision Agriculture—Precision Forestry Team have led to AU patent applications for tools that allow accurate monitoring of manual labor operations. Fulton teaches the senior capstone engineering design course and a precision agriculture-precision forestry course and volunteers to teach parts of other courses for the College of Engineering and School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences.

Several new faculty members will be joining the College of Agriculture ranks this fall. They include **Sushil Adhikari**, assistant professor of biosystems engineering; **Christy Bratcher**, assistant professor of animal sciences; **James (Jay) Spiers**, assistant professor of horticulture; and **Michelle Worosz**, assistant professor of agricultural economics and rural sociology.

Gary Mullen, professor of entomology and plant pathology, has been in high demand lately as he tells audiences around the state about Philip Henry Gosse, a naturalist who worked in Alabama in the 1800s. Mullen presented the 2008 Woodham Lecture at Troy University-Dothan in April and spoke as part of the 2008 ArchiTreasures program at the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

The College of Agriculture's Cultural Diversity Committee recently presented its 2008 Humanitarian Award to Overtoun Jenda, AU associate provost for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, in recognition of his efforts toward creating an environment at Auburn that promotes academic excellence, respects differences and accepts inclusiveness. Jenda received the Humanitarian Award March 11 during the committee's Black-American Legacy Program, an annual event that traditionally features a panel of individuals who are minorities and who have achieved success in life. This year's panelists included Jenda; Shirley Scott-Harris, minority engineering program director; Troy Smith, academic counselor, Athletic Department; Florence Holland, special assistant to Jenda; and **Norbert Wilson**, ag economics associate professor. The legacy program was coordinated by **James Brown**, AU horticulture professor and a member of the AU Cultural Diversity Committee.

Horticulture professor **Harry Ponder** recently was given the Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association (ALNLA) 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award. The award, which Ponder received in January during the 2008 Gulf States Horticultural Expo in Mobile, is presented annually to an individual who has contributed to the advancement of the horticulture industry in Alabama and to the welfare of the ALNLA. At Auburn, in addition to his teaching responsibilities, Ponder is coordinator of horticulture's undergraduate program and of the department's job placement and internship program. That latter program, which Ponder launched shortly after joining the faculty in 1979, is seen as a key contributor to the 100-percent job-placement record that the department and its graduates have enjoyed for going on three decades.



AWARD WINNER—Harry Ponder, right, was given the Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association's 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award recently. Pictured with Ponder at the awards ceremony is ALNLA board member and AU hort alum Stephen Presley of Birmingham.

Student Accomplishments



Daniel Brinson, left, and Congressman Mike Rogers.

Daniel Brinson, a sophomore from Pike Road majoring in agricultural economics, was honored as a hero recently with a congressional certificate of commendation. The rescue occurred last September when Brinson and AU fraternity brother Terrell Webb of Athens, Ga., on their way to the beach for the weekend, encountered a fiery multi-vehicle crash with fatalities. As the two students rushed to the vehicles, Brinson heard a cry for help and discovered a young woman trapped in a burning car. Putting their own lives in jeopardy, Brinson and Webb pulled the young woman from her car. She was the sole survivor of the crash. In January, Alabama Congressman Mike Rogers, having heard about Brinson's heroics, recounted the rescue story on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, thus making it an official part of the Congressional Record. Rogers came to Auburn in March to present Brinson the citation for bravery in a ceremony in Samford Hall. Read the Opelika-Auburn News' full story about Brinson, the wreck and the award at www.oanow.com/oan/news/local/article/auburn_student_honored_for_bravery/7371/.



Sabrina Beyer

Sabrina Beyer, a master's student in fisheries and allied aquacultures, claimed the award for Best Student Paper at the 24th annual Alabama Fisheries Association meeting in late February in Orange Beach. The paper recapped her findings in a study to investigate the validity of current techniques used to determine the age of red snapper and to test a new age-determination method. **Steve Szedlmayer**, Beyer's major professor, says that Beyer took a risk with this project, because she had to recapture marked red snapper that had been at liberty for at least one year. No recaptures would have meant no thesis.

College of Ag freshman **Lauren Lewis** made the "final four" in the American Farm Bureau Federation's Collegiate Discussion Meet, held in February in Baltimore. Lewis qualified for the national competition after winning the Alabama meet, held at AU as part of a class called agricultural quotient. Lewis, of Haines City, Fla., is currently an animal sciences major but says competing in the meet made her realize that she enjoys legislative and policy work and that she plans to change to agricultural economics with a minor in animal sciences. As a finalist, she received \$1,000 and a plaque.

Several College of Agriculture students were named as outstanding graduate students by the Auburn University Graduate Council. They include **Elias Bungenstab**, a doctoral student in animal sciences working with professor **Russ Muntifering**; **Bethany Harris**, a master's in animal sciences working with professor **Skip Bartol**; and **Konasale Anilkumar**, a doctoral student in entomology and plant pathology working with professor **Bill Moar**.

Kim Cline, a senior in animal sciences, was selected by the AU Student Government Association as the outstanding student in the College of Agriculture. Cline will be starting a master's degree in animal sciences this summer. She participated in the AU Undergraduate Research Fellow program in 2007-2008 and presented her research at the 22nd National Conference for Undergraduate Research at Salisbury University in Maryland this spring and will also make a presentation this summer at the Centennial Meeting of the American Society of Animal Science.



Rachel Angel

Rachel Angel was selected by the faculty as the 2008 Outstanding Student in Biosystems Engineering. Angel, who will graduate in May, has been on the Dean's list several times and is a member of the engineering honorary, Tau Beta Pi, and is a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. The winner of numerous prestigious scholarships, Angel also participated in the Cooperative Education Program working as an environmental engineering intern with MeadWestvaco Corporation.

Ming kang Jiang has been selected as the Outstanding International Graduate Student in the College of Agriculture. The award is given by the AU International Student Organization and a winner from each AU college or school is chosen among nominations made by each department. Ming kang is officially enrolled as a student in Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures, but he is pursuing his Ph.D. degree under the supervision of Yifen Wang in Biosystems Engineering. His work is in the area of food engineering and food processing where he has focused on processing techniques for smoked catfish production and in the extraction of gelatin from catfish skins for food and pharmaceutical packaging materials. Jiang is not just a fine student, he is also a dedicated community and campus volunteer. He participated in student recruiting events such as E-Day and Ag Roundup and often presents his research in food engineering to prospective students and the general public. Jiang has also worked on community service activities such as the "Adopt-a-Mile" program and as a volunteer at the Lee County Humane Society.

Warner Orozco-Obando, a graduate student in horticulture, was his department's nominee for the ISO Outstanding International Graduate Student award. **Whitlyn Miller**, an undergraduate student in horticulture, was named the ISO's Undergraduate International Student of the Year.

Michael Mulvaney, a graduate student in agronomy and soils, took first place in the oral graduate student presentation at the Southern Branch American Society of Agronomy meetings held in Dallas, Tex., this spring. Agronomy and soils graduate student **Laura Sturgeon** took first place in the graduate student poster competition at that same meeting.

Several graduate students from the College of Agriculture participated in the AU Graduate Student Research Forum sponsored by the Graduate Student Council in March on the AU campus. They include: entomology and plant pathology students **Konasale Anilkumar**, **Nicholas Sekora**, **Scott Moore** and **Jongkit Masiri**; animal sciences students **Teresa Fenn** and **Bethany Crean-Harris**; poultry science students **Teresa Dormitorio**, **Shan-Chia Ou**, **Kejun Guo**, **Candace James**, **Priyvantha Gunawardana**, **Benya Saenmahayak**, **Regina Lehman** and **Lindsay Stevenson**; agronomy and soils students **Michael Mulvaney**, **William Dunnivant**, **Bradford Young**, **Uma Karki**, **Sheryl Wells** and **Laura Sturgeon**; horticulture student **Paul Jackson**; and agricultural economics and rural sociology students **Pedro Correa** and **Cephas Naanwaab**. The Forum is a showcase for graduate work of all types being conducted here at Auburn.

Ag Ambassadors...Coming and Going

The names have been released...the names of the 2008-09 Ag Ambassadors, that is. They include: **Anne Barganier**, **Taylor Burdg**, **Christi Chesnut**, **Kate Derby**, **Bethany Donaldson**, **Amanda Ferguson**, **Katie Hines**, **John Lee**, **Lauren Lewis**, **Landon Lowery**, **Kelly McCay**, **Leah Mitchell**, **Shaina Smelas**, **Cody Smith**, **Kate Williams**, **Hope Burge**, **Laura Calhoun**, **Kyle Carpenter**, **Jeremy Deaton**, **Jeremy Green**, **Jenny Gvillo**, **Nic Hilyer**, **Jennifer Himburg**, **Maggie Jordan**, **Amy McDaniel**, **Katlin Mulvaney**, **Anna-Marie Murphy**, **Caitlin O'Neal**, **Patrick Sullivan**, **Kimberly Triplett**, **Chrissy Weaver** and **Loren Willis**. And to all of the 2007-08 Ag Ambassadors who will graduate May 10—**Whitney Boozier**, **Kim Cline**, **Mark Doroh**, **Ginger Gaines**, **Jeremy Green**, **Whitney Griffin**, **Erin Hunter**, **Jennifer Jordan**, **Bart Smith**, **Patrick Sullivan**, **Kimberly Tidwell**, **Jordan Towns**, **Brian Watkins** and **Kindra Wood**—thank you and all the best.

News from the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station's affiliated school and colleges.

College of Human Sciences

June Henton, Dean

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www.humsci.auburn.edu



“Freshman 15” Study Makes the News

A presentation by **Sareen Gropper**, professor in the College of Human Science's Nutrition and Food Science Department, was selected by the scientific societies participating in Experimental Biology 2008 meeting to be highlighted in the media.

The presentation showcased results of her research on “freshman 15”—the rapid weight gain that many new college students reportedly experience when they begin school—showing that this fabled 15 may be more urban legend than true experience.

Gropper's study followed 36 freshmen at Auburn University and found that an average gain of only 1.9 pounds occurred during the first semester, with women gaining slightly more than men. A majority of freshmen in the study (71.4 percent) did gain weight, notes Gropper, but only 21 percent gained five pounds or more. No one gained the freshman 15.

She and her colleagues have begun a larger study of 240 students who entered Auburn in the fall of 2007. At the end of the first semester, 68.7 percent of students had gained weight: an average of 2.1 pounds. Only 21 percent of students gained five pounds or more.

Gropper, in partnership with colleagues from Auburn University's Department of Consumer Affairs, used a 3-D whole body scanner to collect information on body size and shape.

Gropper presented the study at the Experimental Biology 2008 meeting in San Diego in April, an event that drew some 12,000 scientists. The presentation is part of the scientific program of the American Society for Nutrition. Gropper's co-authors on the Experimental Biology presentation are CHS faculty members **Lenda Jo Connell**, **Karla Simmons**, **Pamela Ulrich** and **Claire Zizza**, along with CHS graduate students **Kelly Drawdy** and **Alisha Gaines**. The study was funded by the USDA and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station.

An article related to her study ran in the April 7 edition of Science Daily, an online source of research news. It can be viewed at <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/04/080406153357.htm>.

Mize Publishes Paper in National Science Foundation's Journal

Jackie Mize, professor of human development and family studies in the College of Human Sciences, recently had a paper published in the National Science Foundation's journal, *Highlights*.

The paper addressed her work with the hormone cortisol, which plays an important role in energy metabolism and is a primary stress hormone in humans, in gauging how preschool children react to daycare situations.

In a project supported by the National Science Foundation, Mize and her former graduate students **Jared Lisonbee** and **Amie Lapp Payne** have been studying 4-year-olds in child care to identify factors that predict which children experience atypical cortisol patterns and whether children with elevated cortisol at age 4 have more negative outcomes a year later. Based on research showing that secure relationships with parents protect children from cortisol elevations in stressful situations, Mize expected that the quality of children's relationships with teachers would play a key role.

Their findings show that large group size, poor child care quality and overall teacher insensitivity predicted increases in cortisol from morning to afternoon in the classroom. However, the strongest predictor was the quality of children's relationships with their teachers. Ultimately, these findings indicate that children with better relationships with their preschool teachers show less stress reactivity in a variety of contexts and situations that they experience at child care.

HDFS Hosts Innovative Graduate Student Symposium

The College of Human Sciences' Department of Human Development and Family Studies hosted a unique “student-run” conference in February that provided a supportive environment for graduate students to share their research and to develop a network of professional contacts with peers and faculty scholars from other universities in the region.

The event was the 32nd annual Southeastern Symposium on Child and Family Development—known as Quint State—which drew faculty and graduate students from Auburn, the University of Georgia, University of Tennessee at Knoxville, University of North Carolina at Greensboro and Virginia Tech.

It has a proven record of advancing students and is a prime opportunity to develop contacts with faculty and students from other universities, says HDFS Associate Professor **Francesca Adler-Baeder**, who helped organize the meeting.

For more information on the Quint State Conference, visit the HDFS Web site at www.quinstatate.org or contact Philip Thorsen at thorspe@auburn.edu.

College of Veterinary Medicine

Tim Boosinger, Dean

334-844-4546

www.vetmed.auburn.edu



Southeastern Raptor Center Announces Fall '08 Programs

The Southeastern Raptor Center at the College of Veterinary Medicine will host educational birds-in-flight raptor programs on Fridays this fall before home football games.

The programs, “Eagles, Owls and Other Critters,” are scheduled for Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 19 and 26, Oct. 10 and Nov. 7 and 14. Each show will begin at 4 p.m. in the 350-seat Edgar B. Carter Educational Amphitheater on Raptor Road just off Shug Jordan Parkway.

Tickets will be available at the raptor center gate for \$5 each, payable only by check to the Southeastern Raptor Center. Cash cannot be accepted. Tickets are \$3 a person for school groups, which should call ahead. Children under 3 years old are admitted free. More information about the programs or about arranging an educational program for a school or group is available by calling 334-844-6943.

AU Boshell Diabetes Research Day Draws Top Scientists

Auburn University hosted its first annual Boshell Diabetes Research Day in March featuring some of the nation's top diabetes researchers. Auburn faculty presented their research as did guests from the University of Texas, University of Alabama, Birmingham and Vanderbilt.

Twenty-one AU faculty are part of Auburn's Boshell Diabetes and Metabolic Diseases Research Program that was established by the Diabetes Trust Fund in 2003 to honor the late Buris R. Boshell, a 1947 AU agriculture graduate who attended the AU veterinary college for two years before transferring to Harvard Medical School.

At Auburn, funds generated by the Boshell endowment enhance the university's research efforts to improve the lives of people and pets, which are also susceptible to diabetes, through investigation into the causes and treatment of diabetes and other metabolic diseases.

College of Sciences & Mathematics

Stewart W. Schneller, Dean

334-844-5737

www.auburn.edu/cosam



DIGGING IN—Numerous people pitched in earlier this year to help plant a bigleaf magnolia (top photo) in the Donald Davis Arboretum in honor of the late George Folkerts, pictured above, with the blooms of a bigleaf.

Folkerts Honored with Academic Freedom Award

The late **George Folkerts**, a professor for 38 years in the College of Sciences and Mathematics who died suddenly in December 2007, was recently twice honored – once with a tree planting in the Donald Davis Arboretum in February and again with the American Association of University Professors' Academic Freedom Award in March.

Folkerts earned a bachelor's degree in zoology and a master's degree in botany from Southern Illinois University and a Ph.D. in herpetology from Auburn University. During his career as a teacher and researcher, Folkerts studied every aspect of nature. He had a comprehensive knowledge of plants, invertebrates and vertebrates inhabiting the Southeast and was a renowned expert in the ecology of disappearing habitat types and declining species. Part of his legacy was his being honored by having multiple native species named after him.

In the late 1990s, Folkerts led a successful effort to preserve AU's Davis Arboretum, which resulted in the art museum being built on South College. A big-leaf magnolia was planted in the arboretum in February in honor of his efforts to save the arboretum. And that effort was cited as a primary reason for the AAUP Academic Freedom Award.



School of Forestry & Wildlife Sciences

Richard Brinker, Dean

334-844-1007

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DRUMMOND AWARD WINNERS—Two School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences students were recently honored with Drummond Company awards. Chelsea Nag, left, a master's student in forestry and Wei Ren, right, a doctoral student in forestry both received the Drummond Company Award. Ren also won the SFWS Outstanding International Student award. Pictured with Nagy and Ren is David Carroll, a representative of the Drummond family and SFWS alumni president.

SFWS Graduate Students Shine at Symposium

Several graduate students from the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences were shining in March during the annual AU Graduate Research Forum held on the AU campus.

Among the participants were forestry graduate students **Felipe Casarim**, who presented on sediment sources and dynamics within southeastern coastal plain riparian forests; **George Matusick**, whose presentation addressed southern pine root inoculation with various *Leptographium* species; **James Zanzot**, whose presentation on ecological and molecular data suggest *Leptographium serpens* is a recent introduction into the southeastern United States; **Jody Thompson**, who reported on a study looking at the effects of thinning and fertilization on the population dynamics of bark beetles in loblolly pine stands; **Jacob Thompson**, who presented on evaluation of forest stand health in association with biomass removal and standard silvicultural practices; and **David Dyson**, who presented on longleaf pine seedling growth in response to light and moisture under varying canopy densities.

Wildlife students who participated included **Eva Kristofik**, who presented on the distribution of bats and their habitat selection based on land-cover types and landscape characteristics in Alabama forests; **Alan Hitch**, whose work looked at whether avian habitat relationships estimated from remotely sensed data are applicable on a regional scale; **Carrie Johnson**, whose work focused on predicting the occurrence of brown-headed cowbirds in northeastern Alabama; and **Phil Damm**, who presented on modeling differences in detectability for trail cameras.

HAPPY MOMENT—R. Oneal “Smitty” Smitherman was honored recently with a W. Kelly Mosley Environmental Award for his work in preserving and protecting Alabama's native azaleas. The presentation was made at the College of Sciences and Mathematics' Donald Davis Arboretum on the AU campus, where Smitherman has helped establish native azaleas in the arboretum boundaries. The award, given by the Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, recognizes individual achievements in promoting the wise use of renewable natural resources. Pictured with Smitherman at the awards ceremony is his wife, Patsy.

Erosion Project in Progress at E.V. Smith Research Center

Ground has been broken on a new erosion-related project at the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station's E.V. Smith Research Center in Shorter that involves collaboration among Auburn University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and several other groups interested in protecting Alabama's soil and water resources.

The project involves establishing research and demonstration plots at E.V. Smith. Plots will evaluate vegetation and other treatments to control erosion. Work to set up the plots began in March 2008 following archeological investigations in the area to ensure no historical sites were disturbed in the process.

The project is located on a 200-foot long hill with a steep 4:1 slope, and has been established with up to 21 plots that will be planted with different types of grasses and ground cover vegetation. Runoff water and sediment loss, among other indicators, will be monitored to see how the vegetation affects soil loss and water quality. The researchers, who include scientists from the AU departments of Biosystems Engineering, Agronomy and Soils, Civil Engineering, Landscape Architecture and the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences will determine the effectiveness of biological, mechanical and chemical techniques used for establishing long-term vegetative cover on disturbed slopes with natural rainfall.

Ultimately the project will identify and demonstrate the best techniques for permanent grass establishment, mitigation of soil loss and reduction of storm and nutrient runoff to the environment. The project has been supported through a grant from Alabama Ag Initiatives and has received support from USDA-NRCS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, the Alabama Department of Transportation and local contractors interested in improving site development techniques on steep-sided slopes.



CREATING A SLOPE—Work has begun on a new study area at E.V. Smith Research Center in Shorter to identify ways to better control erosion and water runoff on steep slopes, which will help farmers, road builders and contractors protect soil and water while also developing land.

Web Page Provides New Resource for Researchers

Faculty members in the College of Agriculture and other AU schools and colleges who have Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station appointments have a new resource at their fingertips, thanks in large part to the efforts of John Liu, the newly appointed College of Agriculture associate dean for research and assistant AAES director.

Under Liu's guidance, a Web page has been added to the college and AAES Web sites that offers quick access to funding programs and opportunities. That site, www.aaes.auburn.edu/funding/, provides details on funding sources and application forms for programs as well as links on how to develop grant proposals.

Faculty who are looking for more research resources are encouraged to visit the page and learn more about ways to fund their science.

AAES Personnel Changes Announced

Last year brought some personnel changes among employees at some of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station's research units located across the state.

Jarrold Jones has been named associate director at the Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center in Fairhope and **Gene Pegues** is the new associate director at the Blackbelt Research and Extension Center in Marion Junction. **Drew Schrimsher** was hired at the Tennessee Valley Research and Extension Center in Belle Mina as an agricultural technician.

Julia Huff has also come on board as a safety and health specialist. She is located on the AU campus and works with researchers on the AU campus as well as with the outlying units.

The AAES outlying research units are vital centers of scientific study and community involvement throughout Alabama. For more information about these units, visit www.ag.auburn.edu/aaes/outlyingunits/.

Research Briefs

Immigration Reform and Weed Control

Roundup[®] is a potent, nonselective herbicide that's highly effective at wiping out weeds—and basically all other plant life it touches.

In his almost three decades as an AU horticulturist and AAES scientist, Charles Gilliam has never advised nurseries to use Roundup to control noxious weeds that plague their ornamental crops.

But what if sweeping immigration reform occurs, and the extensive affordable labor force that the nursery industry has relied on to manually weed their container-grown crops literally disappears?

That distinct possibility has Gilliam thinking far outside the box on weed control. At test sites in Auburn and at the AAES's Ornamental Horticulture Research Center in Mobile, Gilliam is spraying Roundup at varying strengths over a broad range of nursery crops.

His goal is to determine if there is a rate at which the nonselective herbicide could be applied on certain species at certain stages of development without damaging the plants and sacrificing quality.

Several widely grown nursery crops have shown remarkable tolerance to Roundup, and many other species, though they suffer foliar burn initially, fully rebound, putting on healthy new growth and thriving.

Gilliam is creating a database detailing his findings—not as a standard guide for producers, but as an emergency resource for growers facing serious weed infestations and a nonexistent workforce.

Maximizing Profits on Switchgrass

The case for growing switchgrass as a biomass energy crop got another major boost in January when the National Academy of Science reported not only that the native perennial prairie grass produces five times more renewable energy than the energy it takes to produce the crop but also that it offers substantial environmental benefits over conventional fuel.

For farmers, switchgrass has strong profit potential. It is high-yielding—up to 15 tons of dry biomass harvested per acre on some AAES test plots, with a six-year per-acre average of 11.5 tons. It is also naturally resistant to many pests and diseases, hence less need for chemicals, and it's highly tolerant of drought, floods and poor soils.

But in a new AAES-funded study, a trio of AU agronomists and soil scientists intend to unearth key information that will help growers get the most bang for the least buck on their switchgrass crops.

In the first phase of the three-year project, Edzard van Santen, Wes Wood and Charles Mitchell will be analyzing the amounts of key nutrients—primarily nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium—that are removed

from the soil when switchgrass is harvested. Using that information, the researchers will establish solid soil fertilization recommendations producers can rely on to maximize their profitability.

The study's focus then will shift to genetics and a search for switchgrass varieties that have superior yields and minimal nutrient requirements. Such information will lay the groundwork for a switchgrass breeding program.

The switchgrass test plots will be located at the AAES's agricultural research centers in Winfield and Brewton.

Something's Fishy with Delta Bass

Fishing is good in the Mobile-Tensaw River Delta, especially if you're angling for largemouth bass. They are there in abundance.

But Delta bass are different. They don't get big (five-pounders and any over 15 inches are rare); they start reproducing far earlier than other bass; they don't live as long as largemouths elsewhere; and they're shaped like footballs.

Anglers' concerns over the size of Delta bass prompted AU fisheries ecologists Rusty Wright and Dennis DeVries to launch an investigation six years ago. The study is ongoing, but so far, they've found that Delta bass differ genetically from other largemouths, probably due to coasts of isolation from bass outside the Delta.

The genetic differences may explain why, compared to other bass, the Deltas are shorter, fatter and thicker in the middle. Easy access to saltwater shrimp and crabs in the brackish waters near Mobile Bay probably doesn't hurt, either.

Keeping the Yolks Out

Let just a smidgen of egg yolk drop into your egg whites, and you can dash any plans to whip those whites into soft, glossy peaks. The fat in that tiny bit of yolk is enough to reduce the foaming ability of the whites.

In egg-processing plants, clean separation of whites from yolks is a top priority. Every batch of whites must be tested for yolk contamination; any level over 0.05 percent is unacceptable.

But the current methods available to the industry for measuring yolk contamination are unreliable, laborious and time-consuming; they lack the sensitivity to read below that 0.05 percent upper limit; and they require costly equipment that is expensive to maintain.

Clearly, what the industry needs is a rapid, simple, accurate and inexpensive option.

Thanks to AU poultry scientist Wallace Berry, they soon will have that—and more, because the assay Berry is developing and for which he has applied for a provisional patent can detect yolk contamination at less than 0.01 percent.

In technical terms, Berry's new method—which he's now adapting for industrial settings—uses a yolk marker protein to detect the presence of yolk in egg whites.

Current methods measure yolk lipids, or fats.

Berry expects the new procedure to be licensed to a third party and marketed to the industry, with royalties from sales accruing to AU, the College of Agriculture and the Department of Poultry Science.

AU Lotus Researchers Test the Waters For Putting Aquatic Plant on the Market

By Jamie Creamer

An Auburn University research and outreach project that scientists launched in 2001 moved from the laboratory into the mainstream market in mid-April when, for the first time ever, gardeners in some parts of the U.S. had the opportunity to buy spectacular lotuses, already in bloom.

Lotuses—ancient aquatic perennial plants that are native to China and that have been used for centuries throughout the world for food, medicinal and ornamental purposes—normally don't start flowering until late May. But using data from Auburn-led research on lotus as an alternative crop for Alabama farmers, an AU horticulture grad at his south Alabama nursery has manipulated temperatures and lighting conditions in four lotus greenhouses and conned 4,500 lotuses into blooming early.

"What we have done is show that you can 'force' lotuses to bloom early and have them in garden centers during their peak sales season," says Ken Tilt, AU horticulture professor and leader of the lotus research team.

And in the select northern states where the Stevensburg, Va.-based wholesale aquatic plants nursery that ordered this debut crop chose to distribute the 4,500 lotuses, retailers sold the containerized plants as fast as they could unload them from the delivery trucks. The wholesaler, Moerings-USA, already has doubled its order for next year.

"Things are moving a little more quickly than we had expected, but it's going great," says Tilt, who launched the AU lotus project seven years ago after a visit to the Wuhan Botanical Gardens, China's lotus central. The project's mission: to explore the possibility of growing lotus in the Southeast, particularly in Alabama's Black Belt region as a potential double-cropping option for west Alabama fish farmers.

"The environmental conditions to grow lotus are the same as those to produce fish in ponds," Tilt said. "Edible and ornamental lotus production in association with aquaculture farms has the potential to increase the economic revenue from fish ponds, diversify farm production and make fish farm operation more economically sustainable."

Sizing up the cultivars

In studies based at Auburn and at Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station research and extension centers in Cullman and Mobile, Tilt and his team have evaluated more than 100 small "teacup" lotus cultivars and several large cultivars for potential production in Alabama. Focusing on the top performers in those evaluations, and on the cultivars that Alabama Master Gardeners have voted "the best of the best," the team has developed best management and production practices for lotus.

This time a year ago, Tilt would have told you the team had two to three more years of research on lotus production, economics and marketing potential before introducing the plant to the marketplace. But those plans changed in mid-2007, when AU lotus team member and horticulture doctoral candidate Warner Orozco-Obando gave an enthusiastic presentation on the AU research at an aquatic plants conference in Thailand.

In the audience was Oscar Warmerdam, owner and president of Moerings-USA, and he liked what he heard. In fact, Moerings specializes in sales and marketing of aquatic plants, and Warmerdam wanted to be able to offer flowering lotuses to his retail customers in time for their frenzied spring sales season—their 2008 spring sales season.

Tilt approached Bill Bancroft of Ten Mile Creek Nursery in Hartford about producing the lotuses for Moerings "because Bill, an AU horticulture graduate and early student worker on the project, was familiar with the lotus research. The Bancrofts are also catfish and tilapia producers, which would give us the opportunity to evaluate the feasibility of double-cropping," Tilt says.



"What we have done is show that you can 'force' lotuses to bloom early and have them in garden centers during their peak sales season."



TEAM EFFORT—At right, Ken Tilt, left, and Bill Bancroft review research data in one of Bancroft's four lotus greenhouses amidst hundreds of containers holding just-planted lotus tubers. Above, an early-blooming lotus is ready for the market.

An eager participant

Bancroft, who tends to specialize in unusual nursery crops—e.g., sea oats for the nearby coastal market—jumped at the chance to be a player in this trial run for lotuses. Just weeks into 2008, he received crate loads of dormant lotus tubers from China and immediately planted them in the 4,500 soil- and water-filled pots packed into the four greenhouses he built specifically for the lotus venture.

Those greenhouses are equipped with sensors and monitors to record data that the Auburn scientists will use to identify the best cultivars for Alabama's growing conditions and to increase production efficiency. Bancroft is also keeping detailed time and financial records so that agricultural economists at AU can fully analyze the economics of lotus production.

Bancroft shipped the first truckload of 800 early-blooming Alabama lotuses to Moerings in mid-April, with more following in intervals. While the researchers continue to gather data from year one of Alabama lotuses, they continue to investigate other uses for the plants. Given that all parts of the Chinese and the native lotuses, from seed pods to roots, are edible and are staple food items in many cultures, horticulture Ph.D. student C.J. McGrath is attempting to gauge Americans' willingness to add this delicious and nutritious

News from the College of Agriculture's Student Services program. For more information on these stories or on educational opportunities in the College, contact Don Mulvaney, coordinator of leadership and student development, or Dave Williams, interim associate dean for instruction, at 334-844-2345 or visit www.ag.auburn.edu.

Spring Break in the Southern High Plains

Seventeen Department of Animal Sciences undergraduate students from Auburn University and three departmental faculty members spent Spring Break week in the Southern High Plains studying beef and dairy cattle production systems.

"This area of the country is a tremendous laboratory to study these major animal agriculture industries," says Wayne Greene, animal sciences department head. He notes that this region produces approximately 35 percent of the nation's beef and 10 percent of the nation's milk.

Activities for the trip included a tour (led by Keith Lusby, department head of animal science at the University of Arkansas) of Pendergrass Farm stocker cattle farm in Clarksville, Ark., a six-generation family farm. They also participated in a shortcourse on beef and dairy cattle, led by scientists from the USDA-ARS Research and Conservation Laboratory, Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center, Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory and West Texas A&M University.

Students also visited the corporate headquarters of a major cattle feeding company and learned about corporate operations from the company's head nutritionist and veterinarian. The group was also hosted one day by Texas Cattle Feeders Association where they learned about the association and how it serves the cattle industry.

During the trip, students had the opportunity to see Alabama cattle on feed in the Texas panhandle and discuss the performance of these cattle with the feed yard manager/owner Robbie Kirkland of Kirkland Cattle Company. Kirkland's feed yard houses approximately 20,000 cattle and was a good laboratory for studying the operation and management of a privately owned feed yard.

Steve Martin, a 1987 AU animal sciences graduate and now a private dairy nutrition consultant, led the students through a 3,200-cow dairy that milked 24 hours per day in three eight-hour shifts. The students learned about feed production and acquisition, dry cow and lactating cow management, and calf rearing.

Throughout the six-day trip, which required the students and faculty to start their days at 6:30 a.m. and keep going till 10 p.m. or later each evening, students were constantly reminded that knowledge of business, science, personnel management and the many other areas of expertise are needed to make such vast industries work.

For the students, the trip was an eye-opening experience.

"I grew up on a small cow-calf operation," said student Brandon Smith as he toured the Randall County feed yard, a 250-acre corporate feed yard owned and operated by Friona Industries. For almost as far as the eye could see was pen after pen of cattle being fed for Ranchers Registry Beef. "Never in my life did I think that I would see that many cattle in one confined area. It was truly an amazing experience."

Another student, Cody Horton, said the trip provided a perspective on the global impact of agriculture. "This is one of the most valuable moments of my college career thus far. I can now see how all production systems fit together," Horton said.

For student Cameron White, the trip offered an invaluable behind-the-scenes look at the beef and dairy industries and illustrated the hard work and effort this profession requires. Student Emily Owen was intrigued by the business side of the cattle industry. "I never knew there were jobs in the industry that require a suit and tie in lieu of boots and jeans," she said.

Another student, Jeremy Deaton, thought the trip helped them see what they had been studying in class and provided networking opportunities that may help students pick career paths. Tyler Doty commented that, "you can't be taught what we experienced and learned this week in any classroom. Observing these industries first hand was a tremendous learning experience."

Student Amanda Harbison said that the trip allowed her to learn new information that she can take back to her family farm.



CADILLAC RANCH—The 17 AU animal sciences students who spent spring break on a tour of Texas cattle country also stopped for a little sight-seeing along the way. They are pictured here at the Cadillac Ranch, an art attraction along historic Route 66 near Amarillo, Tex.



ON-SITE LEARNING—Students on the Department of Animal Sciences spring break tour were able to see Texas-sized cattle operations first hand and hear from many professionals during their trip. Among the speakers was N. Andy Cole, left, a research scientist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service in Bushland, Tex.

At the end of the trip, as the bus rolled back into Alabama, student Christi Chesnut said, "Talking to cattlemen in the 'Cattle Feeding Capital of the World' and finding out what they look for when purchasing cattle was extremely educational. This experience will help us all become more productive animal scientists."

According to Greene, that kind of statement shows that this trip was a huge success. "I am proud of the enthusiasm these students have for learning," he says. "By the way they interacted with our hosts, their questions and the discussions, I know these students are going to be our industry leaders in the future. We are in good hands."



MINDING THE GRIND—Danny Johns, an AU student majoring in meat science and an employee at the Lambert-Powell Meat Laboratory, shows students participating in the Beef Excellence Education for You (BEEF U) program which drew approximately 150 youth on campus with many of their parents.



BEEF U TEAM—A dream team of workers helped make BEEF U a huge success. Those who helped included: front row, from left, Danny Johns, Katie McMurtrie, Cobie Rutherford, John Starnes and Lindsay Graber; second row, from left, Bob Ebert, Erin Hunter, Abby Crow, Mindy Hittle, Christy Bratcher, Lilly Sledge and Lisa Kriese-Anderson; and third row, from left, Barney Wilborn, Clint Rowe, Kyle Grubbs, Chris Kerth, Suzanne Free, Ricky Colquitt, Kent Stanford and Josh Elmore.

Ag Week 2008



AG WEEK PROCLAIMED—AU President Jay Gogue, seated at left, signs a proclamation designating April 6-12 as AU Ag Week 2008 while USDA Undersecretary Gale Buchanan looks on along with, standing from left, Ag Council adviser Don Mulvaney, Ag Council President Erin Hunter and Ag Council Vice President Kim Cline.



HARDEE AWARD WINNER—Erin Hunter, center, president of Ag Council, was the 2008 recipient of the Joel Daniel Hardee Memorial Award in Agriculture, which is given every year to the outgoing Ag Council president. Pictured with Hunter are members of the Hardee family, who established the award in 2005 in honor of Joel Hardee, who had been a student officer in the College of Ag.



AG OLYMPICS—The Ag Olympics was one of several activities held during 2008's Ag Week festivities. This competition—fence post pounding—had Jeremy Green, left, competing against Robert Hardy, right, as Ashley Jones cheered them on. Other special events held during Ag Week included a picnic lunch, barn dance, Contemporary Ag Program speaker and much more.



FEEDING TIME—A College of Ag student serves up some hush puppies during the Ag Hill Picnic, held in April as part of AU Ag Week.

A New Paradigm for Agriculture: Gale Buchanan Speaks to College of Ag Students

By Deborah Solie
Student Services Coordinator

Agriculture has been defined traditionally by six F's—food, feed, fiber, flowers, fins and feather—according to Gale Buchanan, undersecretary for the United States Department of Agriculture and former director of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station and dean of research for the College of Agriculture in the 1980s. But the addition of a seventh F to the list—fuel—has created a new paradigm for agriculture.

Hosted by the College of Agriculture on April 7 during Ag Week and sponsored by the Ag Student Council, Buchanan spoke to a large crowd of students, faculty, staff and members of the community about this new paradigm and how it will affect their future in the industry.

"We must achieve sustainable energy security," said Buchanan. "Think of energy as food. If every time we ate a meal, that food was gone and could not be replaced, we'd be in trouble. But we've made food sustainable and we must do the same for fuel."

Buchanan went on to speak about other challenges facing the agricultural industry: water supply, global climate change and improving human nutrition.



CAP Speaker—USDA Undersecretary Gale Buchanan, a former administrator at Auburn, spoke to College of Ag students during Ag Week in April.

"Agriculture is the single largest user of water," said Buchanan. "Sixty-two million acres, or 18 percent of crop land, is irrigated. By 2029, freshwater demand is expected to double."

These challenges can appear daunting for many, but according to Buchanan, they mean the future for agriculture is bright. Graduates from colleges of agriculture across the United States will be meeting these challenges by developing new technologies and new crop varieties and creating new products to meet the requirements of a growing population.

"Not since 1862 have land-grant universities had such challenges," said Buchanan. "We are poised on the brink of the most important challenges that have ever faced mankind."

Buchanan's speech was part of the annual Contemporary Agriculture Program, which features industry leaders speaking on issues that affect today's agriculture and the future.

This year's CAP speaker was selected and hosted by Ag Student Council president Erin Hunter, senior in animal sciences; vice-president Kim Cline, senior in animal sciences; and the council's adviser, Donald Mulvaney, professor in animal sciences and College of Agriculture leadership development coordinator.

"Students in the college are committed to meeting the challenges outlined in Dr. Buchanan's lecture," said Hunter. "We wanted to let everyone in the university and surrounding community know how important agriculture is and will be in the future."

To hear all of Buchanan's lecture, listen to his podcast at www.ag.auburn.edu.

Information on the College of Agriculture's alumni and development programs. For more information on becoming a donor, contact the College of Agriculture's Development Office at 334-844-1475. For more information on our alumni programs contact 334-844-3204.



Eddie C. Burt

Burt Named Biosystems Outstanding Alumnus for 2008

Eddie C. Burt, whose efforts during his career made profound impacts on the ability of engineers to design machines and tools that conserve energy while maintaining the optimal conditions for plant growth in our soil, was selected as the Outstanding Graduate from Biosystems Engineering for 2008.

Burt received his Ph.D. from the AU biosystems engineering department (then known as agricultural engineering) in 1973 and devoted his career to improving understanding of the interaction between machines and the soil. He worked as a research agricultural engineer with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service his entire 38-year career, much of which he spent at the National Soil Dynamics Laboratory in Auburn where he served as research engineer and research leader. While at the laboratory, he studied the fundamental behaviors of traction and soil compaction, and his research led to new theories on the mechanics of wheels operating on soil and the effects of dynamic load and inflation pressure on the performance of off-highway vehicle tires.

Burt also led the development of new testing systems for measuring the magnitude and direction of normal and tangential stresses at the soil-tire interface of pneumatic tractor tires. His research identified the causes for a problem known as power hop, which can reduce the performance of four-wheel-drive tractors with radial-ply tires, and he led projects that uncovered new methods of reducing energy requirements for tillage equipment. The results of his work provided the fundamental engineering knowledge used in the development of Caterpillar's groundbreaking Challenger series tractors that were equipped with rubber tracks along with the development of other four-wheel-drive agricultural tractors.

During his career, Burt authored more than 150 publications and provided leadership to numerous technical and professional organizations. He is a Fellow in the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers.

Pursell Wins Lifetime Achievement Award

James T. Pursell, who graduated from Auburn in 1952 with a degree in business but has spent his life involved in agricultural industries, is one of four AU alumni to receive the AU Alumni Association's highest honor—a 2008 Lifetime Achievement award.

Pursell began his career at Sylacauga Fertilizer Company, which under his leadership grew into one of the largest manufacturers of controlled-release fertilizers in the world.

Pursell was inducted into the Alabama Agricultural Alumni Association's Hall of Honor in 2007. In addition to his work in the fertilizer business, Pursell also helped establish Pursell Farms, a 3,000-acre site in Sylacauga, and, in 2001, FarmLinks, an 18-hole golf course featured as the world's first research and demonstration course.



GIVING THE GREEN LIGHT—Tom Beatty, a long-time supporter of the College of Agriculture and member of the AU Agricultural Alumni Association, gives golfers at the 2007 Ag Classic a list of the tournament rules before they hit the greens. This year's tournament will be held May 21-22.

11th Annual Ag Classic Proceeds Designated for AU Dairy Barn

Proceeds from this year's 11th annual Ag Classic, which was held May 21-22 in Auburn, have not yet been tallied but once they are, the monies will be used to renovate and rebuild the former AU Dairy Barn at Ag Heritage Park.

Located on Samford Avenue on a site that is now the gateway to Ag Heritage Park, the Dairy Barn functioned as part of the university's dairy until 1985. It was then used for teaching purposes through the 1990s and as an informal gathering spot for tailgating in the early 2000s until concerns about its structural safety forced its closing for public events. The project's goal is to transform the Dairy Barn into a facility that will increase the visibility of Ag Heritage Park, further establish the park's presence on the AU Campus and provide a venue for telling the story of agriculture at AU and throughout Alabama.

Ag Classic is an annual event that includes golfing, skeet shooting and fishing competitions along with a social, dinner and auction.

For more information on Ag Classic, contact Katie Hardy at 334-844-1475 or hardyk@auburn.edu or visit www.ag.auburn.edu/agclassic. And watch for a list of winners and a report on how much money was raised for the Dairy Barn in the next issue of Ag Illustrated.

Oakes Wins NRCS Engineer of the Year Honors



AND THE WINNER IS — Perry Oakes, second from left, recently received the NRCS Engineer of the Year award at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., honoring engineers throughout the federal government.

Perry Oakes, state conservation engineer with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Alabama and a College of Ag graduate, was recently named NRCS Engineer of the Year and was among the top 10 candidates for the overall Federal Engineer of the Year award, selected from federal employees from 33 federal agencies. The presentation was made in February at the National Society of Professional Engineers Federal Engineer of the Year banquet at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

Oakes, who lives in Auburn, graduated from the Department of Biosystems Engineering (then the Department of Agricultural Engineering) with a bachelor's degree in 1978 and a master's degree in 1982.

Oakes was praised for providing outstanding leadership to the NRCS Engineering program in Alabama. He helped develop the Alabama Handbook for Erosion Control, Sediment Control and Stormwater Management on Construction Sites and Urban Areas.

He has served in many state-wide voluntary leadership roles including service as chair of the Alabama Interagency Waste Management team, consisting of some 50 members who convene to further innovation in this arena. He co-authored the Animal Feeding Operation Rule for the State of Alabama, served as environmental advisor to the Alabama Poultry and Egg Association and co-authored draft language for an Alabama Safe Dams Act to improve public safety through regulation of high hazard dams.



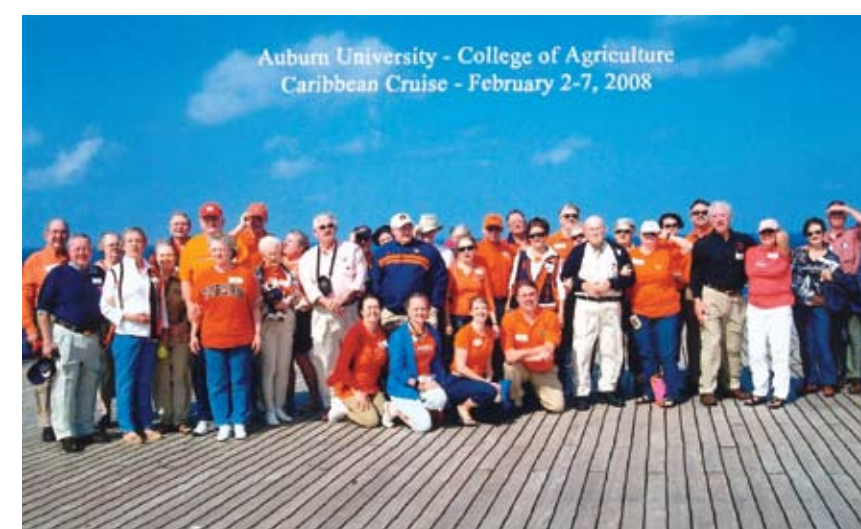
AU HOMECOMING—Current agricultural economics faculty member Henry Kinnucan, left, chats with Sheldon Williams during Williams' recent visit to Auburn. Looking on is ag econ senior Bart Smith.

Former Professor Returns to the Plains

Agricultural economics and rural sociology faculty members welcomed a special guest to Comer Hall in March when 96-year-old Sheldon Williams made a long-overdue homecoming to the institution where, from 1947 to 1952, he served on the ag econ faculty.

Williams, who was the department's first faculty member to hold a Ph.D., left Auburn in 1952 for the University of Illinois, not because he was dissatisfied at Auburn, but because Illinois offered totally free tuition for faculty members' children, and he had eight.

His stop at AU was arranged by Williams' son-in-law, William "Bear" Blackmon, who says that every spring when he drives Williams from his winter home in Bradenton, Fla., to his permanent address in Urbana, Ill., "he always lights up like a Christmas tree when we get near Auburn and talks about how much he loved it here." So this year, Blackmon decided to schedule an overnight stop in Auburn. Kelley Terry, special projects coordinator in the Dean's Office, put together a visit that included the reception in Comer and a tour of Ag Heritage Park.



CRUISIN' FOR A CAUSE—It's no coincidence that most of these folks donned orange and blue for the group photo taken of them aboard Carnival Cruise Line's Holiday Ship. They're all big Auburn fans—specifically, 46 AU College of Agriculture alumni and friends who enjoyed five glorious and affordable days at sea as participants in the college's first-ever Caribbean cruise for a cause. Not only did they get great prices, but a portion of their fare—along with matching dollars from Carnival—came back to the College of Ag for scholarship support. The Feb. 2-7 cruise, which set sail from Mobile, included stops at Cozumel and Progreso. The \$2,547 generated for the college will be awarded as a scholarship to an outstanding student for the 2008-09 school year.

In Memorium

Joseph D. Norton, 80, of Auburn died Jan. 28 in Auburn. Norton was born Oct. 14, 1927, in Flat Rock. He was a retired lieutenant colonel in the Army-Air Corp and the Army-Air Force Reserves and a retired professor in the AU Department of Horticulture. Known internationally for his work developing new varieties of watermelons, plums and other fruits, Norton is survived by his wife, Evelyn Norton; his son, Michael W. Norton; his brother Jesse Norton; his granddaughter, Carlye Sussannah Norton; and several nieces and nephews.



Joseph D. Norton
1927—2008



FISH FACTS—Teachers who participated in the 2007 Ag in the Classroom Summer Institute learned about the details of catfish and the catfish industry.

Ag in the Classroom Summer Institute Planned for June

Summertime means vacation time for many elementary school teachers in Alabama, but Agriculture in the Classroom offers teachers an opportunity to work a few days this summer to improve their teaching skills and take new ideas back to their classrooms next fall. The annual Summer Institute workshop is scheduled for June 17—19 at the Huntsville Marriott.

The purpose of the Ag in the Classroom Summer Institute is to provide teachers with innovative materials and teaching strategies that increase student knowledge of the nutritional and economic importance of the food and fiber systems in their daily lives. Activities incorporate language arts, science, social studies, and mathematics skills as well as those found in the Alabama courses of study and on the Stanford 9 Test.

The first and last days of the workshop are spent in indoor workshops. During those workshops several hands-on activities are given to emphasize the importance of agriculture. This year the guest speaker will be Mary Ann Kelsey who coordinates Oklahoma's Ag in the Classroom program. Teachers will receive Accelerated Reader books, videos and several other free items for their classroom.

Jennifer Collins, who teaches first grade at Webster Elementary School in Muscle Shoals in Colbert County, said the institute was the best in-service program for teachers she's ever attended.

"Everything was interesting, and I learned a lot that I can actually take back and use in my classroom," she said. "We did a session on making a pig from a plastic jug. My class already does a lot of things with Charlotte's Web, so that will be a really neat activity to incorporate in my classroom."

Jean Wyatt, a first-year, third-grade teacher from Centre Elementary in Cherokee County said the make-and-take workshops definitely are something she will use in her classroom next year.

"Since I've only been teaching one year, the make-and-take sessions will be very valuable. I especially liked the one involving the water cycle. That's something I can definitely use in my classroom. We also learned about different crops like cotton and soybeans, what they're used for and ways they're incorporated into our everyday lives. As a young teacher, I appreciate all the materials and ideas that I can take back and make my classroom more interesting. When students are interested, they learn more."

Alabama Farmers Federation Women's Division Director Kim Earwood is chairman of Alabama Agriculture in the Classroom. "In addition to the workshops, teachers loved the farm tours," Earwood said. "In addition to taking ideas back to their classrooms, I think they now have a genuine appreciation for our farmers and the jobs they do. Plus, I think the farmers we visited with are excited about teachers using agriculture as a way to teach science, math and other courses."

Going to the Dogs: New Student Club Focusing on the Beauty of Hounds

AU students, faculty, staff and even local residents are going to the dogs these days, but in a very good way.

They are doing it through a new organization – The Auburn University Houndsman's Club, a newly formed group interested in fostering understanding and appreciation for sporting hounds of all types.

Houndsman's Club members hold a formal meeting once a month, typically with a guest speaker. In between meetings, members organize demonstrations intended to showcase the abilities of one or more of the various hound types.

Topics of interest to the club members include (but are not limited to) discussion and demonstration of distinguishing breed characteristics, the science of scenting, training techniques, working in packs and safety in the field.

According to Walt Cheatham, president of the club and a senior in forestry and wildlife sciences, hunting with hounds is an ancient tradition. "The Crusaders, on their way to conquer the Holy Land, took packs of hunting hounds along to pursue the varieties of game between Europe and Jerusalem," says Cheatham.

"The passion to hunt with man's best friend crossed the Atlantic to the New World. George Washington brought hounds to Virginia to pursue the fox, and part of the relationship Washington formed with Marquis de Lafayette included the exchange of several of the Marguis's staghounds from France."

While that passion for hunting with dogs still remains strong in the United States, many young hound enthusiasts leave their dogs behind when they head off to college. Cheatham and his fellow club members want to help support students with hounds and encourage others to learn more about them.

"College is a time for broadening horizons and exposures to new, unknown experiences," says Cheatham. He says the Houndsman's Club was formed when sev-



HOT BUT HAPPY—These beagles, which belong to School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences professor Graeme Lockaby, enjoyed a run in the woods during a Houndsman's Club outing.

eral Auburn students recognized all of this and decided to do something about it."

With that goal in mind, The Houndsman's Club is a place where people with coonhounds, beagles and any other kind of hound can come together. The Houndsman's Club also strives to expose hound hunting as well as new forms of hunting with dogs to its members, so as often as possible the club is in the woods with one form of hound or another.

The Houndsman's Club, which just began in 2007, spent its first year primarily getting on its feet. Now that it is established, Cheatham says they hope to organize

a field trial or two for coonhounds and beagles in the coming year.

"Of course the reason we are together is to have a good time with our hounds, so in the coming year we will include many more chances to do so," he adds.

Cheatham notes that many of the club's members are students in the College of Agriculture, but he adds that membership is open to all students, regardless of their major, and to faculty and local townspeople. To learn more about the Houndsman's Club, visit <http://houndmen.wordpress.com/> or contact Cheatham at cheatwb@auburn.edu.

Bass Sports Club Casting for the Tigers

Auburn University students who enjoy fishing in their spare time now have a new sports club to pit their angling skills against other schools.

The AU Bass Sports Club, which hosted its first tournament last fall on Lake Guntersville, is hosting three spring tournaments and a championship on north Alabama lakes.

"Bass fishing clubs began about 10 years ago in the Big 10 schools up north," says academic adviser Jann Swaim. "It's now catching on as a club sport across the country. Outdoor sports such as fishing and hunting need to be promoted, because many kids don't spend time outside or don't have the opportunity."

The spring schedule already has included a March tournament on Wheeler Lake in Decatur and an April tournament on Weiss Lake in Centre. The club also will host a May 24 tournament on Wilson Lake in Florence and the championship tournament on June 13-14 at Lake Guntersville in Guntersville.

Ten university clubs have or will join AU in the series, including the University of Alabama, University of Alabama, Birmingham, Faulkner University, Freed-Hardeman University, University of Georgia, University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University, University of Montevallo, University of Tennessee at Knoxville and University of Tennessee at Martin. More than 30 boats are expected in each event.

Teams compete one-on-one during the tournaments, with the matchups determined by draw, while the championship event features all teams competing at once. Swaim adds that monetary prizes are not awarded, just plaques and prizes such as fishing equipment.

Twenty students with a variety of academic majors, including several from the College of Agriculture, make up the current AU Bass Sports Club membership, which is open to all Auburn students regardless of their



TROPHY BASS—Sam Rochell, left, vice president of the AU Bass Sports Club, and teammate Richard Peek show off their catches following a tournament at Wheeler Lake in Decatur.

fishing experience. Each semester, members compete in qualifying tournaments to determine the top six who will represent Auburn in tournaments the following semester. This spring's competitors were determined last fall.

"We are very active as a club, but are very strict and tell them they must keep their grades up and they can only fish on weekends prior to a tournament," Swaim says.

In the tournament last fall on Lake Guntersville, AU students took first and second places among 10 schools, ahead of last year's national champion, Virginia Tech.

Swaim has high hopes that they will do well at the national championship this fall.

For more information about the AU Bass Sports Club, contact Swaim at 334-703-7591 or swaimjb@auburn.edu.

(MOAR, from page 6)

Mrs. Moar teaches fifth grade in the Auburn City Schools System and last year was named elementary teacher of the year at the local and district levels. Stephanie is now a sophomore in graphic design at AU; daughter Shannon is an eighth-grader at Auburn Junior High.

Moar readily admits that he thoroughly enjoys teaching.

The research phase

Front and center in Moar's lab at Auburn is his Bt work in cotton. Since it hit the market in 1996, Bt cotton has been a godsend to producers, saving U.S. growers \$27 billion in the first 10 years alone. Specifically, Moar's expertise is in the development of Bt resistance in major cotton pests, starting with the highly destructive bollworm.

That he is one of the top authorities on Bt technology and resistance prevention was evident when the editors of *Science*, the weekly, peer-reviewed journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, asked Moar to write a "per-

spectives" article on gene pyramiding, the concept of designing Bt proteins to pyramid with other compounds to delay Bt resistance.

In the seven months he is able to devote solely to research, Moar is a globe-trotter, traveling the world to give presentations at conferences and to work on several international research projects in which he is involved, including developing a Bt sweetpotato that repels the vicious sweet potato weevil and helping to develop a Bt cowpea, or black-eyed pea, resistant to the intense insect pressure that plagues West African growers.

And, he holds two Bt-related patents.

"I guess I've just been in the right place at the right time concerning the global interest in Bt," he says.

Moar is passionate about scientific research; but he comes across as being just as passionate about teaching. So, honestly, which does he really prefer?

"Are you kidding?" he says. "You'll never get me to answer that."

CS

Recipe

He says it's "never anything fancy," but probably a couple of times a week when AU entomologist Bill Moar gets home from work, he heads to the kitchen to prepare the evening meal. If he still lived in his native Oregon, Moar likely would treat his family often to Dungeness crab, fresh from the Pacific Ocean.

But since fresh Dungeness crab is not readily available here, Moar has found several recipes which, though they don't taste like fresh crabmeat, could be the next best things. One is for White Chili, a recipe that Judy Simon submitted to the Dean Road Elementary School 1993 PTA Cookbook.

White Chili

- 3-4 chicken breasts, to yield 4 cups cooked, diced chicken
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 (3-lb.) jar Northern beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 (4-oz.) cans chopped mild green chilies
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 3 cups shredded Monterey Jack or Cheddar cheese



Parboil chicken in 6 to 8 cups water until tender. Remove chicken, reserving 6 cups broth. To the broth, add garlic and onion; simmer for 20 minutes. Add beans, chilies and seasoning; simmer for 10 minutes. Dice chicken to yield 4 cups, and add to broth; simmer for 30 more minutes. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle cheese over chili. Serve with cornbread and a salad.



THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER—David Lambert, a former diplomatic appointee to the United Nations World Food Program in Rome and a nationally recognized advocate to end hunger in the U.S. and abroad, visits with Amy Wright, AU horticulture associate professor, at a reception that preceded Lambert's presentation as the College of Agriculture's Spring 2008 York Distinguished Lecturer. In his address, "A World Free of Child Hunger: An Imperative for All," Lambert noted that hunger in America costs Americans \$90 billion annually. The E.T. York Distinguished Lecturer Series was established at Auburn in 1981 with an endowment by E.T. York Jr. and his wife, Vam Cardwell York, both native Alabamians and AU graduates. York was Alabama Cooperative Extension Service director from 1959 until 1962, then served as Federal Extension Service director in Washington, D.C.; University of Florida provost and vice president for agriculture; and chancellor of the State University System of Florida.

AU War on Hunger Campaign Continues to Expand

The Auburn University War on Hunger, which is organized and guided by the AU Committee of 19, helped host the third annual University Hunger Summit held in Washington, D.C., in March and those attending came home motivated to further spread the word about world hunger.

"We found it very informative and educational, not to mention inspiring," says Clark Solomon, a member of the AU Honors College War on Hunger subcommittee who attended the summit. "Hearing all of the speakers and other college students with the same passion was extremely motivating."

The summit, the first two of which were held at AU, is an effort to get more universities and colleges involved in helping alleviate hunger worldwide.

From that summit inspiration has sprung several new projects that the Honors College subcommittee hopes to implement in the coming months. Included in those plans is an effort to involve local high schools in the War on Hunger campaign through informational programs and canned food drives. They also hope to actively recruit freshmen at AU, particularly those involved in Tiger Tuesdays, to get involved in the AU War on Hunger campaign. "We think that educating freshmen is key to expanding knowledge and involvement on campus," says Solomon.

The group also will work to establish contacts with Alabama's congressional representatives to make them more aware of hunger issues in Alabama, the United States and the world. Finally, they plan to participate in the YouTube World Food Program Commercial Contest. "We already have three commercial ideas," says Solomon.

These are just a few of the projects that the War on Hunger and Committee of 19 are sponsoring. The Auburn University Committee of 19 is a student leadership group created at Auburn in 2004 to help raise awareness of both international and domestic hunger issues.

One project begun by the Committee of 19 last year that will continue this year is the sale of War On Hunger Fair Trade coffee blends, which are available at The Market at Ag Heritage Park (AU's weekly farmers' market), on campus in 210 Spidle Hall or at Whole Foods Market in Birmingham.

For more information on the War on Hunger campaign and the Committee of 19, visit www.auburn.edu/hunger.

calendar of events

June 5

State FFA Meeting

AU Campus

Contact: Deborah Solie at 334-844-8900

June 12

Alabama 4-H Golf Classic

FarmLinks Golf Club

Sylacauga

7 a.m.

This fourth annual Alabama 4-H Golf Classic is held to raise money to support Alabama 4-H youth programs and activities. It is held at FarmLinks Golf Club (www.farmlinksgolfclub.com), an 18-hole championship course. The deadline to register is June 2. Sponsorships also are available. Contact: www.aces.edu and click on the "Golf Classic" link.

June 17—19

Alabama's Ag in the Classroom

Summer Institute 2008

Huntsville

This event helps teachers integrate agriculture into Alabama's teaching standards. Participants take part in workshops and farm tours, learning innovative ways to teach agriculture to their students. Contact: Amy Belcher, Alabama AITC, P.O. Box 3336, Montgomery, AL 36109, 334-240-7126 or www.alabamaaitc.org.

June 25—27

4-H State Congress and Leadership

Conference

Alabama A&M University

Normal

This three-day event is a culmination of 4-H competitive events for senior-level 4-H youth (ages 14-19). Contact: Shannon Andress at 334-844-2232 or andresh@auburn.edu.

July 4

Independence Day Holiday

Aug. 2

Farm, Home and Wildlife Expo

Chilton Research and Extension Center

Clanton, Alabama

12—5 p.m.; Dinner at 5 p.m.

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

Aug. 9

Summer Graduation Breakfast

Ham Wilson Arena

Auburn University

Auburn

Summer 2008 College of Agriculture graduates and their families are honored at this breakfast hosted by the AU Agricultural Alumni Association and sponsored by the Alabama Poultry and Egg Association. Contact: Ann Gulatte at 334-844-2345 or gulatom@auburn.edu.

Auburn Landscape School Adds Nursery/Greenhouse Program

As was true in 2007, the AU Department of Horticulture's 2008 Auburn Landscape School (Aug. 12 and 13) will offer invaluable educational sessions for landscape professionals and Master Gardeners.

But this year, the school is expanding to include both an educational track specifically for nursery and greenhouse professionals and the annual summer business meeting of the Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association.

The four educational tracks—landscape, nursery/greenhouse, Master Gardeners and, an option for both professional groups, pest management—will be at the Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center, primarily on Aug. 13. A dinner on Aug. 12 will be at the Ham Wilson Livestock Arena.

The Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association will hold its business meeting early on Aug. 13.

A complete schedule and registration information will be available online soon at www.ag.auburn.edu/hort and at www.alnla.org. Registration will begin by July 1.



Thursdays 3—6 p.m.
Now until August 14



The Market at Ag Heritage Park Season Under Way

The Market at Ag Heritage Park, a community farmers' market located on the AU campus, kicked off its 2008 season in April and will run through mid-August.

The Market, which was established in 2004, is held on Thursday afternoons from 3 to 6 p.m. at Ag Heritage Park, located off Samford Avenue on the AU campus. It features locally grown and made produce and products for a fresh-from-the-farm shopping opportunity.

"Each market week will bring new produce throughout the season," says Dani Carroll, market manager. "But each week you can count on such staple items as honey, goat cheese, stone-ground grains, baked goods, Alabama-roasted coffee and a wide variety of plants."

In addition, educational displays are set up at The Market and many market days feature live music and cooking and gardening demonstrations.

For more information on The Market, contact Carroll at 334-749-3353 or carrodl@auburn.edu or visit www.ag.auburn.edu/themarket.

The Market is hosted by the AU College of Agriculture and co-sponsored by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station.



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