Dr. Hoveland departs with a flourish

When Professor Emeritus Malcolm Sumner volunteers to “provide the entertainment” for any event, those who know his expansive nature and broad sense of humor smile in anticipation. When the event is a retirement reception for Dr. Carl Hoveland, Sumner’s long-time friend and colleague, the “I’ll be there” RSVPs come in from all over the southeast.

Thursday, August 10, from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. the department hosted a reception at Flinchum’s Phoenix to wish Dr. Hoveland well. Guest Speaker Dr. Don Ball from Auburn shared reminiscences of and praise for the guest of honor, then was interrupted as the swirling scarves and jingling waist-coins of belly-dancing women distracted the room. The dancers proceeded to seat Dr. Hoveland and swath him in silk, while draping sashes around faculty members and urged them to dance along. Most were game, and the evening proceeded with dancing, laughter, hand-clapping, toasts and heavy hors d’oeuvres catered by Marti’s at Midday.

Dr. Hoveland has served the department for 22 years, as a faculty member from 1981 – 2003, and as Professor Emeritus until present. His research focused on obtaining better performance from grasses, clovers and other legumes, thus improving beef cattle. Dr. widely for over 40 years, documenting how other cultures and systems pasture and feed their livestock. His slides of his tours are an important resource for those in Forage Management.

Every seven years, the university both reviews and visits the operations of the three campuses comprising the Crop and Soil Sciences. November 27 through 30, 2006, the department hosted a four-person review team comprised of faculty from UGA and other institutions. The reviewers were presented with the department’s Self-Assessment Document, which includes a listing of faculty biographies.

The Review Team has six months to come up with a series of recommendations. The Department of Crop and Soil Sciences has a year to comply. For more information on the Review, please visit www.cropsoil.uga.edu/Department Information/Program Review 2006
CAGT Adds State-of-the-Art Greenhouse

“It’s as good as any university has at this point.” Greenhouse Manager Kurk Lance, standing in the greenhouse complex on Riverhill Road in Athens, gestures toward the new greenhouse which came into full use at the beginning of the spring 2007 semester. The facility, funded by individual grants and plant breeding allocations, will do more than provide needed space to the department’s crop improvement efforts. Among such features as auxiliary light sources, automatic controls, more efficient use of space and vented heating, the greenhouse’s key benefit is its Biolevel Grade 2. The Plant Breeding and Genomics professors who will occupy this new space are Dr. Steve Knapp and Dr. Charles Brummer. In two-thirds of the greenhouse, Dr. Knapp says, “we will primarily be growing sunflower and peanut plants.” In the remainder, Dr. Brummer will continue his forage breeding research.

The opening of the new greenhouse is but the beginning of an ongoing process, notes Lance. Two other greenhouses in the complex, dating to 1969, are slated for improvements as well. Lance turns again to the new greenhouse, glinting in the sunlight. “This is a real asset to the department, one that we can be proud of.”

Construction of the new facility took approximately three months, beginning fall 2006.

Students Honored

Nick Chammoun wins ASA Hank Beachall Scholarship

The American Society of Agronomy has awarded Crop and Soil Sciences Senior Nick Chammoun the 2006 Hank Beachall Future Leader Scholarship. This honor provides funds for a student to enrich his study experience by pursuing agricultural activities in unfamiliar locations. Nick received the award at the annual meeting of the ASA-CSSA-SSSA International in Indianapolis in November. He will be using the scholarship to travel first to Brazil, where he will learn about ethanol production facilities, then to Mississippi to research biomass conversion.

Nick is the first UGA student to win this scholarship; just one student is chosen among candidates nationwide.

2007 CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Our annual Christmas luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 18, 2007, in 2401 Miller Plant Sciences, from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. All current and retired faculty and staff, as well as students and alumni are cordially invited to join us for this celebration.

Jay Haider takes first in Southern Weed Science Society competition

Second-year graduate student Jay Haider won first place in the Southern Weed Science Society’s annual Graduate Student Paper Competition with his presentation entitled “Physiology of Glyphosate Resistant Palmer Amaranth (Amaranthus palmeri).” The competition, a fixture of the SWSS’s annual meeting, was held at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville from January 22 to January 24, 2007. In addition, the University of Georgia graduate student team finished second overall in the first annual SWSS Quiz Bowl, losing to LSU in the final round. Quiz Bowl team members included Jay Haider and Aaron Wise.

Dr. Wilson Faircloth of the National Peanut Research Lab presents Jay Haider (right) with the SWSS Graduate Student Paper Competition award, which includes a cash prize of $200.
Faculty Honored

Dr. David Kissel receives PPI Robert E. Wagner award

Dr. David Kissel, Director, Agricultural and Environmental Services Laboratories, is the recipient of the 2005-2006 Robert E. Wagner Award for a senior scientist by the Potash & Phosphate Institute (PPI).

This internationally known honor recognizes distinguished contributions to advanced crop yields, and confers $5,000 upon its winner.

Dr. Kissel’s research encompasses improving the fate and dynamics of fertilizer nutrient applications. He works to transfer his research results into management practices that will increase fertilizer efficiency, crop yields, and producer profitability.

Brooks Award for Excellence presented to Dr. John Beasley

The College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences recognized Dr. John Beasley, a UGA Cooperative Extension peanut agronomist working from the Tifton campus, for the innovation of his applied research program.

The annual D.W. Brooks Lecture and Faculty Awards for Excellence were given October 3. Presenting the honor, which includes a $5,000 award, the Dean of CAES, Dr. Scott Angle, noted the value of Dr. Beasley’s work to Georgia agriculture. Dr. Beasley’s program promotes the improvement of peanut varieties for taste, pest and disease resistance, crop management and commercially competitive production systems.

Read the story on Dr. Beasley's research into the relation of harvest time and taste: http://georgiafaces.

AGSA

The Agronomy Graduate Student Association has been active on a number of fronts since the fall semester. Socially, the monthly AGSA Coffee Hours continue. These are relaxed drop-ins in the MPS conference room, where students, staff and faculty members congregate for coffee and carbohydrates. Monthly AGSA Happy Hours also continue in downtown Athens. The best attended was an evening outing to hear CRSS graduate student Jake Mowrer play Brazilian-styled music in the band Cachaça.

Following AGSA events is easier, and certainly more aesthetically pleasing, owing to the organization’s Web site redesign by President David Butler. Visit it (and admire the nexus between agriculture and art history) at www.uga.edu/agsa/.

Turning from art to commerce, AGSA launched this year’s fundraisers by commissioning a variety of department t-shirts, ball caps, and polo shirts. The spring fundraiser, AGSA’s vegetable transplant sale, takes place April 25-26; a time-proven way to get the best in summer tomatoes! To learn more, visit the AGSA Web site link above.

Wednesday, April 4, AGSA hosts a departmental research forum where graduate and undergraduate students present their research with a poster which may be judged eligible for one of three cash awards. See the Web site for details; abstracts must be submitted prior to March 31.

Dr. John Beasley and research assistant John Paulk monitor a peanut test plot at UGA Tifton. Their work was spotlighted in a story in the CAES publication "Georgia Faces" which covered Dr. Beasley's work examining how the impact of harvest times, adjusted for new varieties, influence peanut taste and consumer demand.

Prepared by CSS Newsletter Committee: Laura Burris (chair), Gina Rowan, Steve Brown, Jerry Johnson, David Radcliffe, Zack Shearin, Matt Waters, and David Fleming.
Following the cookout, it was time to spend October gearing up for the Ag Club’s yearly fundraiser: selling four-pound cans of Georgia-grown peanuts, roasted in three varieties. Club members sent hundreds of order flyers throughout the state. Once the orders were processed, the trucks—and the crowds—arrived. November 15-17, despite often nasty weather, club members loaded cans and cases of peanuts into customers’ cars.

**Agronomy Club**

The students of the undergraduate Agronomy Club hosted a fall semester cookout on the lawn in front of Miller Plant Sciences building in Athens. Undergrads, graduate students and department faculty mingled, enjoying the grilled burgers and beautiful weather. They were joined by CAES Dean Scott Angle and Associate Dean Jean Bertrand.

Agronomy Club members flipped burgers in front of Carlton Street as grateful students, faculty and staff awaited another helping.

**Turf Club**

The annual Turf Club cookout at Dr. Karnok’s house took place on Oct 18. The highlight of this event each year is the flag football game in which Dr. Karnok plays quarterback for both sides. After the game, the players ate delicious food prepared by Melinda, Dr. Karnok’s wife. Next, Dr. Shilling spoke, offering both his and the department’s support for the club.

Later in the fall, several members attended the annual Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Meeting in Stone Mountain. The club had a booth and sold t-shirts and bumper stickers. In December club members traveled to the annual Georgia Turfgrass Conference, where they made important contacts for both school and career.

The AgTech faculty and research staff hosted the drop-in reception honoring Carolyn, and Dr. Boerma, among others, related anecdotes and thanked her for her cheerful good work over the years. When asked about plans for her retirement, Carolyn beamed. “I’m waiting for my first grandchild, due August first, so I certainly have something special planned. I’ll be babysitting!”

**Soils Judging Team**

Traveling to Bowling Green, Kentucky, the University of Georgia Soils Judging team spent four days in October getting low-down and dirty—for science, that is. For their efforts, they achieved 6th place in the Southeast Regional Contest. Senior Dustin Dinsmore ranked tenth in the individual competitions.

CSS Arriving and Departing

**Departing**

Carolyn Hightower, Athens

Friday, January 12, members of the Crop and Soil Sciences department gathered to express appreciation and best wishes to Carolyn Hightower upon her retirement after 32 years of service to UGA. For most of that time, she worked with faculty members of the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences. She followed Dr. Roger Boerma over to the then-new BioBusiness complex in 2000, and provided computer and administrative support for both the Center for Soybean Improvement and the Center for Applied Genetic Technologies.
Arriving

Dr. Charles Brummer, Athens

In October Dr. Charlie Brummer joined the department as Professor, Forage and Biomass Crop Breeding. He comes to us from Iowa State, where he researched forage breeding and genetics for thirteen years. Leaving Iowa State as a full professor, he joined the department in October, returning to the campus where he attained his Ph.D.

Working from CAGT on Riverbend Road, Dr. Brummer continues his research toward sustainable agriculture, and will also teach undergraduate and graduate courses.

Dr. Brummer is accompanied to Athens by both his wife, Pinar, and his Web site, linked to his CSS page, which features a “below the fold” section discussing books, music, film, art, and politics.

Dr. Dennis Hancock, Athens

Following work as the University of Kentucky’s Research and Extension Coordinator for the Precision Ag team, Dr. Hancock assumes a 75% extension/25% research appointment as an Assistant Professor—Forage Extension Specialist in Athens.

His goal is to affect a true change in the efficiency of forage production: developing educational programs and testing, developing cooperative relationships with stock-holders, and developing an applied research program to resolve basic issues facing Georgia farmers.

Dr. Hancock lives in Watkinsville with his wife, Stephanie, and their three children, Ethan (8), Andy (4), and Logan (6 months).

Arriving

Georgi Austin, Athens

Georgi Austin has been promoted to the Senior Accountant position on the Athens campus, after only a few months working within the department. She initially joined us in the fall as an administrative associate with fiscal duties, following her accounting work with UGA’s Feed and Environmental Water Lab, and Xaxby’s Corporate Office.

Georgi lives in Winterville, with her husband Norman and her three children, Hillary, Christopher, and Norman Jr.

Arriving

Dr. Jack Huang, Griffin

Dr. Huang comes to us from the University of Michigan to join the Griffin campus as Assistant Professor, Environmental Water Chemistry. His research focuses on environmental transport and transformation of organic pollutants in soil and water systems, and techniques for remediation and removal of these pollutants.

Dr. Huang moves from Michigan to Griffin, Georgia, with his wife, Jun Yang, and his four-and-a-half-year-old son, Edward.

Laura Burris, Athens

Laura Burris joins us as the Administrative Assistant on the Athens campus. She previously worked on campus in a temporary capacity, for both ITOS and the Institute of Gerontology, before finding a position with Crop & Soil.

Laura lives in Jefferson, sharing the family home with her mother and 4 cats.

ALUMNI: If you would like to Invest in Our Future, please visit www.cropsoil.uga.edu, and follow the link to “Invest In Our Future.” Also, please visit our Alumni page, and be sure to update your information (http://www.cropsoil.uga.edu/alumni/alumni_info.php).

Dr. Tubbs, Tifton

After spending three years as a Postdoc with USDA-ARS AMRU in Lincoln, NE, Dr. Tubbs joins the department as an Assistant Professor and Cropping Systems Agronomist.

His program is developed around agronomic practices to improve crop production, especially related to tillage systems, crop rotations, nutrient cycling and maximizing net returns.

Dr. Tubbs lives in Tifton with his wife, Danielle. They are expecting their first child, a boy, in December.

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