



# Newsletter

..... Spring '99

## COLLEGE CREATES POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

The first wave of graduates from CALS' Environmental Science major is building a strong reputation for the program among employers, said David Parrish, coordinator of the major in the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences (CSES).

With over 300 graduates in the job market since the program began in 1992, Parrish credits the growing reputation to the need companies, consulting firms and regulatory agencies have for scientists who understand the science of human interaction with the environment.

"Science' is very much the operative word in the Environmental Science program," he said. "There is a very heavy dose of it. It is a very science-intensive, very rigorous, and very demanding curriculum."

While policy issues are not ignored by the CALS program, they are not its central focus, as is the case with many other environmental major programs.

"The skills our graduates take out into the job market are ones employers definitely want," Parrish said. "This is a very multi-  
*(see College on page 9)*



*By Andy Swiger, Dean*

**P**aul Mellon, the wealthy though retiring philanthropist, left the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences \$5 million after his death Feb. 1. That's the largest single gift ever given directly to the college.

The gift to our college specified in his will was far smaller than many gifts — it was listed in a Washington Post article in an obscure paragraph devoted to "other gifts." Nonetheless, it is a major award for this college.

The money, when it is received, will be most welcomed. Just as great a gift, however, is the message this bequest gives us: this college is a trusted, valued, and relevant institution in Virginia today. That

## Mellon Gift Rewards College's Good Works

is a message I hear when a legislator without prompting from us introduces a bill to support our research, or when industry comes to us for help with a problem, and from a multitude of sources.

Everyone associated with the college does tremendous work. All our work in teaching, research, extension, and in vital support from the staff added together is the foundation for our reputation. On top of that is the hard work done here by our students in mastering their studies, and the competence and dedication they take to their jobs after  
*(see Swiger on page 9)*

### INSIDE

*Ag Homecoming . . . . . 7*

*New Interim Director . . . . 3*

*1998 Faculty Awards . . . . 5*

*Fighting Malaria . . . . . 5*



# Academic Programs Continue to Strengthen

By John M. White  
Associate Dean and Director

Enrollments of undergraduate and graduate majors in CALS continue to stabilize at about 1,500 undergraduates and 250 graduate students. The college ranks fifteenth in enrollment among all land-grant colleges of food and agricultural sciences. The quality of our students continues to improve. In fact, the average high school class rank of CALS freshmen entering Fall 1998 was the top 16 percent, which was the same as new College of Engineering students and the highest in the university.

Careers and placement continues to be very strong. More than 70 corporations and state and federal agencies attended our college Careers Fair last October. Over 20 of these stayed in town the next day to interview students for internships and placement positions. Our next Careers Fair will be Oct. 14 in Squires Student Center.

Two of our teaching faculty will be honored at Founders Day on April 9. Dr. Reese Voshell, professor of entomology, will receive the Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award. Dr. Dave Parrish, professor of crop and soil environmental sciences, will be awarded the Alumni Outstanding Academic Advisor

Award. Outstanding teaching and academic advising are staples of this college.

Jodie Johnson, Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences, will also be honored on Founders Day as the outstanding graduating senior in CALS. Jodie, a native of Dobson, N.C., sports a grade point average of 3.9 out of a possible 4.0, has earned dean's list honors every semester of her enrollment, has a long list of leadership and extracurricular activities, and has been pledged into Golden Key, Gamma Sigma Delta, ODK and Phi Kappa Phi. The competition for outstanding graduating senior in CALS this year was fierce, with any one of the nine departmental nominees worthy of the recognition.

We were pleased to host 10 students and a faculty member from Orange Free State University, South Africa, last fall as we initiated an international student/faculty exchange program with that institution. We currently have seven students and a faculty member, Dr. Dave Notter (Animal and Poultry Sciences), spending spring semester 1999 at Orange Free State University. Also, we will have three study abroad programs in Europe this summer. Two groups will participate in agriculture marketing studies, one headed by Dr. Eluned Jones and the other by Dr. Waldon Kerns, both of Agricultural and Applied Economics. Professor Robert McDuffie, Horticulture, will take a horticulture gardens group.

Tom Dobbins, who coordinat-

ed our Ag Alumni Organization for the last couple of years, returned to Clemson University Jan. 1 at their request to fill a critical need in their Ag Education program. He will finish his Ph.D. while working full time at Clemson this spring semester. Phil Fravel, Ph.D. candidate in Agricultural Education, is serving as our Ag Alumni Coordinator while teaching in our Agricultural Technology program this spring.

The CALS Newsletter is produced periodically for the College Of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech by the Agriculture, Research and Extension Communications unit. Comments should be addressed to Stewart MacInnis, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, 104 Hutchison Hall (Mail Code 0402), Blacksburg, Va. 24061, or by e-mail to macinnis@vt.edu.

Dean: Andy Swiger

Editor: Stewart MacInnis, CALS public relations coordinator

Layout & Design: Mark Chorba, ARE Communications graphics supervisor

Writers: Stewart MacInnis. Special thanks to club reporters and faculty advisers.

Photographers: Bob Veltri, Rick Giffiths, Stewart MacInnis

Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, handicap, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, or political affiliation. Anyone having questions concerning discrimination or accessibility should contact the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office.



# 25-Year Veteran of Extension Named Interim Director

David Barrett, a 25-year veteran of Virginia Cooperative Extension, has been named interim director of the agency, said Andy Swiger, dean of CALS.

Barrett succeeds C. Clark Jones, who took up duties as Virginia Tech's vice president for outreach Jan. 1. Barrett will continue his current duties as associate director for field operations for Extension while filling the director's position, Swiger said.

Virginia Cooperative Extension, a part of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, provides scientific information that citizens can use to improve their lives at work and home. Extension is a cooperative effort of local govern-

ments, state government, the land-grant universities, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

With 106 local offices in nearly all of the state's counties and cities, Extension provides programming in the broad areas of agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer services, and youth programs.

Jones, who served as director since 1996, is credited with the streamlining of the organization's administrative structure, the increased specialization of agents, and the increased effectiveness of the organization by introducing a modern information technology system.



*David Barrett, interim director*



*John Watkins*

## Watkins Named Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agriculture

John C. Watkins (Hort. '69) has been named the 1999 Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agriculture by the Virginia Agribusiness Council.

Watkins represents the 10th Senatorial District in the Virginia State Senate. He is president of Watkins Nurseries in Midlothian.

"Sen. Watkins has been a voice of reason in the Virginia General Assembly," said Agribusiness Council President

Donna Pugh Johnson. "As a Virginia Tech graduate and a respected nurseryman, Sen. Watkins knows that Virginia agribusiness can be successful only as it continues to grow in harmony with the environment."

Watkins was cited for his willingness to call for his fellow legislators to base laws "on fact, not emotion, and on science, not hearsay."

# CALS Establishes Link to Greek Agricultural School

The ties CALS has established with the two-year college component of the American Farm School of Thessaloniki, Greece, will benefit both institutions, according to the director of CALS' two-year agricultural technology program.



*John Crunkleton (left) presents cooperative agreement to Sperry Lea and George Draper of the American Farm School.*

The memorandum of understanding between the two institutions creates the groundwork for exchange of students and faculty members, as well as technical assistance and training, said John Crunkilton, associate dean and director of agricultural technology for CALS.

The memorandum was signed by Virginia Tech President Paul Torgersen and George Draper, president of the American Farm School.

"The Farm School is quite a renowned institution," Crunkilton said. "It does work with many of the other countries in the Balkan region."

The agreement pertains to the Dimitris Perrotis College of Agricultural Studies, a two-year college program of the American Farm School. Crunkilton helped establish the curriculum for the program as a Fulbright Scholar three years ago.

The Farm School was estab-

lished in 1904 by American expatriates to teach the rural youth of Greece modern agricultural methods and vocational skills. It now offers academic and vocational training for students equivalent to the American 10th, 11th and 12th grades. The College of Agricultural Studies was established in 1996 to provide a two-year degree program.

Last summer Crunkilton, who has been appointed to the Farm School's governing board, gave the commencement address at the ceremony marking the awarding of the first college degrees.

The Farm School's two-year program "has been an innovation in agricultural technology in Greece," he said. It is putting graduates into the agriculture sector who understand good agricultural practices and farm management techniques.

## Students Prepare for CareerScope

Virginia Tech is the place more and more employers are looking for workers. CALS and the College of Forestry and Wildlife Resources are helping match them with outstanding students who are looking for jobs.

The two colleges are co-sponsoring CareerScope '99, the 10th annual job fair for students interested in permanent, summer, and co-op job opportunities. CareerScope '99 will be held on Oct. 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Squires Student Center.

The job fair is an opportunity for employers to promote their organization and to recruit Hokies. Employers attending the fair will be provided with a booth where they can display company literature, meet potential candidates for jobs, and receive hundreds of resumes. Employers are also given the option to conduct on-campus interviews with students the day following the job fair. A reception will be held the evening before the job fair to give employers the opportunity to meet with faculty, other employers, and students in leadership roles in curriculum clubs.

Last year more than 70 organizations and corporations and more than 500 students attended CareerScope.

For more information about CareerScope '99, contact Margaret Jenkins, career services coordinator, at (540) 231-9666; email: [jenkinsm@vt.edu](mailto:jenkinsm@vt.edu).



Shirley Luckhart examines mosquitoes in her laboratory.

# Scientist Seeks Genetic Solution to Malaria



Malaria has made such a dramatic re-emergence in many areas of the world that the last five years has seen the growth of global interest in finding novel strategies to control the disease.

Somewhere in the workings of the genes of mosquitoes may be a key to disrupting the insect's complex relationship with the parasites that cause malaria, a key that could break the cycle of transmission.

Shirley Luckhart, an assistant professor of biochemistry at Virginia Tech, is searching for that key. She's studying the two-week period when the malaria para-

site develops inside a mosquito.

Only about 70 of the hundreds of mosquito species are capable of transmitting malaria. The disease-causing parasites must negotiate a torturous life cycle that alternates between the mosquito and an animal host.

Luckhart said that resistant parasites have emerged for each of the eight drugs that are commercially available to treat malaria. The species of mosquitoes that carry malaria are also becoming resistant to a number of control methods. Countries witnessing a rising inci-

dence of the disease are often experiencing dissolving social structures, which leads to increasingly ineffective control measures.

"The approach we're taking, if it's successful, is to develop transgenic mosquitoes that are incapable of transmitting the parasite," she said.

Luckhart is looking at biological and biochemical events occurring in the mosquito and in the parasite during the two-week incubation period.

"What we want to do is identify points in that process where the mosquito's immune system keeps the parasite's development in check," Luckhart said.

There is also the possibility that by understanding the biochemical processes occurring in the mosquito, scientists may be able to manipulate other responses to the parasite or they

may be able to interfere with other pathogens, like viruses, that mosquitoes transmit.

Luckhart developed the project at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research during a three-year fellowship before she came to Virginia Tech last summer. She will continue to collaborate with the Army, which has a variety of research programs concerning mosquitoes because of the potential for soldiers to find themselves in areas where malaria is prevalent.

Her work is also supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health and from the World Health Organization.



# Faculty Excellence



**Mike Chandler**, professor of agricultural and applied economics, and Extension specialist, earned the 1998 University Public Service Excellence Award. He was recognized for the wide array of public service activities he coordinates for appointed and elected local government officials. As a community development specialist, he designs, delivers, and evaluates off-campus Extension and continuing education programs focusing on land-use planning, economic development, and generalized public management. He has conducted more than 500 workshops for localities on such topics as zoning, growth management, community sustainability, community goal setting, and strategic planning. He earned a doctor of public administration degree from the University of Georgia.

**Bill Eigel**, professor of food science and technology, received the 1998 University Award for Excellence in Career Advising. Unusual though it is for a nomination to come from students rather than administrators, it's not surprising that the students of the Department of Food Science and Technology nominated Eigel for the award. His commitment to students has earned him their appreciation. He spends time helping them select courses, preparing resumes, and even getting interviews with potential employers. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Virginia Tech, and his doctorate from Michigan State University.



**Mike Ellerbrock**, associate professor of agricultural and applied economics, received the university's 1998 Sporn Award for Teaching of Introductory Subjects. It is the only university teaching honor presented by the student body. The Sporn Award recognized his inspiring and thoughtful teaching style. Ellerbrock expects his students to do their best, and in the process teaches them to set high standards for themselves. In addition to his teaching duties, Ellerbrock is director of the Center for Economic Education. He earned his bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University, and earned his master's and doctoral degrees from Clemson University.

**E.T. Kornegay**, professor of animal and poultry sciences, received the 1998 Morrison Award for outstanding research that has been of direct importance in livestock production. Presented by the American Society of Animal Science, the award recognizes his extensive research efforts. The Morrison Award is one of the most prestigious awards available to animal scientists. Kornegay earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from North Carolina State University, and his doctorate from Michigan State University.



**David R. Notter**, professor of animal and poultry sciences, received the 1998 Rockefeller Prentice Memorial Award. The prestigious award is presented for research excellence in animal breeding and genetics. Presented by the American Society of Animal Science, the award recognizes his extensive research program dealing with animal breeding and genetics. Notter earned his bachelor's degree from The Ohio State University, and his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Nebraska.

# Recognized in 1998

**Richard Nunnally**, Chesterfield County Extension Agent, received the 1998 Alumni Award for Excellence in Extension. His many Extension programs in Chesterfield County help local residents and businesses improve and maintain the quality of their environment. Among the programs he delivers are environmental horticulture, the Chesterfield Master Gardeners program, and water quality programs. He also provides pesticide re-certification classes, and coordinated the writing of two manuals to prepare prospective applicators for the certification testing. Nunnally earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Virginia Commonwealth University.



**Wayne Purcell**, professor of agricultural and applied economics, was named Alumni Distinguished Professor. In making the prestigious award, the university's board of visitors cited his excellence in the classroom, far-reaching extension programs, and an active research program. The professorship recognizes extraordinary academic citizenships and distinguished service within the university community. Purcell is one of only seven professors on campus to currently hold the honor. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Virginia Tech, and his doctorate from Michigan State University.

## Homecoming Rescheduled for October 16th



The Hokies will battle Syracuse in Lane Stadium during the homecoming game Oct. 16. The match with Syracuse was set as homecoming in late February after the original homecoming date of Sept. 11 was discarded because it conflicted with the religious observance of Rosh Hashanah.

The Ag Alumni Roundup is being rescheduled for the afternoon of the Syracuse game, which kicks off at 8 p.m. Details on homecoming events will be available later. The Virginia Tech

Ag Alumni Organization is not offering tickets. Because of the anticipated high turnout for the game, people wanting to attend are urged to call for tickets and make lodging reservations as early as possible.

The ticket office telephone number is 1-800 VA TECH4 (828-3244).

Also tied to homecoming is the annual CALS Scholarship

banquet, to be held at 6 p.m. on Oct. 15 at Custom Catering in Blacksburg. An early notice to those invited had cited a September date for the banquet. The change in homecoming also caused the change in the date of the banquet. Those who traditionally attend the banquet are current scholarship holders, scholarship benefactors, faculty, friends and others.

# Gifts Make a World of Difference

By A. L. Eller, Jr. *Director of Development*

Fundraising is becoming ever more important for higher education. State funds are an absolute necessity, but gifts from alumni, friends, corporations, foundations and others truly allow for program excellence. The very successful Campaign for Virginia Tech, which closed last June 30, garnered \$337 million, 35 percent above its \$250 million goal.

A \$15 million campaign goal was set for CALS, which included Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Smith Mountain Lake 4-H Project. Gifts to the college totaled \$25.6 million, 71 percent above the goal. Of this total, \$10.7 million went into endowments, \$4.7 million was earmarked for facilities and equipment, and \$10.2 million was set aside for current operations.

Many very large and important gifts came to CALS. A gift from the estate of Patricia Bonsall Stuart totaled \$2,639,244. The gift

was split between CALS and the Virginia Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine. CALS will use \$1 million to set up an endowment for equine studies in the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences. The remaining \$319,622 will be used toward the construction of the Virginia Tech Livestock Teaching Arena. Pat Stuart and her husband, Herb, had a farm at Afton, Va., and bred Arabian horses.

Another very large gift of over \$900,000

came from the estate of Margaret S. Gary to endow a professorship, create a program enrichment endowment, and add to the Julian H. and Margaret S. Gary Scholarship, in the Department of Horticulture.

Five new scholarships in excess of \$100,000 each were established. The Charles W. Wampler Sr. Scholarship was funded by Wampler Foods, Inc., and William D. Wampler. Southern States Cooperative, Inc., funded the William T. Steele Graduate Scholarship. Mr. and Mrs. Reginald H. Nelson IV, Mr. and Mrs. Gene A. James, and Mr. and Mrs. Horace E. Alphin funded graduate scholarships in their names. Some \$500,000 has been endowed to support graduate stu-

dent tuition. Many other graduate and undergraduate endowed scholarships were recently established.

Some of the largest gifts come to CALS as deferred gifts. Benjamin F. Morgan Jr., former CEO of Dairymen, Inc., and a Virginia Tech alumnus, set up a charitable remainder unitrust in the amount of \$2.25 million. Of that, \$50,000 will endow a scholarship in the Corps of Cadets; \$1.1 million will endow a scholarship in CALS for students studying agricultural economics; and \$1.1 million will establish an unrestricted endowment in the college. John R. Dawkins of Lewisburg, W.Va., established a charitable remainder unitrust in the amount of \$500,000, which established an

## Gifts to CALS during Campaign for Virginia Tech

	Number of Gifts	Amount Given	Percent of Total Given
Alumni	3,865	\$7.7 million	30.1
Friends	1,036	\$10.1 million	39.6
Corporations	511	\$4.5 million	17.5
Foundations	28	\$1.8 million	7.4
Other Organizations	208	\$750,000	2.9
Miscellaneous	227	\$650,000	2.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,875</b>	<b>\$25.6 million</b>	<b>100.0</b>

endowed scholarship in CALS for students from southern West Virginia.

The campaign to raise \$1.5 million for the construction of the Virginia Tech Livestock Teaching Arena has been very successful. Matching funds to construct the \$3.2 million facility will come from the state. Major gifts of \$25,000 or more came from Horace E. Alphin, English Construction Company, William A. Hazel, Dwight Houff and the Houff Foundation, William C. Latham, James P. Massie, William B. McSpadden, S. W. Rodgers, Patricia B. Stuart, the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation and county affiliates, William D. Wampler, Nicholas Wehrmann and White-

stone Farm.

## Swiger

*(continued from page 1)*

they take to their jobs after graduation.

Woody Hayes, the famous Ohio State football coach, wrote a book entitled, "You Win with People." We also win with people. When the university President's Awards of Excellence are given on Founder's Day, four of five staff honored will be from our college. On the same day we will win the Advising Excellence Award for the sixth time in the 10 years it has been given.

Even all that would not support the excellent reputation we have.

## College

*continued from page 1*

disciplinary program, drawing on the strengths of the entire university. And that has worked to the students' advantage."

The program is centered in CSES, but departments throughout CALS and the university give it its broad and well-rounded nature. The inspiration for the major emerged among the soil scientists in CSES. The department, in fact, had been teaching environmental courses for nearly 30 years before the major was established, Parrish said.

Students choose one of four options in the program:

- Aquatic Resources,

concentrating on fresh water as a resource. It is concerned largely with water quality matters.

- Land Resources, which lays down the science behind making good decisions about land use.

- Plant Resources, which taps into the crop science expertise in CSES. It looks at using plants in the reclamation of drastically disturbed areas, such as surface mines. It also explores the field of phytoremediation, using plants to treat areas of pollution.

- Waste Management, which looks at the issues of proper disposal of waste, covering such topics as landfill design, septic systems, waste cleanup, and strategies

to recycle waste.

Two students have won Udall Scholarships since the major was established. The national scholarship is very competitive, and the award of the scholarships is another indication of the stature the major is gaining, Parrish said.

## 4-Hers learn value of the Bay

By the time 4-Hers finish a three-day spring-time marine science camp on Virginia's Eastern Shore they develop an awareness of the beauty, diversity, and fragility of the Chesapeake Bay. They also come away a step ahead of their peers in mastering some of the Standards of Learning they face in school.

Virginia Cooperative Extension has teamed up with the Eastern Shore research station of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science to provide the 5th-graders with a "hands-in" experience. Standards of Learning are integrated into the program, said Pauline Milbourne, 4-H agent for Accomack County. Participants come away with important lessons that will help them in school and in life.

The key ingredient that permeates the college is a shared vision to be relevant. Relevant to the needs of students, relevant to the needs of client groups, relevant to the needs of society.

This college is a big organization, and it must go in many different directions at once. An edict demanding relevance cannot be issued from the top and be effective; rather, giving direction to this organization must come from many decentralized points. We do this well because what has grown in this college is a culture, a culture to address the important

issues of the day, a culture of relevance.

We are all grateful for the gift from Paul Mellon. We'll certainly use it in a way that we think he would have liked to see it used. A large portion will surely go for equine programs at the Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension Center, which was established 50 years ago with his support. The gift will benefit the college as a whole, as well.

Perhaps the greatest gift Mr. Mellon gives us is the knowledge that we are appreciated.

# Student Clubs & Teams

## Dairy Club

The Virginia Tech Dairy Club took many top honors this year in competitions at the Southern American Dairy Science Association (ADSA) competition in Memphis, Tenn., in February. The club placed second overall in the chapter competition, which is based on the activities report, display, club activities, and student participation.

**Darren Remsburg** presented his first-place paper in the production division titled "Sex Control: Potential in Dairy Cattle." **Joel Coble** presented "Mycobacterium paratuberculosis: Are Concerns Valid?" in the manufacturing division competition, placing second. The annual scrapbook placed second and the club display took top honors. **Dee Guyton** was elected President of the Southern ADSA Student Affiliate Division, **Jana Edwards** was voted in as Officer at Large, and **Dr. Ray Nebel** was elected 1st Year Advisor to the Student Affiliate. Also, **Scott Sink** received the Outstanding Undergraduate Student Scholarship from the regional association.

The showing this winter followed a successful year for the Vir-

ginia Tech Intercollegiate Dairy Cattle Judging Team in 1998.

The team placed third of 23 teams competing at the national contest held at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis., early in October. The team also placed fourth at the Harrisburg



*THE DAIRY JUDGING "A" TEAM with one of the awards it received. Pictured are (from left), Katherine Knowlton, coach; Kelly Myers, junior; Darren Remsburg, senior; Jaclyn Stewart, senior; Jeremy Daubert, senior; and Michael Barnes, coach.*

All-American Contest, and sixth at the Eastern States Contest held in Springfield, Mass., in September.

## PPPWS

Graduate students from the Department of Plant Pathology, Physiology and Weed Science won first and third places in a regional competition sponsored by the Northeastern Weed Science Society.

Held last summer in Georgetown, Del., the competition pitted the eight Virginia Tech students organized in two

teams against teams from twelve other universities. The teams competed in four events: weed identification, herbicide identification based on plant symptomology, solving farmer problems, and sprayer calibration.

Taking first place was

## Block & Bridle

The Virginia Tech's Block & Bridle Club was the only one of more than 200 chapters nationwide to place in the top three of three major awards at the national convention in January.

The local chapter took first place for annual yearbook, second place for scrapbook, and third place for chapter activities. The 43 members of the club attending the convention comprised the largest contingent at the event in Fort Worth, Texas.

## Agronomy Club

Members of the Virginia Tech Agronomy Club competed in the Quiz Bowl Contest at the American Society of Agronomy meetings in Baltimore in October. They placed third of 34 collegiate teams, losing to the University of Minnesota in the semi-finals.

## APSC

## Quadrathlon Team

The Academic Quadrathlon Team of the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences placed first in the Quiz Bowl and third overall in the Intercollegiate Academic Quadrathlon competition held at Mississippi State University and the American Society of Animal Sci-

ences' southern section meeting in Memphis, Tenn., in February.

### CSES

A student team from the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences finished with a tie for third place in the College Quiz Bowl at the annual meeting of the American Society of Agronomy. Team members were **Jodie Johnson**, **Kim Van Horn**, **Jason Kenner**, and **Brandon Schmitt**.

The Virginia Tech Soil Judging Team captured first place honors at the Southeastern Regional Collegiate Soil Judging Contest held last Nov. 6 near Crossville, Tenn.

Undergraduate teams from 12 universities and seven states in the southeast U.S. participated in the contest. Each student performed soil descriptions, interpretations, and classification of four diverse soils. As this newsletter goes to press, the Virginia Tech team

along with the second and third place teams will be representing the southeast at the National Collegiate Soil Judging Contest at the University of Arizona in Tucson, March 21-26.

The Virginia Tech team is coached by **Pamela J. Thomas**, senior research associate, Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences. **Aaron Syracuse**, junior, Chester, Va., was the top individual (out of 75 students), and **Brian**

**Jones**, senior, Weyers Cave, Va., was the fifth highest individual. Other team members include **Kim Burckle**, junior, Centreville, Va.; **Adam Kappesser**, sophomore, Williamsburg, Va.; **Emily Miller**, senior, Fulks Run, Va.; **Ryan Reed**, senior, Hagerstown, Md.; and **Elizabeth Webster**, senior, El Paso, Texas.

## Student Achievers

**Karen A. Hix**, a junior majoring in Environmental Sciences in the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences, was awarded a scholarship by the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in Environmental Policy Foundation. She was one of 75 students nationwide to receive the one-year \$5,000 scholarship.

The scholarship honors Udall, whose long career in public service was marked by concern for the environment.

**J. Michael "Mike" Schmidt**, now a graduate student in CSES, won a Udall Scholarship in 1997. Schmidt was one of 20 students nationwide named a USA Today Academic All American last year. He also received a national Phi Kappa Phi fellowship to use in his graduate training.

**Julie Bardugone**, a junior and a student ambassador in the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences, placed first in the Undergraduate Research Competition at the American Society of Animal Sciences' southern section meetings in Memphis, Tenn., in February.

**Heather McMahon**, graduate student in food science and technology, won the best oral paper presentation in enology at the American Society for Enology and Viticulture annual meeting last July. She also received a scholarship from the society to support her research on grape-derived aroma/flavor precursors. Due in large measure to her efforts, Lallemand International donated \$3,000 for general support of the enology program at Virginia Tech. McMahon has

worked in the Virginia Tech enology lab as a laboratory specialist since earning her master's degree in Food Science and Technology with study in enology last December.

**Dan Poston** and **Wendy Pline**, graduate students in the Department of Plant Pathology, Physiology, and Weed Science, earned laurels at recent meetings of professional associations. Poston won the graduate student paper award at the 1998 meeting of the North Central Weed Science Society. Pline won a graduate student paper award at the 1999 meeting of the Southern Weed Science Society.

**Jami Todd**, CSES, was elected corresponding secretary and **Brandon Schmitt**, CSES, was elected treasurer of the Student Branch of the American Society of

Agronomy at the society's annual meeting in Baltimore in October.

**Mark Fina**, a Ph.D. student in agricultural and applied economics, has had his application for a Fulbright Fellowship forwarded to Finland, the proposed host country for his research. If approved, Fina will conduct research on the phenomenon that has become known as the 'Volvo Effect' in Finland. When landowners are faced with a major expenditure, they often harvest and sell timber to meet the obligation. Harvesting when expenditures dictate the need rather than harvesting at an optimal harvest time has implications for the landowners' well-being, as well as the Finnish economy and Finland's forest stocks.



*Mark Alley*

# ***Alley Named to Wysor Professorship***

died in 1979, was an agricultural Extension agent and later an Extension agronomist. He established Virginia Seed Service, which evolved into Southern States Cooperative.

Alley succeeds soil scientist David C. Martens as Wysor Professor. Martens retired last summer. Alley has been a faculty member for the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences since 1977.

His research includes investigations into nitrogen management in no-till wheat production. A cropping systems study

he is heading is looking at ways to improve efficiency in the production of cash crops in the Coastal Plains region. Among the aspects involved in that study is the adaptation of precision farming practices to the unique character of Virginia's farmlands.

He teaches an undergraduate course in soil fertility and management. He is also chairman of research and graduate studies for the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences.

**M**ark Alley was named the W.G. Wysor Professor of Agriculture at Virginia Tech by the university's board of visitors in November.

The professorship is named for William G. "Bud" Wysor, a 1914 graduate of Virginia Tech and the founder of Southern States Cooperative. Wysor, who



**College of Agriculture and Life Sciences**  
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061

U.S POSTAGE  
PAID  
Blacksburg, VA 24061  
Permit No. 28  
NON-PROFIT ORG.