

GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

This issue is our first effort at a departmental newsletter for our alumni and friends to keep you informed of happenings in the Department. Several have suggested that we call the newsletter Hort Forum after our oldest student organization. Our goal is to improve with each issue. Your comments and suggestions will be appreciated.

PATERSON GREENHOUSE COMPLEX RENOVATIONS UNDERWAY

I am extremely excited about the renovation of the Paterson Greenhouse complex. While it seems that it has taken forever, with a million meetings in between, construction has finally begun. We will have a new gutter connected range to replace the three old glass houses attached to the head house (which were closed in the spring due to electrical hazards), a new poly house (to replace old number 8), enlargement and complete renovation of the classroom (to include heating and cooling systems), new potting area, a new pesticide mixing and rinsing station, a new cooler, and other amenities. The total project cost is about \$1.2 million. When completed, we will work toward purchasing a new soil mixer and conveyors and replacement of the gate off Duncan Street. Finally, we will have a facility that all of us can be proud of, that enhances our efforts to deliver a quality education to our students, and a safe environment to work in. Our plans are to have an open house in the spring when the project is completed.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW FACULTY MEMBER, AMY WRIGHT

We are delighted to announce that we have just hired a new faculty member: Amy Wright, who is finishing her Ph.D. at North Carolina State University. Dr. Wright will join our faculty in May of 2002. Dr. Wright's appointment will be 80% instruction and 20% research. She will teach Plant Propagation, Growth and Development, and other classes to be decided. Her hiring will allow us to reduce class sizes by offering the courses more frequently. Our faculty believes that our students will benefit greatly from this new hire.

SEE YOU IN MOBILE AT THE GULF STATES HORT EXPO

We are establishing a new opportunity for meeting with faculty, alumni, and friends of the Horticulture Department at the annual Gulf States Horticultural Expo. The Alabama Nurserymen's Association will graciously allow us to have a gathering of alumni and friends in conjunction with the 2002 Gulf States Horticultural Expo on Friday, January 25, 2002, at the Mobile Convention Center. Our faculty value the time we can gather with alumni and renew friendships, share successes, and discuss future opportunities. We will also continue to meet at the Southern Nursery Association in Atlanta.

KUDOS TO OUR FINE FACULTY

Finally, I want to say a word about our greatest asset, the Horticulture faculty. One of our college administrators told me recently that our Horticulture faculty get more done with less resources than any other unit in this or any other college that he had ever been associated with. Our faculty work long hours; they are dedicated to the student's education; they are burdened by students not living up to their potential; they could make a lot more money elsewhere; they are unselfish. It's no wonder that we now have not only one of the largest Horticulture departments in the country, but one of the best.

Charles Gilliam
Professor

Chair, Horticulture Department

CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF AU HORTICULTURE?

A few years ago, we were timid about sending people to our web page to get information. Now, the majority of our industry has access to the Internet. We invite and encourage you to visit our ornamental Extension web page at <http://www.ag.auburn.edu/landscape>. Our monthly newsletter updates you on current events within our industry, educational programs, and research at our experiment stations across the state. Want to know what diseases to expect to see next month or what plant diseases are coming in the diagnostic lab this month? You can find it here! Do you have a tree you want to identify or a plant that you would like to see a picture of its leaves, flower, fruit or the whole plant? Our plant ID database is continuing to be updated. Starting a nursery or a greenhouse and want to know what to do first and how much it costs? We have the answers from Auburn and links to other expertise across the country. How do you change the flower color of hydrangeas in containers or how do you grow hostas? We have a data base of past articles that may have the answers you need. If you cannot find it, email us and we will try to help you with your problems. The advantage of this format is that there is no limit to length of articles or the number of color pictures you can post. You can get the full unedited story without having to trim for publication costs. We see the Internet as a major communication channel for our future. Send us an email and we will include you on our mailing list to get our monthly electronic newsletter. This will serve as a reminder that new information has been posted to our site. If you see an article you like, you can go to the web page and get all the photos to go with the information. We also encourage and often receive contributions from our readers that we like to share with others. If you have a plant you like or a new idea to make life easier at your business, send us an email and attach a photo. We will pass it on. We are your land grant university. Let us know how we can serve you better! Visit our web page and jot us a note. We like to hear from you.

EVEN IN RECESSION JOB MARKET LOOKS BRIGHT

The job market continues to look bright as Auburn Horticulture graduates are still in demand in record numbers. Despite talk of recession and layoffs on the national economic scene, most of the

companies that we do business with are optimistic and are continuing to hire.

FORMER STUDENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

We will be spotlighting former students to let you know how and what they are doing. JEFF McMANUS is our spotlight graduate for this issue. Jeff is from Douglasville, GA. He entered Auburn as a student in the Business School. After taking a Horticulture class he became intrigued, switched majors, and graduated with a degree in Landscape Horticulture in 1989. Jeff began his career with OneSource (formerly ISS) in Orlando, FL at the Grandcypress Resort. Grandcypress is a premier resort with national and international exposure. Jeff's good work was seen by the people operating Turnberry Isle Resort, a world class establishment. He was soon hired as the head man for this North Miami Beach resort. They wanted a landscape second to none and for the next ten years Jeff put and kept Turnberry's landscape at the top of the landscape world. Because of the spectacular vistas created and maintained by Jeff he was soon recognized as one of the top landscape managers in the country.

A year ago, the Chancellor of the University of Mississippi, Dr. Robert Khayat, contacted us about hiring an Auburn graduate to manage the landscape at Ole Miss. Dr. Khayat told us he wanted the grounds to be the prettiest in the nation and wanted to hire someone with experience in managing major properties. This position would be unique as the landscape manager would answer directly to the chancellor. We told him about Jeff and that it would be difficult to attract him away from his current position. He assured us that he could and he did. The transformation on that campus is phenomenal. Dr. Khayat told us "the day you recommended Jeff McManus...has forever changed not only the appearance but the culture of this campus...Ole Miss and I will be forever grateful to you." We concur with Chancellor Khayat that Jeff McManus is an outstanding Horticulturist, alumnus and individual.

RECORD STUDENT ENROLLMENT NUMBERS

2001 is a record breaking year for the Horticulture Department. Fall semester enrollment is over 240 students, the largest enrollment in our history, representing the 6th consecutive year that enrollment has exceeded 200. Horticulture students presently represent 30% of the students in the College of Agriculture.

HORT FORUM FALL FIELD TRIP

In early November the Hort Forum Club took a field trip to Biltmore House and Gardens in Asheville, NC. Students toured the house and gardens and were amazed that we truly do have a castle in the United States. The house, built by George Vanderbilt in 1895 is filled with luxury and stateliness from a bygone era. The gardens were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, who also designed Central Park in New York City. Students were able to see and experience first hand the work of one of America's best landscape architects. Hort Forum students raised money for the trip through plant sales, T-shirt sales, and other fund raising activities. It is a very active student organization that also participates in many community service projects.

HORTICULTURE ELECTIVES CONTINUE TO GROW IN POPULARITY

Dr. James E. Brown continues to teach Organic Gardening and Vegetable Production to many students at Auburn. These two horticulture classes

are the most sought after elective courses on campus. This semester 1,414 students are enrolled in Organic Gardening and 942 in Vegetable Production. Many students develop an interest in gardening after taking his courses, a few even make career changes to Horticulture.

GREENHOUSE EXTENSION

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Nurserymen's Association held a Poinsettia Production Short Course on Friday, October 26, 2001 at the Extension Center in Mobile, AL. The short course provided training on basic cultural practices necessary to grow a quality Poinsettia crop in Alabama greenhouses and was designed for growers, managers and key employees. Speakers included Bryan McCaffery (Whitmire Micro-Gen), Bodie Pennisi (The University of Georgia), Raymond Kessler (Auburn University), Chazz Hesselein (Ornamental Horticulture Substation), and John Nelson (Greenway Plants). Attendees toured the Poinsettia cultivar trials at the Ornamental Horticulture Substation.

FUNDING FOR HORTICULTURE RESEARCH

Many people are recognizing the importance of horticulture industries in Alabama to the state's current and future economy. Our federal legislators and the Alabama Farmers Federation have been instrumental in procuring research funding for a second year in a row, which is designed to continue stimulating horticulture industries in our state. Congressman Robert Aderholdt sponsored a research proposal for \$320,000 for the greenhouse, nursery and turf industries. Senator Jeff Sessions and congressmen Terry Everett and Sonny Callahan sponsored a research proposal for \$800,000 for research on Satsuma mandarins to develop technologies to reduce freeze damage. This research is in conjunction with the Agriculture Center of the Louisiana State University, which will receive 40% of the funding. The Horticulture Department also received a \$100,000 marketing grant from the Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. Charles Bishop, of the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries and the USDA Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program to develop markets for Satsuma mandarins. This research is in conjunction with the Department of Agricultural Economics at Auburn University. The critical support our federal legislators and Commissioner of Agriculture are providing is allowing our department to develop programs that directly service the needs of horticulture industries in Alabama.

AU GOES TO THE ROCKIES

In its tenth year of ALCA Student Career Days competition, the Auburn team traveled in March from the plains to the high country to compete with 46 other schools. Nineteen members of our local chapter participated in the 25th Associated Landscape Contractors of America Student Career Days in Fort Collins, Colorado. Competition was rigorous and Auburn placed 21st overall. Our team placed second only to Mississippi State University among the seven Southeastern Conference schools that participated. Wes Clement finished in 6th place in Exterior Construction Estimating which represented Auburn's best performance in an individual event this year. Seven other students finished in the top twenty in their events. In March of 2002 the AU ALCA team will be in Peoria, Illinois to compete in the 26th annual ALCA event.

It was, however, in the interaction with industry where Auburn students were champions. Representatives from companies nationwide repeatedly commented on the positive attitude and professionalism of the AU students. All of the students were required to interview at the career fair, and most were sought by industry personnel later for follow-up interviews. While the competitive events are always fun and exciting, it is through opportunities for industry interaction such as that offered at the Career Days that the students and industry invest in their future.

Thanks to the following sponsors who contributed to the students' travel: Advanced Mower, Alabama Nurserymen's Association, Arthur A. Jones and Associates, Blackjack Gardens, Davey Tree, Dixie Green, Inc., Flowerwood Nursery Inc., Greene Hill Nursery Inc., Greenway Plants Inc., Live Oak, McCorkle Nurseries, Minus Vinus Nursery, Moore and Davis Nursery, Pike Family Nursery, Plant World Nursery, Shore Acres Plant Farm, Twelve Oaks Landscape, Bright's Nursery and Greenhouse.

NURSERY ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS EXTENSION

The Alabama Nurserymen's Association (ANA) came to the rescue of Extension Nursery, Landscape & Greenhouse programs. Well publicized funding cuts at Auburn University left Extension Specialists without any revenue to service the needs of the ornamental industry. Salaries were being paid but there was no money for travel to nurseries, educational programs or educational demonstrations across the state. The ANA gave \$16,000 to support these programs. They said that they were happy that the Association was at a point financially from which they could offer help to the people that had supported them since their inception. The Horticulture Department is very grateful for this cooperative relationship. With the outlook of continued declining support from the State, financial partnerships will have to be made with industry in all programs at the university in order for educational support services to continue. Thank you to ANA members for their commitment to this partnership.

Charles Gilliam, Chair
Horticulture Department
College of Agriculture
101 Funchess Hall
Auburn University, AL 36849-5601

YOUR CONTINUED GENEROSITY IS MUCH APPRECIATED

At the end of the year many people evaluate their financial positions to determine the extent of their giving to non-profit organizations. Should you choose to give to Auburn University, we would like to suggest several possibilities in the Horticulture Department.

The Henry P. Orr Fund for Horticultural Excellence has a goal of raising \$250,000 within three years. During the first year almost \$80,000 was committed to the endowment, which is designed to enhance learning beyond the classroom.

The Hoyt Adair Fund has recently been initiated to honor recently deceased Hoyt Adair, a faithful supporter of Horticulture at Auburn University for many years. His family owns and operates Classical Fruits in Molton, Alabama. The goal of this endowment is \$25,000 which would provide supplemental support for a graduate assistantship, thus enhancing the department's ability to recruit an outstanding student in the fruit/vegetable area.

We have a Horticulture Gifts account that is used for a number of activities in the department. For example, we pay expenses for the alumni get-together in Atlanta, the faculty-student fun day in the fall, and other miscellaneous projects that promote Horticulture.

If you need additional information, please feel free to contact Charles Gilliam at 334-844-3045.
cgilliam@acesag.auburn.edu

Detach here and mail

Gifts to the Auburn University Department of Horticulture

Please make your check payable to the
AUBURN UNIVERSITY HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT
and kindly designate the fund and the amount of your contribution.

_____ **Henry P. Orr** Fund for Horticultural Excellence
\$ _____

_____ **Hoyt Adair** Fund
\$ _____

Horticulture Gifts Fund

\$

Thank you so much for your generosity.

Mail this to Charles Gilliam, Professor and Chair, Horticulture
Department, Auburn University, AL 36849.