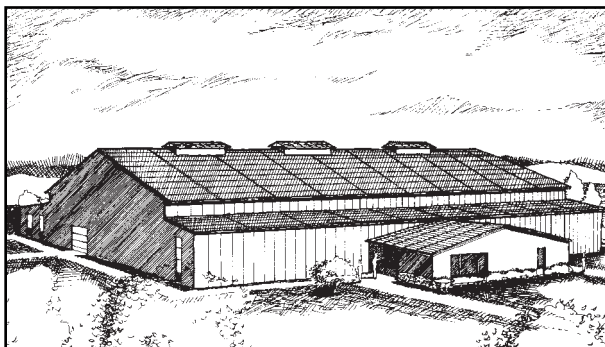


Teaching arena named for benefactors

A livestock teaching facility to be built on Plantation Road will be named the Alphin-Stuart Arena for benefactors Col. and Mrs. Horace Alphin and the late Patricia Bonsall Stuart, according to action taken by the university's board of visitors.

"This is a critically needed facility for our students and livestock industries," said Gary Minish, head of the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences. "It is so important that it seemed appropriate to name it for these people who have had such a major impact on our programs."



Artist rendering of the teaching arena.

The centerpiece of the \$3.6 million facility is a 31,250- square-foot arena floor with seating for 800 people. The building will also include classrooms, an office, a kitchen-concession facility, and animal holding area.

The arena will provide a facility for teaching activities, major student-organized events, intercollegiate animal competitions, trade shows, and for other university functions. It will provide space for more than 30 courses and labs involving animals that are currently taught in less than ideal conditions. More than 1,000 students each semester will have classes in the new facility. The majority of the present animal-related teaching facilities were constructed in the 1950s.

See Arena, page 6

Delano receives Alumni Distinguished Service Award

Robert B. Delano, one of the nation's most influential agricultural leaders for three decades, received the Alumni Distinguished Service Award during Founders Day ceremonies April 28.

In 1980 Delano was elected president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, the world's largest agricultural organization, representing more than 3 million farm families. The following year, U.S. News & World Report mentioned him as one of the nation's most influential leaders.

Delano (Animal Science '45) served 17 years as president of the Virginia Farm Bureau and six



Robert Delano

years as American Farm Bureau president. In one of the many ways he has served the university, he was named to a four-year term on the Board of Visitors in 1994.

He has also devoted considerable time and talent to the College

of Agriculture and Life Sciences' Alumni Organization, and its strategic planning committee; the College of Veterinary Medicine Citizen Committee; the Major Gifts Committee; the National Campaign Committee; and the Corporate and Foundation Committee.

He is a member of Alpha Gamma Rho, honorary agriculture fraternity, and Epsilon Sigma Phi, honorary Extension fraternity. He has also received the Award of Merit from Gamma Sigma Delta, honorary society of agriculture and the National 4-H Alumni Award.

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FROM THE DEAN

Old and new

By Andy Swiger
Dean



Virginia Tech's — and this college's — expertise in the realm of biotechnology is nothing new. Researchers here have accomplished many firsts, such as developing the first transgenic pig and creating transgenic tobacco that expresses human proteins.

The university now plans to build on our strengths in biotechnology and to stake a claim to a leading position in the field of bioinformatics. This is a key part of the strategy to move Virginia Tech into the ranks of the top 30 research universities in the nation.

This college stands to be a major contributor to this exciting endeavor.

Bioinformatics is the marriage of computers with biology to organize the mountains of biological data to make them accessible to scientists. Scientists around the world are producing vast amounts of information about the genes of many organisms, including humans. These "gene maps," which show where in the organism's genome a particular gene is located, are combined with information about the proteins the gene instructs the organism to produce, what those proteins do, disease susceptibility, resistance traits, and a whole range of other biological information.

All this information is already too vast to be comprehended, and scientists are adding to it every day.

Bioinformatics uses biologists, mathematicians, statisticians, computer

scientists, and others to make this information accessible to researchers around the world.

With this information, scientists will then turn to biotechnology to modify plants and animals for the benefit of people. Many of those biotechnologists are associated with this college. Their work, however, is a dead end without professors, students, staff, and alumni knowledgeable in producing crops and animals.

No matter what new crops and food animals are created by the exciting techniques of biotechnology, those plants and animals will be produced on the land by farmers and will require new cultivation, harvesting, processing, and marketing methods.

The promise of these techniques cannot be realized without strengthening our traditional programs in production, processing and marketing. Research and education in "old" fields of endeavor for the "new" technologies will be every bit as important for biotechnology as they were when hybrid corn, mechanization, or fertilizer and pesticide amendments were new.

Therefore, in the months and years ahead as these flashy new areas of research gain press coverage for the university, I hope to be able to report that the traditional areas in which this college excels are making gains in step with the new technology.

Correction

The date of CareerScope was erroneously reported in the last issue of this newsletter. The correct date is Oct. 5. Also, the telephone number for Sharon Williams, career services coordinator for the college, has been changed to (540) 231-9666.

From the Academic Programs Director's Desk

John M. White
Associate Dean

It's recruiting season again and not just for scholarship athletes. The fall is also the recruiting season for talented high school seniors who may want to pursue a degree from our college

We solicit your help in the process. If you know of highly qualified students, encourage them to investigate the opportunities we offer.

An excellent way for prospective students to gain insight into Virginia Tech and our college is to attend one of the Fall 2000 open house programs. The university will sponsor open house programs on the weekends of Sept. 23-24; Oct. 21-22; and Nov. 11-12. The Saturday open house program is repeated on Sunday, so each is a one-day event.

At the open house, prospective students learn about the admissions process, financial aid, student activities, entertainment, health programs and

many other student affairs sponsored programs. Also, students and parents will spend an hour with me and others to discuss academic programs, career possibilities, scholarships, extracurricular and other programs offered by the college.

Prospective students should be aware the college offers bachelor's of science degree programs in animal and poultry sciences, which includes the vast majority of our pre-vet students. The dairy science department was recently referred to as the best such degree program in the country by a USDA external review team.

Our horticulture degree program is one of our most rapidly expanding enrollment majors, with great interest in the "green industry" and landscape design and contracting options. The crop and soil environmental sciences department offers two bachelor's degrees, one in crops and soils

(agronomy) and the other one is the very popular environmental science degree.

The food science and technology graduates have terrific placement and career options with the highest starting salaries in the college. Our agriculture business majors are in our agricultural and applied economics department. Most of our students interested in pre-professional or molecular biology programs are biochemistry majors. And finally, we offer an excellent two-year associate degree program in agricultural technology.

If you have questions, contact me at jmwhite@vt.edu or (540) 231-6503.



John White

Student research presentations

Virginia Tech President Charles Steger talks with Elizabeth Cowardin, center, and Jennifer Rice. The two students from the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences presented findings from separate research projects during Animal Industry Day July 14.



Alums landscape their business to success

Hidden Lane Landscaping & Design Inc. is anything but hidden; it sits on 11 acres virtually in the heart of rapid residential growth in Northern Virginia.

It's right where Peter Murray (Hort. '82) wants it to be, geographically, in terms of the business, and with his staff.

"Every year has been an up year for the business," Murray says. "We've been very fortunate not to have to experience the ups and downs of the business cycle. We specialize in residential landscaping, and this area is booming."

The business was started in the 1950s on a part-time basis. Roger Brewster (Hort. '54) owned it from 1974 until he sold it to Murray in 1995. Brewster, in fact, assembled much of the team now working at the Herndon location.

"We all have the same landscaping ideas and philosophy," says Brewster, who remains interested in the business. "We all feel that every job you do has to be the very best that it can be."

Linda Nichols (Hort. '80) agrees.

"We've always had a very loyal clientele," she said. "Word of mouth advertising keeps us busy. We are located in a very, very good area where there are people with lots of disposable income."

Nichols had a class with Murray while at Virginia Tech. She went to work at another landscape business after graduating, but looked up Murray when she began looking for another job.

Nichols, a landscape designer and salesperson, says an important part of the company's reputation grows from the work ethic of the El Salvadorans who make up much of the landscaping crews. Designers and crews work together throughout a project, giving them all a sense of pride in the work.

Heather Bratt (Ag. Econ. '96) is office manager for the business, and she often helps the workers with immigration issues, health care, and schooling. She's earned a reputation among the staff akin to that of Radar O'Reilly on *M*A*S*H*, anticipating everyone's needs and keeping the paperwork in order. She's bookkeeper, receptionist, and more.

"I'm outside more than I'm inside, helping with whatever needs to be done," she says. "I like to be involved in that part of the business -- helping with the plants, helping move stuff, and that kind of thing."



Linda Nichols, seated, Becky Turning, left, and Heather Bratt review a landscape plan.

Becky Turner (Hort. '00) is the newest member of the professional staff. She's helping out with preparing drawings, measuring in the field, and other jobs while she is also working to establish her own clientele base. She was recruited directly from Virginia Tech, which Murray says has become his favorite source of new employees.

"Virginia Tech grads are a known quantity," he said. "We know what the education is like there, but we also know that graduates from there don't think they know it all."

Turner says she is just beginning what she expects to be a two-year learning curve.

"Everyone is so professional and they care very much about what they do," she says. "Sometimes that is a little intimidating, but everyone is very supportive. They want you to succeed."



HIDDEN LANE owner Peter Murray, left, and Roger Brewster discuss characteristics of various plants.

Ag alumni can make a difference

By Anne Herring
VTAAO President

The Virginia Tech Ag Alumni Organization can become a force to aid the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences as it charts its course in a new century, but it cannot help without participation from you.

Agriculture and the many disciplines encompassed by the college are changing as the world changes. We all are being driven by the need to be faster, more efficient, and more productive in our business lives, and even in our personal lives. The college must respond to the pressures that we feel if it is to remain a relevant organization.

The college already does an impressive job of keeping up with, and even leading, developments in many areas. But the VTAAO has a role to play in keeping college leaders informed of changes that alumni see as needing to be addressed. We are in the daily churning

of work, and we often see changes as they emerge.

This organization is especially in touch with the teaching aspect of the college, but is also in touch with the research and Extension missions as well.

By becoming involved in VTAAO, you have an opportunity to pass your views along. This can be done by talking to leaders of the organization or by coming to regional receptions and other events.

In return, though, we look to you to become informed about the college and the issues it faces. By becoming informed, you can become an effective advocate for it. And this could be the most important way you can repay the college for what it has done for you.

For more information about how to become involved in the alumni organization, visit our Web site: www.agalumni.vt.edu/

VTAAO scholarship fund

The Ag Alumni Organization and the college's development office are still working to fund the VTAAO scholarship. More than half of the \$50,000 goal has been collected or pledged.

Two annual \$1,000 scholarships to students of the college will be offered from the endowed scholarship when fundraising is completed. For more information, contact the alumni coordinator at (540) 231-5809 or the college development office at (540) 231-5546.

News from the alumni office

Academic Dean John White and Alumni Coordinator Lynn Young recently represented Virginia Tech at the 25th annual conference of the National Agriculture Alumni and Development Association at Purdue University.

A large number of universities shared ideas pertaining to both alumni and development programming. One new initiative, which evolved from the conference and will begin spring semester 2001, is the Ag Ambassador program. Several students from the College of Agriculture and the College of Natural Resources will serve their respective college and assist with

programs for both current students and alumni. Applications will be available from the academic dean's office.

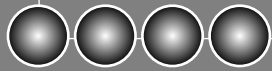
The annual College of Agriculture and pre-game tailgate event is set for October 7. The event is scheduled for 2 1/2 hours before kickoff for the homecoming game. A registration form will be sent in the mail soon.

The first regional alumni reception of the year was held May 18 at the Virginia Tech/University of Virginia NOVA Center in Falls Church. Nearly 25 alumni and administrators from Virginia Tech were in attendance.

The second regional alumni reception was held on Aug. 3 at

the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon. More than 30 local alumni attended. Special guests from Virginia Tech included Dean Andy Swiger, John White, Bob Meadows, Mark Sumner, Ned Skinner, Ike Eller, Bryan Rowland, and Lynn Young.

The first two regional alumni receptions planned for next year will be held in Hampton and the Eastern Shore in early February. If you would like to serve on the planning committee for these two events or if you would like to host a regional event, please contact Lynn Young at (540) 231-5809 or e-mail her at youngl@vt.edu.



Alphin aims to repay debt

Ed Alphin and his wife, Betty, have donated more than \$2.2 million to Virginia Tech over a 25-year period. Still, Alphin figures the debt hasn't been entirely repaid.

"I owe everything to that school," said Alphin "I was just a country boy when I went to VPI."

Seventy years ago Ed Alphin left the family farm near Buchanan to become a rat in the Corps of Cadets. When he graduated four years later he had a bachelor's degree in dairy science and a commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve.

He earned a master's in bacteriology and immunology from Virginia Tech, but only because the agriculture dean let him write his thesis while he was commanding a camp for the Civilian

Conservation Corps during the Depression.

After a brief stint as an Extension agent in North Carolina, Alphin was called to active duty in the buildup for World War II. He finally hung up his uniform in 1967, retiring as a colonel.

He then began a 13-year career in hospital administration in Washington, D.C. While involved in that career, Alphin began buying real estate, farms and houses, in the quiet Northern Virginia area.

Boom times came to that quiet area, allowing Alphin to translate real estate holdings into gifts to Virginia Tech. The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has benefited from his generosity, as has the Corps of Cadets and



Col. Ed Alphin at his home.

the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine.

"I feel it's right I do what I can," he said. "I profited greatly by the instruction I got at Virginia Tech. The university, the college, the Corps all did so much for me I won't ever be able to pay them back."

Rowland named development officer

Bryan Rowland has been named new development officer for the college. He is working during a transition period with Ike Eller, who will retire at the end of the year.

Rowland has been development director for the College of Natural Resources since 1998. He earned his doctorate from Virginia Tech in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. He was previously manager of education and training in the university's Economic Development Assistance Center.

Eller has served as development director since 1995, when he retired as a professor of animal science. His retirement this Dec. 31

will conclude a 45-year career with Virginia Tech.

"Ike has done an outstanding job as the half-time director of development," said Timothy Corvin, interim associate vice president for development. "His success as a half-time director of development underscores the need now to hire a full-time director to cover all the major gift prospects assigned to the college."



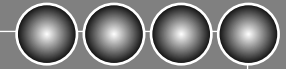
Bryan Rowland

Arena -

continued from page 1.

The arena will be a part of the livestock complex west of main campus on Plantation Road. It is planned for a site across the road from the Beef Cattle Center, the Livestock Judging Pavilion, and Campbell Arena.

Approximately one-half the funds for the facility were donated by individuals — including the Alphins and the gift from Stuart — commodity groups, corporations and foundations. The remaining funds were appropriated by the Virginia General Assembly.



Horses motivated Stuart

Horses were such a major part of Patricia Bonsall Stuart's life that as a child she played with toy horses rather than dolls. That love of horses continued until her death in 1996.

Stuart was 11 when she was given her first horse. By 1927, when she was just 14, she began a lifelong career of showing horses. She eventually won the reserve champion five-gaited class at Madison Square Garden.

She was born in Philadelphia. When she graduated from the Friends Central School there in 1930, her yearbook made this observation:

"What do we think of when we think of 'Pattie?' Well, lots of things. Horses, riding championships, good-looking clothes, horses, dancing, luncheons, plays, and horses, and horses."

She graduated from a liberal arts college, but never achieved her dream of becoming a veterinarian.

She married Herbert Stuart, a young engineer, in 1935. They moved to New Jersey until his retirement in 1967.

During that time, Mrs. Stuart began a 42-year judging career, and became involved in 4-H.

They moved to a farm near Charlottesville in 1967.

Mrs. Stuart became involved in the Virginia Horse Council, of which her husband was a founding director and she became secretary and president. She received the council's "Horsewoman of the Year" award in 1991.

She was inducted into the Virginia Horse Shows Association hall of fame in 1993. She also served as a director of the Virginia Horse Center Foundation. The



Pat Stuart in earlier years.

two were early supporters of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine.

Herb Stuart died in 1982 and Mrs. Stuart died in 1996. She left a nearly \$2.7 million bequest benefiting various horse-related programs in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and in the veterinary college.

(Special thanks to Bette Brand for providing material for this profile.)

Wall of honor

This wall in the foyer of Litton Reaves Hall honors major donors to the college. Plaques identifying donors are interspersed with photographs of scenes from the college. The wall was completed this summer.



Homecoming plans

Ag Homecoming activities will start 2 1/2 hours before kickoff of the homecoming game with Temple University Oct. 7.

The game is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m. But if that changes, the beginning of homecoming activities will shift as well. Because of late changes in the kickoff for the homecoming game last year, the Virginia Tech Ag Alumni Organization board decided to set the college's homecoming activities in tandem with kickoff.

Whatever the final kickoff time, homecoming activities will begin 2 1/2 hours earlier.

Student news

The **Virginia Tech Soil Judging Team** placed fifth in a 22-team field in national competition held in Idaho last April. **Aaron Syracuse**, senior in crop and soil environmental sciences, finished third in the nation in the individual competition. The team is coached by John Galbraith, assistant professor in the department.

Mark Alley, professor of crop and soil environmental sciences, coordinated this year's **Virginia Crop Production Association/Virginia Tech Agroecosystems** three-day tour for more than 30 students. During the tour in May, the students visited farms and heard presentations by Bill Blaylock of Park Forest

Farms, Wylie Farrar of Farrar Sod Farms and Michael Bailey of Goldenleaf Farms and Baileys manufacturing.

One **Virginia Tech Weed Science** team won the Northeast Collegiate Weed Science contest in August, and a second team did well, but did not place in the top three. The contest, held at the University of Guelph in Canada, included entries from nine U.S. and Canadian universities. Members of the winning team, all graduate students in the Department of Plant Pathology, Physiology and Weed Science, were **Steve King, Andy Bailey, Corey Whaley** and **Bryan Johnson**.

Whaley came in second overall in individual competition; King came in third overall. The teams were coached by Scott Hagood, professor of weed science. The students competed in a series of events, such as weed identification and diagnosing the effects of herbicides, testing their skills in weed science.

Meriem El-Hadj and **Jennifer F. Guay**, graduate students in the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences, participated in the outstanding young scientist research paper presentation at the American Forage and Grassland Council annual meeting in Madison, Wis. Guay placed third in the competition.

More jobs in offing for grads

Students with science and marketing skills will be the most sought after by employers in the year 2005, according to a new report just published by the Office of Higher Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. This report is the fifth in a series of 5-year employment opportunities projections.

"We're expecting slightly more job opportunities than there will be students to fill those jobs," said Allan Goecker of Purdue University and principal author of *Employment Opportunities for College Graduates in the Food and Agriculture Sciences, 2000-2005*.

Annual job openings for U.S. food and agricultural sciences graduates are projected to be around 58,000 while the number of graduates for those jobs will be about 57,000. Thirty-two percent of the job openings will be for

positions in science, engineering, and related specialties. Jobs in marketing, merchandising, and sales will comprise another 28 percent of the employment postings.

Among the careers expected to be in greatest demand are food scientists and engineers, landscape horticulturists, plant geneticists, and outdoor recreation specialists. Weaker employment opportunities will be found for those who provide services to farmers and ranchers. Hiring will also be down in agricultural and forest production, veterinary medicine general practices, and for some government agencies.

The report was co-authored by Jeffrey Gilmore of USDA and Christopher Whatley of Texas A&M University.

More information is available at the Food and Agricultural Education Information System Web site faeis.tamu.edu/supplydemand/.

Students and alums can connect to net

Career Services and the Virginia Tech Alumni Association have established VT CareerLink. CareerLink enables Virginia Tech students and alumni to network with Virginia Tech alumni for career planning and job search assistance.

Students and alumni may search the Web-accessible database for alumni volunteers based on major, occupation, employer name, work setting, services offered, schools attended and location. CareerLink displays contact information for each volunteer who matches the selection criteria. Users then contact volunteers directly.

If you have questions about gaining access to CareerLink, call (540) 231-6241.

CareerLink requires a frames-compatible browser. Check out the CareerLink Web site www.career.vt.edu/vtcl99/asp/default.asp for more information.

The CARET, not the stick

Joe Coffey knows first-hand the importance of promoting agriculture to politicians in Washington. He recently retired from a successful career with Southern States.

He also retired last year as one of Virginia's representatives to the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching, or CARET. The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges created the organization in 1982.

"The role of CARET is critical," Coffey said. "My experience in working with Congress is that the most persuasive argument comes from somebody from a congressional district telling the congressman that Virginia Tech has made a difference."

CARET helps localize issues so they are important to individual congressmen. That's not hard to do, Coffey said, because Virginia Tech makes important contributions throughout the state.

Representatives of the organization are knowledgeable about the state and about the university, he said. They provide expert testimony to Congress, and work with other organizations and individuals to promote agricultural research, Extension and teaching.

"I was involved in CARET for about 10 years," Coffey said. "It was a special opportunity for me to become more engaged with the university. I had to learn more about the university so I could be more effective."

Though federal funding for agricultural research has been flat for 20 years when adjusted for inflation, Coffey says the efforts of CARET have been in part responsible for keeping that funding from going into the red.

"It's hard to determine how successful you've been, whether you've been successful at all," he said. "I'm convinced, though, that CARET makes a difference."

Making that difference isn't easy, he said.

"Continued public support requires that CARET representatives put a lot of energy into it," he said. "The key to success is to develop stakeholder support, support among the people affected by a program. It takes a lot of effort to develop that support."

Current CARET members appointed by Virginia Tech are Edwin Jaenke and Donna Pugh Johnson.

Hager addresses leadership banquet



Lt. Gov. John Hager (right) greets the late Sam Obenshain (center) and his son (left) at the Ag Leadership Banquet July 13. In his keynote address, Hager praised the agriculture industry and the college for the benefits they provide the state, and said biotechnology and other advances are important to Virginia's economy. "Agriculture is the key to an elusive future," he said.

Sweet named Udall Scholar

Environmental sciences senior Brian C. Sweet has been awarded a scholarship by the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in Environmental Policy Foundation. Sweet was one of 80 students nationwide to receive the one-year \$5,000 scholarship.

The scholarship was established in 1992 in honor of former Congressman Udall, whose long career in public service was marked by concern for the environment.

Sweet, who grew up in a community on the Chesapeake Bay, is preparing for a career in environmental policy with a non-governmental organization that works to preserve the bay. He intends to attend graduate school after he graduates next year.

Sweet and his father are members of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Oyster Growers Association, which is working to replenish the bay's pollution-decimated oyster population. One form of pollution is nutrient enrichment, which he is studying in an undergraduate research project.

Faculty excellence recognized in 2000



Mike Akers, professor of dairy science, was named to the Horace E. and Elizabeth F. Alphin Professorship for a second term and was awarded the Alumni Award for Excellence in Research. He has received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Virginia Tech, and his doctorate from Michigan State University.



Wayne Purcell, professor of agricultural and applied economics, was one of 11 professors in the state to receive the 2000 Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Virginia Tech, and his doctorate from Michigan State University.



David Bevan, associate professor of biochemistry, received the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' Certificate of Teaching Excellence for 2000. With a hands-on, learning-by-doing approach to teaching, and a caring attitude, he has been exceptionally successful with a broad range of students. He earned his doctorate from Northwestern University.



David Vaughan, professor of biological systems engineering, received the Certificate of Teaching Excellence for the College of Engineering. He teaches such courses as engines and power trains, energy in agriculture, and engineering the plant environment. He earned his bachelor's, master's, and doctorate from North Carolina State University.



Joyce Martin, 4-H Youth Senior Extension agent for Montgomery County, received the Alumni Award for Excellence in Extension. She recruits and trains 4-H volunteers who work directly with the youth. She also works with a number of 4-H boards. She earned her doctorate from Virginia Tech.



Robert Wright, professor of horticulture, was named to the Julian H. and Margaret S. Gary Professorship. The endowed seat was made possible by a bequest by the Garys, who were gardening enthusiasts and long-time supporters of the Norfolk Botanical Gardens. Wright earned his doctorate from Purdue University.

Swiger honored by Ohio State

Andy Swiger, dean of agriculture at Virginia Tech, was named to the Animal Science Hall of Fame at the Ohio State University this spring.

"This is an honor that is especially meaningful for me as it comes from an institution that has been such an important part of my life," Swiger said.

Swiger is a 1954 graduate in animal husbandry. He earned his master's and doctoral degrees from Iowa State University. He worked as a geneticist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture before joining the faculty of the University of Nebraska.

In 1965, Swiger returned to Ohio State, where he established a comprehensive research program

in swine and beef cattle genetics, and was promoted to professor. He joined the faculty at Virginia Tech as head of the Department of Animal Science in 1980. He served as director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station before being named dean of Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in 1992.

J. Paxton Marshall

J. Paxton Marshall, an eminent agricultural economist who helped shape citizen leadership in rural areas, and who left an imprint on many public policy areas in Virginia, died June 16.

A professor and a public policy specialist for Virginia Cooperative Extension, Marshall's 28-year career with Virginia Tech had an impact on the state, the university, and the people he worked with.

Marshall developed a statewide program on land use policy and planning problems. His efforts in developing citizen leadership skills resulted in the Virginia Rural Leadership Development Program and the conduct of "Virginia Assemblies," which brought citizens together to discuss critical public policy issues. He was a leader in analyzing and shaping national policies for peanuts and tobacco.

As much as he influenced policy in Virginia and nationally, Marshall also left lasting impact on the people he worked with.

"Honesty, integrity, and compassion, that's how I'd describe him," said Shirley Baber, executive secretary for the department. "He genuinely cared for people, and he was always there for you when you needed it."

Marshall, who joined the Virginia Tech faculty in 1967, received his bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from the University of Kentucky. Marshall retired in 1995 to Louisville, Ky. He was 78 when he died after being ill for several months.



Paxton Marshall

Sam Obenshain

Samuel S. Obenshain, a nationally known soil scientist, retired professor, and local farmer, died July 25 at the age of 96.

Obenshain was the first soil scientist on the faculty at Virginia Tech, and he is credited with creating the premier soil survey and interpretation educational program in the nation. He taught at the university from 1933 until his retirement in 1969.

He promoted the use of high-quality soil surveys, which are used extensively in agriculture. He is especially recognized for pioneering the use of soil surveys in urbanizing areas.

Obenshain earned a bachelor's degree in agronomy from Virginia Tech, a master's degree in soils from Texas A&M, and a doctorate in soil fertility from Iowa State University.

After specialized training in 1948, Obenshain became the first person at Virginia Tech authorized to use radioactive isotopes in research.

He was active in many professional and civic associations, including the American Society of Agronomy, the Soil Science Society of America, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Virginia Academy of Science, and the Rotary Club.

He was awarded the outstanding graduate award from Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in 1985. In 1997, he received the college's Ag Alumni Citation.

Meadows heads 4-H

Bob Meadows, longtime 4-H specialist, has been named Virginia Cooperative Extension's associate director for 4-H. In a reorganization of Extension administration this spring, the post of associate director for 4-H was established as a separate office.



What's in a name?

A Virginia Tech Ag Alumni cap, coffee mug, and denim shirt if you provide the winning suggestion for a new name for this newsletter.

CALS Newsletter doesn't do it for some people, so we're looking for a new name for this publication. What are the rules? It has to fit. Beyond that, let your imagination go.

Make suggestions to Stewart MacInnis at (540) 231-5863, by E-mail to macinnis@vt.edu, or drop a note to Stewart MacInnis, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, 104 Hutcheson Hall (0402), Blacksburg, Va. 24061.

We hope to unveil the new name and award the prizes at homecoming.

New leaders take over in Horticulture and PPPWS

Two newly recruited faculty members with extensive international experience have taken up duties as department heads in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Two other departments have acting department heads while searches are underway for permanent administrators.

"These are changes in very important positions within the college, but they are occurring with a minimum of fuss and bother," said Andy Swiger, dean of the college. "These leaders are bringing notable strengths to their jobs that will allow their departments to continue providing outstanding service to students and to industry across Virginia."

Craig L. Nessler assumed duties as head of the Department of Plant Pathology, Physiology, and Weed Science July 15. Nessler was professor and associate head

of the Department of Biology at Texas A&M University. He was a visiting research officer at the Plant Biotechnology Institute in Canada during 1989-1990.

He succeeds Kriton Hatzios, who became director of the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station last year.

Jerzy Nowak is the new head of the Department of Horticulture. He took up his duties Aug. 21. Nowak was head of the Department of Plant Science at Nova Scotia Agricultural College.

He succeeds Robert Wright, who is returning to teaching and research duties.

Nowak earned a master's degree in plant biochemistry from the Agricultural University in Olsztyn-Kortowo, Poland, and a doctorate in agricultural sciences from the same university.

He held positions equivalent to assistant and associate professor there, was a visiting senior lecturer at the University of Lagos, and was a visiting research fellow at the University of Alberta before he joined the faculty at Nova Scotia Agricultural College.

In the Department of Food Science and Technology, Merle Pierson, a former department head, has been tapped as acting head until a successor is found for Cameron Hackney, who took up duties earlier this summer as dean of the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Consumer Sciences at West Virginia University.

In Dairy Science, Charles Stallings will take up duties as acting department head when Bill Vinson departs Nov. 1 to become associate dean for research working with Hackney at West Virginia University.



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