

# Under Our Green Canopy

July – September 2006

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## Message from Dr. Doug Bailey

Horticulture Department Head



We have much good news in the Department but before I share those, I wanted to share some other information with you. We have lost two good folks since our last newsletter that I want to express appreciation to and will be losing two more before the end of the year: Larry Freeman

(Research Professional I, Griffin) retired after more than 36 years of service to UGA.

Carl Lasco (Greenhouse Supervisor, Athens) retired after more than 32 years with the department. It will take a long time to overcome the loss of more than 68 years of collected experience held by Larry and Carl. However, we celebrate the initiation of "new life" for both of these wonderful employees. Best of luck to each in their post-UGA lives. Larry's position will revert back to the College as part of our FY07 assessment. The loss of this technical position has resulted in shifting of support personnel at Griffin. Lamont Sudduth has been serving as the Griffin greenhouse manager, but he is now assigned to work with Mark Czarnota's program. Sherrod Baden has transitioned into managing the Griffin greenhouses in conjunction with her current role in Carol Robacker's program. The flexibility and cooperative spirit of the Griffin technicians is greatly appreciated!

Pam Lewis (former assistant greenhouse manager) has taken on the greenhouse supervisory role in Athens, and we are petitioning to refill the assistant manager

position. With the continued rise in our enrollment, it is crucial that we maintain adequate support for our teaching greenhouses. Hopefully upper administration will agree.

Mark Rieger has accepted an Associate Dean of Academic Programs position at the University of Florida and will be leaving us later this summer. We will greatly miss Mark's contributions to the department, yet we wish him well in his new administrative role at Florida. Jim Midcap has announced his retirement to take effect 1 December 2006. Jim's contributions to the department will also be greatly missed, but we wish him all the best in his retirement days ahead. Both Mark and Jim joined the department in July 1987, and each has established highly noted programs--Mark in pomology and whole plant physiology and Jim in nursery management. We are proceeding with requesting permission to advertise and fill replacement positions for both of these important departmental program areas.

Congratulations are in order for our newly promoted faculty (effective 1 July 2006): Paul Thomas -- promoted to Full Professor; Marc van Iersel -- promoted to Full Professor; Bodie Pennisi -- promoted to Associate Professor and awarded tenure; Bob Westerfield -- promoted to Senior Public Service Associate; and Marco Fonseca -- promoted to Public Service Associate. Please help me congratulate all five on their professional achievements and recent promotions.

We have been able to transition Jim Affolter from a 9-month to a 12-month appointment, increasing his teaching assignment. This will allow Jim to take on full responsibility for teaching the Herbs and Medicinals course (which already has 169 enrolled; up from 130

last year) and to expand other teaching contributions to the department.

Speaking of teaching, David Berle will be offering two sections of HORT 2000 each semester starting this fall. There are already 286 students enrolled in HORT 2000 with more anticipated. If course enrollments hold steady for spring semester, we will be the greatest student contact hour generating department in the college. Our next task is to increase the number of majors in our program to serve the needs of the state's expanding horticulture industry. HORT 2000 has been a strong recruiting course in the past, so we are anticipating a corresponding increase in majors as HORT 2000 enrollment increases. Our ultimate goal is to acquire additional resources to help us meet the demands of our burgeoning teaching program!

Although we appear to be rapidly heading into a drought situation in Georgia, another 4 year-long drought is finally over in the Department. Up until this month, our last faculty hire was September 2002, when Marco Fonseca joined us as the Master Gardener coordinator.

I am pleased to welcome our latest hire, Dr. Roger Teal, who will be housed at Tifton in a public service faculty position with responsibility in applied field research and education in soil test and plant tissue calibration for vegetable and agronomic crops. Roger comes to us from Oklahoma State University where he has been holding a Post Doctoral position since completing his PhD program there last May. Please help welcome Roger to our Department.

When it rains, sometimes it pours (rain is a good thing!). Not only are we welcoming Roger into the department, we are also in the process of searching for a new Postharvest Technology faculty position (tenure track extension and research to be housed in Tifton). In addition, we are recruiting for an Assistant Research Associate in the area of plant reproduction/apomixis as well as for a Postdoctoral Associate in vegetable breeding. Additional information on these three positions can be found on our departmental web page at: [http://www.uga.edu/~hort/job\\_oprotunities2.htm](http://www.uga.edu/~hort/job_oprotunities2.htm) (sic).

More good news regarding positions: We have recently received funding to recruit and hire a

molecular geneticist. These new CAES state appropriated redirect funds will allow us to fulfill our departmental priority of adding a molecular component to our programming in Athens. The position will be tied to the Dooley professorship, and will work closely and cooperatively with departmental breeding faculty, especially those involved in ornamentals.

These positions are positive steps that will definitely enhance our programmatic efforts. Hopefully this trend of recognition and support will continue. I greatly appreciate all faculty and staff efforts in generating support for the Horticulture Department through teaching, extension and research programmatic contributions, external support endeavors, and certainly the general marketing of the department. It is my goal that we will continue to receive and even realize an increase in University support and appreciation warranted by our programs. Thanks again for making this happen.



*A cactus Farm near Macon, GA  
The cactus leaves are sold for the leaf pulp which is used in salsa, and other Hispanic recipes.*

### **Special Thanks To Our Many Supporters!**

In past years we have received a great deal of non-monetary or "in kind" support from our friends in the industry. Given our current financial dilemma, our appreciation is even greater this year. Individually each gift is important but it is the sum of all these contributions that becomes the resource base that keeps our department so active and our classrooms so productive. There's no greater testament to the integrity and professionalism of our industry leaders, alumni and supporters than the help and assistance they provide our faculty

and students. Listed below are samplings of those whom have contributed over the last few months. From Dr. Bailey and all of us in the Department, many, many thanks for your support!

**Harrell's Fertilizer** - 5 bags of controlled release fertilizer Scott's - 5 bags of fertilizer and two bags of herbicide

**Yoder Brothers, Inc.** Pennsylvania. - Several hundred mum cuttings for the summer teacher training session.

**Ecke's Inc.** Encinitas, Calif. - Several hundred poinsettia cuttings for Hort 4050 – Greenhouse management

**Davis Greenhouses.** Dewy Rose, GA - Several Hundred cuttings for Hort 4050 Greenhouse Management.

**Fafard Inc.** Anderson, SC – One pallet of soil for the teacher training summer session.

**Speedling, Inc.** 42 - (288) plug trays of seedlings for the teacher training summer session.



## Recent Awards



Listed below are just a few the 2006 awards our faculty and Students have received since the last newsletter.

### Summer 2006

#### Two Students Receive AFE's Vic and Maragret Ball Internships

It is a pleasure to report that, again this year, two of our fine floriculture students have been awarded the Vic and Margaret Ball Internship. Awarded this year were Amy Edmundson, and Faith Conway, both seniors in Horticulture. The Ball Internship program allows students to work anywhere in the U.S, for up to six months. They are paid a standard wage, and if they complete the work successfully, they receive a large stipend between \$3,000 and \$6,000. The amount awarded depends upon the number of months they spend on the internship. Amy is working at GoldSmith Seeds near Santa Cruz, California, and Faith is working at Skagit Gardens, just off the Puget Sound in Seattle, Washington. Both students have signed up for the six-month experience.



Amy Edmundson



Faith Conway

## Recent Promotions

### Marc van Iersel

Promoted to Full Professor status effective 7/1/06

### Bodie Pennisi

Promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure effective 7/1/06

### Paul A. Thomas

Promoted to Full Professor status effective 7/1/06

### Bob Westerfield

Promoted to Senior Public Service Associate status effective 7/1/06

### Marco Fonseca

Promoted to Public Service Associate status effective 7/1/06

### Paul Thomas Elected Chair of University Grievance Committee

Dr. Thomas was recently elected to be chair of the University Grievance Committee. This committee mediates complaints and grievances between faculty and between faculty and the administration. Thomas served on the committee for two years prior to accepting the chair.

### John Ruter Receives HRI Grant

Dr. Ruter received a \$10,000 grant from the Horticultural Research Institute for his proposal "Nickel Nutrition for River Birch and other Ornamentals. He also received a nice grant from UGARF to continue his work on ornamental cultivar development.

### Mark Rieger Receives Grant



Mark Rieger received 2 competitive grants from the USDA in 2006. The first is a joint project between UGA and University of Arkansas to study organic small fruit production (Integrated Organic Program, \$313,000). The second is a Higher Education Challenge Grant (\$195,000) which

will allow the CAES to develop an interdisciplinary teaching certificate program in organic agriculture. As Mark is leaving for Florida, faculty members who were part of the grant teams in the department will take over the research. Congratulations Mark!

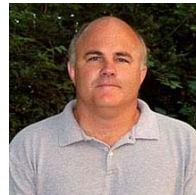
## Department News

### Faculty Travels

### Drs. Tim Smalley and Marc Van Iersel Tour Europe With Students



*A group picture of the students at the temple of philosophy in Parc Jean-Jacques Rousseau*



Drs. Tim Smalley and Marc van Iersel led a group of 37 students on a garden tour of Italy and France in May. Goal of the trip was to teach the students about garden history, and about the connection between garden design, history, and culture. The trip started of with a visit to Pompeii (near Naples), and from there the group slowly made their way north to Rome, Florence, Nice and finally Paris. Among the famous gardens visited on this trip were Hadrian's villa (built by the roman emperor), Villa d'Este, Versailles, and Claude Monet's garden in Giverny. The trip finished up in Parc Jean Jacques Rousseau in Ermenonville, just north of Paris. Here the students had an opportunity to reflect at the Temple of Philosophy and think about the lessons learned during the two-week trip. It was an eye-opening trip for many of the students,

who did not only see many different gardens, but got exposed to new cultures and languages. Please contact Dr. Smalley for details about next year's European garden tour. 706-542-0775.

### Dr. Van Iersel Goes to Italy

Dr. Marc van Iersel traveled to Italy in May, where he was invited to participate in a workshop on subirrigation in greenhouses. Limited water availability and poor water quality are serious problems in the Mediterranean basin, and subirrigation is one way to minimize the impact of these problems. The topic of Dr. van Iersel's presentation was fertilizer management in subirrigation systems. This workshop was organized by the University of Bari (Italy) and attracted researchers from across Italy, as well as many students from the University of Bari. Thanks to the good turnout, the workshop was a resounding success. Following the workshop, Dr. van Iersel traveled around southern Italy with Francesco Montesano, a former exchange student in our department. As part of their travels they visited Pollino National Park, where the wildflowers were simply amazing. Crocuses, daffodils, hyacinths, muscaris (grape hyacinth), violas, and orchids were among the many plants in full bloom, making for beautiful mountain meadows.



### Giulia Camerata Returns to Italy

Giulia Camerata, an exchange student from the University of Palermo in Sicily, Italy, recently finished her 3-month visit to the horticulture department. Giulia came to UGA to do research with Dr. van Iersel. While working here, Giulia investigated the whether calcium fertilization can be used to minimize the detrimental effect of salt on hydroponic tomatoes. The presence of salt in irrigation water is a common problem around the



world, and especially in the Mediterranean. This exchange program was part of Giulia's PhD studies at the University of Palermo.

### North American Blueberry Research & Extension Workers Conference a Success!

D. Scott NeSmith



The 10<sup>th</sup> North American Blueberry Research & Extension Workers Conference was held June 4-8, 2006 at the University of Georgia's Tifton Campus Conference Center, and it was a great success.

Serving as hosts for the event were Dr. Gerard Krewer and Dr. Scott NeSmith, both faculty members of UGA's Department of Horticulture. The Conference was attended by more than 65 participants from across North America and around the world. The attendees came from Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Alabama, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Idaho, Maine, Tennessee, and South Carolina in the U.S. International participants were from a variety of countries including Canada, Australia, Japan, Chile, Uruguay, Korea, and France.

The Conference consisted of 2-days of oral and poster presentations on a range of topics including genetics, plant physiology, cultural management, pest management, soil fertility, and post-harvest issues. The first day's "welcome" was given by Dr. Doug Bailey, Horticulture Department Head at UGA, and the second day's welcome was given by Dr. Scott Angle, Dean of UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Following the first day's scientific meeting, participants were treated to a fine meal and Southern hospitality as they toured UGA's Blueberry Research Farm at Alapaha. During the second evening, a genuine southern fried quail meal was served along with a cultural experience of bluegrass music and southern humor.

Following 2 days of meetings a post-conference tour of Southeast Georgia and the blueberry industry was held. Participants visited several commercial operations, including farms and packing facilities, and made their way to St. Simons Island for an evening on Georgia's beautiful Coast. After the night's stay on the Coast, more of Georgia's blueberry industry was visited as participants made their way back to Tifton the next day.



**Figure 1.** Participants of the 10<sup>th</sup> North American Blueberry Research & Extension Workers Conference held June 4-8, 2006 in Tifton, GA.

Sponsors for the Conference are greatly acknowledged for their financial support. The following is a list of sponsors:

- Driscoll's**
- Georgia Blueberry Growers' Association**
- Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Growers' Association**
- Michigan Blueberry Growers Association**
- Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium**
- SunnyRidge Farm, Inc.**
- U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council**
- Valent Biosciences**

Proceedings from the meeting are posted on the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium's web site at: <http://www.smallfruits.org/>.



**Figure 2.** Blueberry Conference participants enjoy and evening of southern fried quail and bluegrass music.



**Figure 3.** Blueberry Conference participants visited UGA's Blueberry Research Farm at Alapaha

### Summer Teacher Training Program Yields Record Attendance

The summer teacher training program cooperatively sponsored by the department of horticulture, the Ag leadership, education and communication department, and the Georgia Department of Education saw a large increase in attendance. 34 teachers from state high schools returned to the classroom, and the greenhouse to learn how to manage teaching greenhouses. Teachers learned irrigation construction, wiring, fertilizer injector procedures, greenhouse environment control options, plant problem diagnosis and plant ID. The program was coordinated by Drs. Teri Hamlin and Paul Thomas.



Teachers learning how to apply shade cloth without crawling up on the greenhouse roof.

### Visitors Impressed at Annual UGA Trial Garden Open House

The 2006 open house for the UGA trial gardens was an impressive sight this year. Meg Green and the greenhouse staff did a fantastic job with

the gardens this year. Folks kept saying they'd never seen it looking so vibrant. The Georgia Master Gardeners held a plant sale along with the event to raise money for the trial garden program. They raised over \$3000! Of course, the main attraction was getting a tour of the thousands of plants by none other than Allan Armitage. If you haven't been to the open house, contact the department in May, for the exact dates in June....and whatever you do, don't forget your camera!



### Happiness Abounds On Graduation Day



*Doug Bailey stands with our students for a group photo.*

Fifteen seniors graduated this spring from within the department of horticulture. The ceremony put on by the college was nicely done and the reception snacks were delicious. During the reception, we learned that Stevie Daniels had just accepted a position with Park Seed as a staff writer. In fact, most of our graduates already have jobs lined up. Congratulations to the following students: Doug Batchelder, Donna Brogdon, Faith Conway, Matt Cucuzza, Craig Curry, Stevie Daniels, Jeff Hooks, Rachel Johnson, Laura Johnson-Jones, Mike Plattner,

Mike Royal, Amber Sheffield, Blanton Sheorn, Penny Stoming and Matt Weber.



*Stevie Daniels*

### Justin Porter goes to China



Ten minutes after the graduation ceremony, the editor bumped into Justin Porter, whom had been visiting friends at the ceremony. It seems he had to get home quickly to catch a bus to the airport. Justin, along with the entire UGA Red Coat Band went to

China to participate in local ceremonies there as part of a band exchange event. Justin will be one of our UGA Hort Club co-presidents this next year. Amy Conway, and Justin will each serve for 6 months, so that each can accommodate their own graduation schedules. It's quite amazing what you learn at receptions.

### Southeast Greenhouse Conference

Despite power outages caused by thunderstorms, the Southeast Greenhouse Conference went off without a hitch. The attendance was over 3000, and the educational program was well received. Dr. Bodie Pennisi was this years Education Program Chair and was responsible for the entire three day educational event. Several UGA faculty were prominent in the program, including Allan Armitage and Paul Thomas.



*Drs. Armitage and Pennisi working in the dark, in an empty trade show floor waiting for the power to return.*



*Armitage moderating a panel discussing the current market for plant materials in the southeast. The event was a special sponsored luncheon put on by Greenhouse Grower Magazine and Fafard, Inc.*

### Young Scholars Program Expands



This year, three students joined the department of horticulture this summer as part of a career exploration program sponsored by the College of Agricultural and

Environmental Sciences. Will Fisher, Nathalie Grant and Phillip Stice are high school students selected for their outstanding academic records as top prospects for UGA. They are given an opportunity to work directly with College faculty on research, and learn what it's like to work at UGA. These three were immediately and thoroughly immersed in greenhouse work, visiting trial gardens and dodging kangaroos (see alumni section). The projects they worked on included a study to determine what triggers blooming in *Achimenes*, a study to determine which flowers do not attract bees, and they participated in several field trips to such places as Park Seed in Greenwood, SC. The faculty sponsor was Dr. Paul Thomas.

### Graduate Student to Work with John Ruter

We are happy to report that Ryan Contreras, who is finishing his M.S. degree at North Carolina State University, will be joining the Department in August and will be working with Dr. Ruter in the area of plant breeding and selection. John's program has really taken off and many new and improved selections of woody ornamentals are on the way. If you'd like to visit the new material, or make a contribution towards his breeding program, contact John Ruter at 229-386-3907.

### Congratulations, Pam Lewis!



If you haven't been to our campus greenhouses lately, you need to stop by. Our newly appointed greenhouse manager is Pam Lewis, who was chosen to replace Carl Lasco. Pam was promoted from the assistant greenhouse manager's position in July. Pam is making major changes to

accommodate increased use of the greenhouses as a teaching space. We have new workroom space, painted walls, organized cabinettes and new tables in the main hall for plant ID classes. Pam came back to us from Oelschigs Nursery, and the skills she picked up as a professional grower have really come to light in the greenhouses. Congratulations on the promotion, Pam!

### John Ruter Presents Paper



Dr. Ruter, known for being one very busy fellow, attended the Southern Region ASHS meeting in Orlando, FL and the Lancaster Farms Nursery Research Colloquium in Suffolk, VA to present his recent research on copper

deficiency in container-grown *Iropepalum*

shrubs. John's research into mysterious deficiencies in woody ornamentals led he and fellow researcher Bruce Wood to determine that nickel, previously not considered to be an essential nutrient, was essential to certain trees. Now similar work is being done to find the best ways to supply copper to improve production of *Loripetalum*.

### Thomas Appointed to Serve National Endowment



Paul Thomas has been selected to serve on the Scholarship and Education Committees of the American Floral Endowment. The endowment is a nationally focused foundation that funds scientific research in ornamental plants, student scholarships, and events for organizations such as Pi Alpha Xi, the

national honor society for ornamental horticulture. As part of his duties, he will facilitate the screening of hundreds of scholarship applications and work with the AFE board to promote education in ornamental horticulture. Thomas has been a grant reviewer for AFE for 6 years.

### Athens Staff Appreciation Day



The weather was fantastic, and pleasantly cool breezes wafted the aroma of barbecued burgers and dogs around the Hort farm. You could not ask for better weather! Over 2 dozen staff and faculty came together to celebrate the day and

acknowledge the efforts our staff make here in Athens. From technicians to maintenance staff, they keep the wheels turning and the plants growing. Thanks to all of you who support our efforts.



*Hesperis in bloom!*



*Doug Bailey thanking the staff for their support and dedication.*

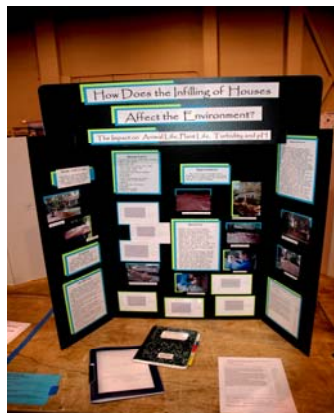
### Faculty Present Talks at Ohio Floral Conference



Dr. Marc van Iersel and former graduate student Stephanie Burnett were among the faculty invited to speak at the national OFA conference in Ohio. This event is the premier

educational event for growers in the US. Marc and Stephanie spoke on greenhouse irrigation automation and the benefits thereof. Also speaking at the conference were Allan Armitage and Paul Thomas.

## Faculty Participate in UGA Science Fair Judging



Each year the University of Georgia hosts a statewide science fair. Faculty are encouraged to serve as judges in the area of their expertise. This year, Drs. Bailey, and Thomas served as judges in the Junior and Senior sections. The projects in the botany and plant science divisions were impressive, ranging from

landscape practices to molecular biology. The event takes all day, but it's worth every minute to see young scientists develop their ideas. The poster shown here was put together by a 14 year old. The take home message to the faculty was "keep your eyes open on the high school programs...there's some real sharp students on the horizon!"

### Meet the People

#### Meet Lee Kelly

Technician for Dr. Knauft



The path that has brought me to work as a research technician in the Horticulture department has been a fun and interesting one. I grew up surrounded by the lush greens of golf courses in Peachtree City, Georgia but never became interested in turf grass. Instead I spent my time helping my father and mother tend to the large vegetable garden in the backyard

and playing in the dirt with my two sisters. As I grew up I always enjoyed being outside whether it was swimming at the beach, riding horses in Colorado or just wandering through the woods.

I attended the University of Georgia for my freshman year of college but soon experienced the desire to travel and study in another part of the country. My sophomore year I attended Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon where I took botany and horticulture classes that encouraged my interest in plants. In my free time, I went hiking in the mountains that surrounded the Willamette Valley as well as took road trips to the Pacific coast. During that school year I realized that I needed to immerse myself in hands on experience in my interest rather than continue in the academic route. I returned to Georgia, by way of a great road trip through the desert and mountains of the southwest, in search of a job on a farm. I worked on a goat farm three days a week, tending to the goats, milking them, building fences and making cheese. Two days a week I worked on Glover Family Farm, an organic vegetable and flower farm west of Atlanta and on Saturdays I helped manage Morningside Farmers Market in Virginia Highlands.

After getting my hands dirty in Georgia, I moved to Santa Cruz, California to attend a program at the University of California at Santa Cruz in Ecological Horticulture. The program was a six month course in which I learned the details of production of organic agriculture and received a Certificate in Ecological Horticulture. I was not



ready to leave after six months since the Redwoods were just uphill from me with tons of hiking and biking and the Monterey bay area was just downhill from me. I stayed in the area for one more year as one of the assistant managers in a 2 acre intensely managed garden where I had the opportunity to further my learning while teaching the new students.

After my time at Santa Cruz was over, I headed north to Portland, Oregon where I lived, played and worked for a year all the while saving money to travel. Then I went on an eight month backpacking trip to Hawaii, Tonga, New Zealand, Fiji, Roratonga, and Tahiti. I did lots of hiking, camping, swimming, and general exploring while in the South Pacific. In New Zealand I participated in a program called WWOOF, Willing Workers On Organic Farms,

where I worked on organic farms in exchange for room and board. That program afforded me personal experiences with the locals and their culture while learning about the agriculture of New Zealand.

My desire to be close to family again brought me back to Georgia upon returning to the states. I returned to Glover Family Farm to co-manage the production of 7 acres of vegetables and flowers and was involved with local farmers markets and Georgia Organics organization. After five years away from school, I decided I was ready to return to UGA and finish my degree. While working on my undergraduate degree in Horticulture, I worked on a local small farm where I met my husband, Andrew. We married in 2002, I finished my undergraduate degree in Horticulture in spring 2003, we finished building our house in May 2003, and had our wonderful little girl Ayden in September 2003....a busy year! After graduating, I worked with Dr. Kays helping to plant sweet potatoes at the Horticulture farm as well as doing research and editing for a root and tuber crop website. I began work with Dr. Knauff in his ornamental plant breeding program in January 2005. It has given me the opportunity to be outdoors, continue to work with plants and learn much more about ornamental horticulture. I maintain all of the plants that are grown in his breeding program, over 20 different genera, which include Lagerstroemia, Indigofera, Vitex, and Mahonia to name a few. This year we are growing out 500 Vitex seedlings, some of which are interspecific crosses. We also have a Lagerstroemia sterility project at the Center for



as well as pollination mechanisms but all the while looking for that next great plant for the industry.

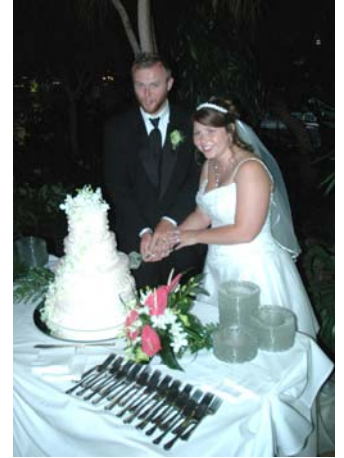
When not at work, I enjoy working in my garden with Andrew and Ayden, maintaining my honey bee hives, going for walks in the woods and just appreciating nature.

Applied Nursery Research that includes 1000 irradiated seedlings. When I'm not taking data on our seedling populations, I'm determining germination protocols for seeds

## Alumni

### Charlie McElhannon and Michelle Moore Tie The Knot!

If you remember from a few issues back, there was a wild Easter egg hunt on the estate of Charles McElhannon the III, and love was obviously in the air, or in the jello-surprises in the easter eggs.....well, love took it's true course and Charlie McElhannon and Michelle Moore became husband and wife this June. The wedding was at the UGA Catholic Center, and the reception (whew...what a reception....) was held at the Botanic Garden. In true Iris fashion, the wedding was a real treat. The couple now live in Auburn Alabama where they are both working on their Masters degrees. Congratulations Charlie and Michelle.



### ....and Nancy Mann Gets Married!



It's been a big year for Nancy Mann. First, she left Athens and her job at Charmar Florists to take over as president of her family's greenhouse company. Next thing we hear, she's married! Nancy and Dave were married March 18<sup>th</sup> and are living in Cherokee County, and are both involved with the family business. Nancy and her husband, Dave (center) were recently spotted at the Trial Garden Open House, standing next to friend Kevin Ware, Wares Greenhouses. Congratulations Nancy and Dave Williams!

### **Matt Hawkins Now Works With Kangaroos!**



Matt Hawkins, '02, Our resident artist turned Hort major, turned professional tomato grower has taken another turn...a big turn. Matt (seated as driver in the Jeep) is now the landscape curator for the (now infamous) Kangaroo Conservation Center in North Georgia. From stringing tomato vines to dodging kangaroo kicks, Matt patrols the 83 acres in his Aussie uniform. Matt sure leads an interesting life. He and his wife Julie, who works in the gift shop, have moved to the Gainesville area and are enjoying the cooler summer weather. Matt also does interpretive tours, and was a big hit with the Young Scholars who visited him this summer. Phillip Stice, far right of group, interviewed Matt and Julie to do a story for a writing project he was working on with the Journalism School as part of the YSP. The photo adjacent to the group shot is a resident of the Conservation Center, where kangaroos are bred for zoos and rare species of wallabies are bred for repatriation to Australia's outback.



### **Melanie Parker Curates at SBG**



Melanie Parker is now curator of the annual and perennial gardens at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia. We spotted her on a recent visit to the garden. She says she loves her job, and is busy getting ready to relocate the perennial gardens to a

new location. Her knowledge of perennials is greatly expanded and she's taken a real interest in designing gardens. This is obviously a great position. Congratulations Melanie!

### **Michael Davis Is Taking Over Greenhouse Business**

We bumped into Michael Davis at the Southeast Greenhouse Conference. It seems Michael is done being a student, having finished his MBA, and has now rejoined his folks in running Davis Floral, in Dewy Rose. Michael is busy contemplating how to move the business into the 21 century and how to reposition the company's market strength. Look for exciting things to come from this company.



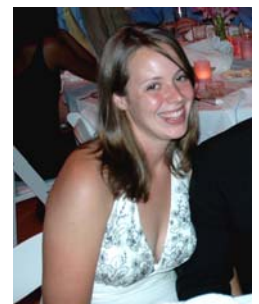
### **Teddy Mierzwa's Growing Plugs ...Big Time!**



We also noticed that Teddy Mierzwa was smiling big at the Southeast Greenhouse Conference. Teddy is the head grower at James greenhouses. The company's sales are booming and Teddy is smack dab in the middle of a successful company. He was manning the company booth like a pro. For those of us who knew him as the radical, long-haired independent type in the classroom, the transformation to a polished and successful businessman is quite dramatic. Take note, y'all, ...he even trimmed his beard!

### **Kelly Bull Now a Professional Perennial Grower**

Another success story for the books. Kelly Bull is now a full time grower for Homestead Gardens, Inc. in Annapolis, Maryland. Kelly is in charge of a large perennial program there and is up to her ears in perennials!



Kelly was recently invited to speak at the American Floral Endowment meeting in Ohio. Kelly spoke to the group about her internship experiences at UGA, and the benefits she received through the AFE programs. She gave a great talk.

It's great to see so many graduates finding great jobs so early in their careers!



**Jessica Cudnik is a Marketing Professional at Ball Horticulture**

Not to be outdone! Jessica Cudnick is now working for Ball Horticulture, the largest Horticulture Corporation in the U.S. Jessica is working in the marketing department in Chicago, and is learning the ropes of high-stakes international business. Travel to foreign countries is just part of the work assignment. Her French and Spanish language skills secured this plum of a position. On top of that, Jessica announced she too, recently married. That makes her Jessica Cudnik-Wilson! Congratulations Jessica!

**Wes Friar and Brent Roper Now Have Their Own Business in Florida**



*Wesley, seen here with a mysterious, un-named woman, seemed very happy with his new life in Florida. More on this developing situation in future newsletters.*

Gutsy Move! That's how to describe two of our most recent graduates as they have entered head-long into the landscape business as a team. Wes and Brent are doing well. The business is primarily a design-install business for residential and small business sites. No word yet on how they divvy up the workload, but

then, we're just getting started on this story...stay tuned.

**Anna Yeager Now Works at Augusta National Golf Course**

Imagine getting to work the beds at Augusta National. Imagine the people you'd meet. That's just what Anna is doing as color installation and maintenance coordinator at Augusta National Golf Course. Next time you watch the Augusta National on TV, and the camera spans those beautiful flower beds at the clubhouse, you now know who's responsible. Nice Work Anna!



## Calendar



- **The Southern Nursery Association Conference, 2006**  
August 8 – 11  
Atlanta, Georgia

**Do you have news?**



Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni and friends of the Horticulture Department are encouraged to send in news and happenings. The benefits of keeping in touch and knowing what's happening in the state are simply outstanding. You may contact the newsletter coordinator by mail or e-mail at the following address. Your contributions will be added in the next issue.

Send to:

Paul A. Thomas  
215 Hoke Smith Building  
Department of Horticulture  
The University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
Email: [pathomas@uga.edu](mailto:pathomas@uga.edu)  
Phone: (706) 542-2340

**From all of us within the  
Horticulture Department,  
Have A Great Summer!**

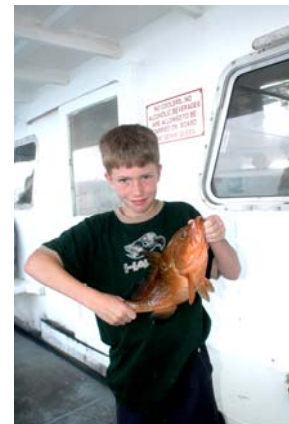
## ***A Summer Boy Scout Trip to Remember!***



*Snorkeling for shells off St. Andrews*



*Studying crabs at Midnight on a sand bar!*



*A "keeper" Grouper!*



*8 Snapper, 3 Perch and 2 Grouper....  
Not bad for a bunch of amateurs!*