

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Forest Resources

2010 | alumni newsletter



Summer Camp

75 years of field training



DEAN'S comments

Stories are an important part of our lives. The stories we tell help us remember special times and provide humor as we recount them with friends and family. Sometimes the stories get expanded a bit, but the memories stay the same. Many of our alumni shared their recollections with me during the Homecoming celebration held last fall at our CFR tailgate. More than 350 alumni and their families, former faculty and friends came back to campus. What a spectacular event! The threat of inclement weather didn't deter our spirit, and thanks to an anonymous donor, tickets for the game were provided to see the Bulldogs under the leadership of Coach Dan Mullen. We even had some who enjoyed watching the game on TV under our tailgate tent. Mark your calendars for the 2010 Homecoming Tailgate reunion on October 23, when the Bulldogs will face the University at Alabama-Birmingham. More details on Homecoming 2010 will be sent this fall.

As I meet with many of our alumni, they often tell me of their time in summer camp. On the cover of the newsletter is forestry professor Robert Parker teaching how to use an Abney level to measure tree heights during the summer field session. Dr. Parker has led the summer field session since 1993 and has done a tremendous job in training young foresters. The summer field program, also known as summer camp, has seen many changes over the years, however, it remains one of a few hands-on summer field sessions in the nation. Students often struggle with the cost of the session. We are establishing a summer field session scholarship to assist deserving students with the funds to attend the grueling nine weeks of training. If you are interested in supporting a student, please contact Jeff Little at 662-325-8151 or jlittle@foundation.msstate.edu.

These are very difficult budget times for all of our businesses, agencies and organizations. The College of Forest Resources and the university are not immune to the financial strains facing our state and nation. Our president, Dr. Mark Keenum, initiated a faculty-led Select Committee on Efficiencies and Innovations last fall to develop a plan for steering the university through this economic crisis. One of the recommendations from the committee was to create a new college from the existing colleges of Forest Resources and Agriculture and Life Sciences. While this is merely a recommendation, I have heard from many of you with concerns of this proposed merger, and I welcome your advice and comments during these deliberations. As I have done most recently, I will provide information on the proposed organization and the cost savings that are currently being developed via our alumni e-mail listserv for further discussion. If you are not on our e-mail listserv, please visit www.cfr.msstate.edu/alumni/update.asp and update your alumni information.

Despite the financial concerns, we are energized by a new program initiated by President Keenum which raises funds for students and faculty. The StatePride Initiative provides support for faculty development and awards, as well as establishes professorships and endowed chairs. The exciting part of this program is that all money raised is matched by the university's athletics contract with ESPN. What a wonderful opportunity to double your money. The College of Forest Resources is striving to raise \$37,500 to be used in the StatePride Initiative for faculty awards. This equates to 30 individuals giving \$1,250 to support one of our outstanding faculty members. Would you join me in this endeavor to recognize our outstanding faculty members?

Finally, thank you for representing the College of Forest Resources in your profession. We have a great group of alumni and friends and I look forward to seeing you soon at one of our many upcoming alumni meetings or events. It is an honor and privilege to serve as your dean. On behalf of all of our faculty, staff and students, we appreciate your advice, counsel and support. If you are in the area, please stop by for a visit.

George M. Hopper
Dean

2009 Alumni Fellow



Edith 'Edy' Williams-Rhodes

The College of Forest Resources 2009 Alumni Fellow is Edith "Edy" Williams-Rhodes. A Prentiss native, Williams-Rhodes is a 1976 forestry graduate and a retired chief of the Division of Fire and Aviation with the National Park Service. Williams-Rhodes knew from a young age that she wanted to be a forester. As a child, she tagged along in the woods with her father, Dan Williams, a fellow forester and a 1951 graduate in the first class of forestry students at MSU. While at MSU, Williams-Rhodes believed her greatest accomplishment was surviving forestry summer camp, a well-deserved feat in the hot, humid Mississippi climate. She also felt that her participation in the cooperative education program, challenging courses and labs helped prepare her for her career. Williams-Rhodes lives in Hattiesburg with her husband, John, and is a realtor with Coldwell Banker Don Nace Inc.

2009 Alumnus of the Year Eddie Thaggard

Eddie Thaggard is the College of Forest Resources' 2009 Alumni of the Year. A 1987 forest products graduate, Thaggard is the owner of Service-All in Hattiesburg, a company with a 12 county coverage area. A native of Philadelphia, he has made a huge impact on the forest products industry throughout his career. He has developed computer models to optimize profits, better utilize timber resources and decrease transportation costs. A true conservationist, he has initiated procedures to eliminate wastes and use timber resources in a sustainable manner, all while increasing profits for his employers. Father of five, Thaggard embodies the aspirations of all Forest Resources alumni: to be good stewards of the environment, to practice conservation and to be productive members of the community.



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Summer Camp

Myths, Legends and Truths

Robert C. Parker
Summer Field
Program
Coordinator
Instructor, Forest
Description and
Analysis



Summer camp holds special memories for all forestry students. It initiates students into the professional forestry curriculum. Most survivors remember their experiences and the many myths and legends that preceded their enrollment. While most of the myths and legends are not true, each group creates new ones to initiate the next class of juniors who take to the hot Mississippi woods in June and July. Every class creates its own unique group personality and I can remember most of them during my time period.

Summer camp memories started back in 1935 when forestry was in the College of Agriculture. The School of Forestry was created in 1954 and officially became the College of Forest Resources in 1996. The Forest and Wildlife Research Center was created as a separately funded unit by the state Legislature in 1994.

According to the lapsing memories of Rodney Foil (dean, 1969-1978), Roy Ross and Sam Land, summer camp was held on the Ole Miss timberlands east of Perkinston before being moved to the John Starr Forest in 1965 to 1967. Wallace Kilcreas remembers attending summer camp at Wiggins in 1963 and remembered camp being there in 1964. So based

on all of the fading memories, we suspect summer camp as we currently know it

began in the John Starr Forest about 1965-1967.

Roy Ross (Poncho) taught measurements and the famous George Switzer, John Hodges (Acorn), and Sam Land (the Evil One) taught forest communities for many years. Since 1993, when I replaced the retired Roy Ross, there have been 881 students enrolled in the measurements class (FO3015 forest description and analysis). Measurements is now a five-week class. Three other classes make up the grueling nine-week summer field session, formerly known as summer camp. Several years ago, two weeks were added to measurements to compensate for the loss of surveying from the curricula. A one-week harvesting course also was added to the summer field session.

The myths and legends about summer camp continue to grow each year, but the truths stay the same. It is the first real exposure to professional level forestry for most students. About half the students transfer in from a community/junior college and about half start as freshmen at Mississippi State. Their field experiences are about as different as night and day. Transfer students have been in the field in various lab exercises while MSU students have not been in the field except in dendrology. Forest description and analysis is where these varied experiences are blended into a single, rigorous technical approach to area, tree and inventory measurements. That blend has been a tough job that creates many anxious moments, long nights and a few memorable quotes like, "If Parker is here, who is in charge of hell?"

Switzer held the original "evil one" title but Sam Land assumed this role for many years. Then along came Parker.



Summer Field Session Courses

Forest Description and Analysis (5 weeks) • Introduction to Forest Communities (2 weeks)

Introduction to Wildlife and Fisheries (1 week)

Introduction to Wood Supply Systems (1 week)



According to some of the former undergraduates who are current graduate students, summer camp has gotten soft. Land is gone; Parker serves hot dogs and Cokes on the first day in the briar patch below Dorman Lake; they dropped the Bankhead Forest trip, the Leopold report and the “where are you” quizzes;

the students take a CPR/first aid course on the first day; and most nightly computer lab computations are done by 10-11 p.m. However, the rigour of summer camp remains and the memories that follow are profound.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

While the summer field session may have changed since you were in college, the program is still one of the best practical, in-the-field experiences for students. It is one of a few remaining in the nation. Challenging economic times have caused many schools to drop their field experience programs. The cost of summer camp is about \$1,932 for resident students. The College of Forest Resources is committed to keeping the in-field experience, however, we need your help. The College of Forest Resources would like to give at least two scholarships each summer to outstanding students who exhibit leadership with his/her peers, work cooperatively with and assisted his/her crew members with field assignments, exhibit strong professional and ethical qualities, have a financial need, and show academic and professional improvement during the summer field session. The scholarship will not be based on academic grades, but on character, need and performance of the student. Would you be willing to contribute \$20, \$50 or \$100 each year to this endeavor? **If you are interested in supporting a summer field session scholarship, contact Jeff Little at 662.325.8151 or jlittle@cfr.msstate.edu.** The college would also like to collect memories and photos of those who survived summer camp. Please send your recollections to Karen Brasher at kbrasher@cfr.msstate.edu.





David Evans, a forestry professor, was recognized for teaching contributions. A 14-year veteran, Evans teaches tree identification and spatial technologies applications in the department. He was praised by students for his dedication and perseverance in assisting students to understand the material.



Associate forestry professor **Emily Schultz** was recognized for service contributions. Schultz co-developed software to provide an inventory of the state's forest resources. The software has been utilized by national and international companies to determine the feasibility of locating plants in the state.



Changyou "Edwin" Sun, a forestry associate professor, was honored for outstanding achievement in research by the College of Forest Resources. A faculty member since 2003, Sun has produced more than 20 refereed publications and has led an extensive research program in forest policy and law.

Award Winners



Sheldon Shi, an assistant forest products professor, received the Early Career Achievement Award. A faculty member since 2004, Shi was recognized for receiving millions in extramural grants, obtaining five invention disclosures and initiating new courses within the department.



Randy Rousseau, an associate forestry professor, received the Extension/Outreach Award. Rousseau worked for Westvaco and MeadWestvaco for 25 years before joining the faculty in 2008. Rousseau has led extension programming on hardwood management, carbon sequestration and other topics.



College of Forest Resources director of development **Jeff Little** of Starkville and forestry office associate **Cathy Dinning** of Stewart recently were honored with 2009 Doris Lee Memorial Staff Awards for outstanding service. Little, an MSU alumnus, works to generate donations for scholarships and needs within the college. He successfully initiated the Bulldog Forest program, a timberland gift initiative, which includes more than 16,000 acres of timberland. Dinning has been with the university for eight years and provides administrative support to the forestry faculty, staff and students.

Jackson named Sharp Professor

Donald C. Jackson, a fisheries biologist and professor in wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture, is the newest College of Forest Resources' Sharp Professor in Fisheries. Named after the Sharp family of Tishomingo County, the professorship recognizes a distinguished record of teaching, research and service within the college.

Jackson, a 23-year veteran, has a distinctive service record including assisting with the Boy Scouts and previously serving as president of the Mississippi Wildlife Federation. He currently serves as president of the American Fisheries Society, a 10,000-member organization. He has received numerous awards, including being named a Fellow of the American Institute of Fisheries Research Biologists and receiving the American Fisheries Society's 2007 Distinguished Service Award for work done to restore fisheries after Hurricane Katrina.

Jackson led the AFS Hurricane Disaster Relief Program. He assisted members in maintaining professional connections, while also collecting funds to jump-start research and management programs of those affected.

Jackson also has led efforts to restore coastal fisheries, including a study on how fish populations in South Mississippi streams evolve following hurricanes.

In addition to tracking natural population processes, the study examined effects of the supplemental stocking of game fish, primarily catfish and bass.

A second study focused on rebuilding artificial reefs offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. A third Jackson project, sponsored by the National Marine Fisheries Service, dealt with the potential impacts on commercial shrimp populations of weather-related river discharges into the Gulf of Mexico.



Jackson working with an Eagle Scout to install bat boxes at Berryman Cabin.



Jackson and graduate student Dan O'Keefe tag catfish to release in South Mississippi.

NEW FACULTY



Peter Allen

Fishing, fly fishing, backpacking and scuba diving are some of the ways that Allen likes to spend his free time. The father of two is a new assistant professor in the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture. Originally from the West Coast, Allen completed his doctoral work at the University of California, Davis. However, he comes here by way of Canada, where he spent the past three years at the University of Manitoba as a postdoctoral fellow. Allen's research interests include fish environmental physiology and aquaculture.

Jeff Hatten

Hatten joined the forestry faculty as an assistant professor in forest soils and hydrology in August 2009 after completing a postdoctoral position at Oregon State University. He earned his doctorate in forest soils at the University of Washington. Hatten's research interests include terrestrial biogeochemistry, forest soil productivity and examining the linkages between terrestrial and fluvial systems. He and his wife Reyna are both from Washington State and recently became proud parents of a Mississippian. Hatten enjoys hiking, road and mountain biking, and cooking.



El Barbary Hassan



Hassan was born and raised in Cairo, Egypt, earning his doctorate in chemistry from Ain Shams University. He has worked as a visiting scientist for Chonbuk National University in South Korea and as an associate professor at the National Research Center in Egypt for four years. Hassan joined the forest products department as a visiting scientist in 2006 and was appointed assistant professor in 2009. His research interests include bio-fuels and preparation of specialty chemicals and polymers from woody biomass materials. He teaches wood chemistry to both graduate and undergraduate students. In his free time, he enjoys soccer, reading, grilling, and playing with his kids.

Jason Gordon

A native of Georgia, Gordon joined the forestry extension faculty as an assistant professor in January 2010. After receiving a bachelor's degree in forestry from the University of Georgia, he spent several years working in Latin America on agroforestry and community economic development programs. He earned a dual title doctoral degree in rural sociology and human dimensions of natural resources from Penn State University. Gordon is the Northwest area forestry specialist and his research interests include private forest landowners, sustainable natural resource management and community development. He lives with his wife Bery and enjoys fishing, hunting, cooking, and baseball.



Brian Davis

Davis joined the department of wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture in August 2009. A waterfowl biologist, the St. Louis, Mo., native began hunting ducks and Canada geese as a youth in northern Missouri. He is an alumnus of MSU, earning both master's and doctoral degrees in wildlife. Davis previously worked for the Missouri Department of Conservation, the California Waterfowl Association and Ducks Unlimited. He teaches waterfowl ecology and management and principles of wildlife conservation. The assistant professor enjoys waterfowl hunting, fishing Louisiana marshes, traveling, SEC sports, and reading.



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

A few years ago, a program was begun to encourage students to obtain real-world professional experience. Several methods were used to engage students in professional experience opportunities, including an online jobs Web site and course credit for their summer activities. While internships and cooperative education are not new ventures for students in the College of Forest Resources, the administration has never placed an emphasis on obtaining this practical, hands-on experience. The Professional Experience program was created to encourage students to obtain jobs in their chosen profession and report back on their accomplishments. Alumni are encouraged to provide internships or work opportunities for CFR students. Please visit our jobs Web site to post a job (www.cfr.msstate.edu/jobs).

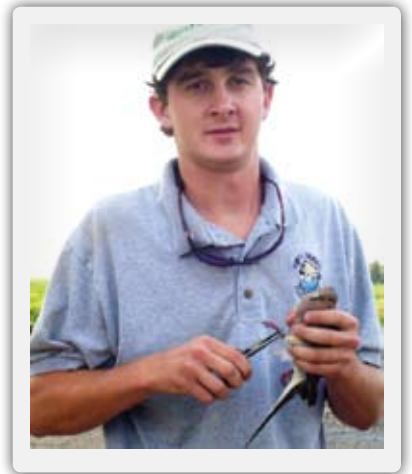


“Working for the USFWS in Alaska wasn't just a great work experience in my field, but it gave me a chance to experience what it's like to work as a federal employee. Now that I'm within the government system, it made it easy to make A LOT of new connections for possible jobs in the future.”

Taylor Grothe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, WFA major

“I worked this past summer for the North Dakota Game and Fish doing a mourning dove banding project. I recommend gaining out-of-state experience so you can get a different perspective on various wildlife ecosystems along with broadening your cultural views.”

Hunter Pridgen, North Dakota Game and Fish, WFA major



“Experience in the classroom is good, but I really had no idea of what I wanted to do, what my likes and dislikes in the field were, until I actually did some work in the field.”

Stephen Last, North East Tree Service, FO major

“I have gained knowledge and understanding in areas of wildlife, forestry and visitation. It has been a great experience getting to learn different aspects of Mississippi forests and wildlife. This will help in the future when looking for a long-term job.”

Amber English, U.S. Corps of Engineers, WFA major

Working for the corps of engineers has been an amazing experience. I have learned how to apply the knowledge learned in class in real-life situations.

Kyle Tedford, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, WFA major

“Thanks to my professional experience in forestry and wildlife management with local private foresters and biologists, as well as with the U.S. Forest Service, doors have become wide open for me for employment opportunities all across the nation, at both the private and federal levels.”

Devin Rice, U.S. Forest Service, FO major

“My experience with the USFWS (STEP) was nothing short of awesome. Not knowing what you may be doing from day to day was really fun. You may be conducting breeding bird surveys or rocket netting ducks in the morning, invasive species control in the afternoon, and frog call surveys or mist netting bats in the evening. I can’t describe how much this experience helps in school. The knowledge you gain, not only in the field, but from biologists, will certainly help down the road.”

Hal Mitchell, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, FO major

My most notable professional experience was with Langdale Forest Products, a large family-owned company based in Valdosta, Ga. I gained a solid working knowledge of the wood manufacturing process, and was given the opportunity to handle managerial tasks. The experience gave me a chance to get my foot in the door with the company, and recently I was offered a divisional superintendent position with them.”

Ryan R. Winters, Langdale Forest Products, FO major

This summer, I had the opportunity to volunteer/intern at St. Catherine’s Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Sibley. During my summer work, I learned many things, including how to capture and band wood ducks (conducted at Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge) and shorebirds; control of invasive species, such as chinaberry and Chinese tallow-tree; and some basic wetlands management techniques. I also conducted research on a historical port that was once located on Old St. Catherine’s Creek, compiled a guide to common plants of the refuge, and sold fishing/hunting permits for the refuge. I enjoyed the summer and gained knowledge that will be very beneficial in the near future.

Beverly McKinley, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, WFA major

While working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a forester trainee, I learned “hands-on” forest management techniques that are not taught at school. One of the biggest “all around” skills I’ve improved on the most is communication by solving problems with other agencies and people who use public land. I think my work experience gives me a little upper hand when I come back to school and solve problems in class.

Ben Field, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, FO major



The 15.4-acre lake on the Old Shop site (off Highway 25) was named Lake Arner in honor of Dale H. Arner, founding head of the department of wildlife and fisheries. Arner established the department and served as its head 1968-1987. He currently is a professor emeritus, mentor and adviser to students and faculty. With the lake dedication came a renewed interest in the endowed scholarship that bears his name. The monetary goal for this scholarship is \$100,000. A plaque bearing the names of contributors is in Thompson Hall. If you would like to contribute to the Dale H. Arner Endowed Scholarship, contact Jeff Little at 662.325.8151 or jlittle@foundation.msstate.edu.



Thanks to our 2009 donors

The donors listed below contributed over \$1,000 during 2009.

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MSU alum adds Pike Co. property to Bulldog Forest program

A Mississippi State alumnus now residing in coastal Texas is making a very personal gift to the university: South Mississippi farmland that has been in his family since 1900.

Wayne O'Quin of Galveston owns the approximately 127-acre Pike County farm located five miles east of Osyka. The property is becoming part of MSU's Bulldog Forest program and will be managed for wildlife habitat by the College of Forest Resources.

"Wayne O'Quin's gift will have a lasting impact on the college," said Dean George Hopper. "It demonstrates his commitment to the tradition of yesterday, plus a strong vision for tomorrow."

Hopper said earnings "from wise management of the land will be placed in an endowed fund to benefit the college."

A 1959 chemical engineering graduate, O'Quin long has supported his alma mater with volunteered time and financial resources. In addition to serving as a member of the advisory board for the Swalm School of Chemical Engineering, he has contributed to MSU athletics.

He is retired from a nearly four-decade career with Philadelphia, Pa.-based Total S.A., the world's fourth-largest oil and gas company and an international chemicals manufacturer. Over time, he worked in Kentucky, Oklahoma and Texas, and was a plant manager for 24 years.

The Bulldog Forest program enables donors to provide a lasting legacy in their family's name. Properties may be held for an extended period of time, with funds generated from timber sales, hunting leases, oil and gas leases, conservation programs, and other means used by the university for donor-specified charitable purposes.

As part of the agreement, funds generated from the property in excess of required management costs will be placed in the Norma Lea O'Quin Endowed Bulldog Forest Fund of the MSU Foundation.

Bulldog Forest properties may retain the name of the individual donor or family. The Pike property now will be known formally as the Norma Lea O'Quin Bulldog Forest in memory of O'Quin's mother who died in 2004.

"The farmland is part of my family's legacy," O'Quin said. "I decided to make this gift to Mississippi State so it could be managed by professionals to serve a beneficial role in the community."

"I also wanted the funds to be used for scholarships to benefit MSU students," he added.

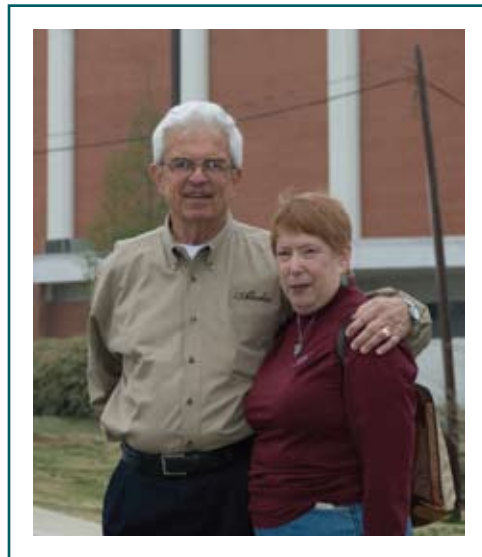
The original early 20th century owner of the property was O'Quin's grandmother, Dora Garner Lea. Subsequently, it was in share-crop operation, producing cotton, corn and sugar cane. In the mid-1940s, Norma Lea O'Quin and husband

Carroll converted the property to dairy farming, which continued until 1995.

"My mother spent her life there," O'Quin recalled recently. "She was devoted to the farm, seeing it through hard times until she died."

"For those reasons, our family wanted to honor her in a fitting way by naming the Bulldog Forest for her."

O'Quin and his wife Alice, a New York native retired from a health-care management career, have been married for 18 years and have three children: Roberty, Caroline, and Michael. Their oldest son Robert is a 1988 MSU mechanical engineering graduate and daughter Caroline attended MSU.



Wayne and Alice O'Quin



Wood Magic Science Fair

About 4,000 fourth-graders and their teachers from across the state attended the annual Wood Magic Science Fair. The goal of the October event is to introduce students to the benefits of forestry, forest products and wildlife to the state. The Wood Magic Science Fair is sponsored by the College of Forest Resources and the department of forest products and held at the forest products complex. The students move through 12 stations in the science fair as they view demonstrations, get hands-on experience and learn interesting facts about wood, forest products, forestry, and wildlife. Highlights of the fair include viewing a portable sawmill in action, making oriented strand board, termite tricks, furniture testing, and demonstrations of wood strength and paper making. Students also have the opportunity to examine wildlife skulls, antlers and horns to better understand an animal's distinctive biological features and lifestyles. The Wood Magic Science Fair was first held in 1994. Last year, some of the teachers who brought their students had been through the fair as fourth-graders, and MSU has several students who came through the science fair while in elementary school. If you know of someone who would like to attend the fair or would like to sponsor a class or event, please contact David Jones at 662.325.8454 or pdjones@cfr.msstate.edu.

college of forest resources

New cluster registry open for forest products industry

As links in a chain provide support and stability, so can "business clusters" for the forest products industry, according to a new report by Robert Grala, assistant forestry professor. A cluster is a group of businesses and institutions in close proximity whose products or services are interconnected through value and supply chains, technologies and complementary products, among other factors. An online registry of U.S. forest business clusters has been created to assist companies. The registry includes location, contact information, legal status, umbrella organizations, duration, size, and specific strategies of existing forest sector clusters. To register, visit www.fwrc.msstate.edu/cluster.

MSU dean visits South America as part of U.S. forestry delegation

George M. Hopper represented American universities and academia at the 13th World Forestry Congress in Argentina. Hopper was among 12 U.S. representatives on the State Department-organized delegation. The meeting was a forum for governments, universities and the private sector to exchange views and formulate global recommendations on forests and the practice of forestry.

Kröger receives wetland scientists certification

Robert Kröger, assistant professor in wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture, has become the only certified professional wetland scientist at Mississippi State. The certification is through the Society of Wetland Scientists, which provides the only national and international professional certification program related to wetlands.

New MSU book prescribes habitat management in unlikely places

A new book by two Mississippi State faculty members is examining more than a half-century of research on wildlife habitat enhancement techniques used for areas often given little or no consideration. *Wildlife Habitat Management for Special Use Areas*, by wildlife biology professor emeritus Dale H. Arner and wildlife and fisheries professor Jeanne Jones, deals with such areas as utility lines and other rights-of-way, surface mines and disposal areas, abandoned orchards, farmland, beaver-impounded water, and impoverished forest lands.

The 163-page book is available through the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and the university's department of wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture. Though written primarily for landowners and natural resource managers, the book's goal is to equip all interested readers with the knowledge required to confront the challenges of wildlife habitat management under special conditions.



New MSU-NSF effort seeks to better understand tree reproduction



Assistant forest professor Cetin Yuceer is receiving \$500,000 from the National Science Foundation to gain a better understanding of how trees initiate sexual reproduction.

He will be seeking to identify and characterize genes that control reproductive bud formation in poplars, fast-growing trees that hold potential use as sources of bioenergy, with the 2009 NSF Early Career Development Award.

The Early Career Development Award is the independent federal agency's most prestigious award for junior faculty members "who exemplify excellence in research, teaching and the integration of education and research." Only 425 awards are provided annually across the various research disciplines.

George Hopper, Forest and Wildlife Research Center director, said "Knowledge from this study will help us better understand the processes that control flowering in trees, and if we can control flowering, we can improve biomass production."

Producing more wood is important as MSU scientists work daily to find ways to produce better trees with more volume for our state's forest products industry, Hopper observed.

A major component of the study will be the development of educational activities for elementary and high school students and teachers in genomic and post-genomic biology.

"Workshops for students from historically underrepresented groups and secondary teachers will be developed, as well as science fairs for elementary school students and teachers," Yuceer said.

Kaminski honored for practical waterfowl research

Richard M. Kaminski, associate dean of the College of Forest Resources, is the The Wildlife Society's latest selection for the Caesar Kleberg Award for Excellence in Applied Wildlife Research. A 25-year member of the MSU faculty, Kaminski also holds the college's James C. Kennedy Endowed Chair of Waterfowl and Wetland Conservation.



Named for a Texas conservationist, the society's Kleberg Award recognizes scientists "whose body of work, in both inquiry and discovery, has resulted in application to wildlife management and conservation on the ground."

Kaminski also was recognized by Ducks Unlimited as a Mississippi Hero of Conservation.

Veteran professor named head of MSU forestry

A 24-year-veteran faculty member is the new head of the forestry department.

Andrew Ezell assumed his new duties Dec. 1, leading the only four-year forestry degree program in the state.

A native of Linden, Tenn., Ezell holds a bachelor's degree in forest management from the University of Tennessee, a master's degree in forest ecology from Yale University, and a doctorate in forest management and wood quality from Louisiana State University.

Ezell, whose research interests include hardwood growth and regeneration, previously worked at the University System of Georgia and Texas A&M University.



MSU department name change reflects impact of aquaculture

Mississippi State's wildlife and fisheries department is changing its name to reflect the state aquaculture industry's importance and the university's role in its continuing development.

During its September meeting, the state College Board approved the change to the department of wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture.

Department head Bruce Leopold said aquaculture makes a "significant contribution" to Mississippi's economy. Presently, the industry—which primarily involves catfish farming—ranks fifth among all agricultural production.

"There are more than 70,000 acres of aquaculture ponds in the state with a production value of \$258 million," the veteran MSU teacher and researcher added. The new name "more accurately reflects our depth of research, teaching and service," all designed to assist professionals working in this field, he added.

ACCOLADES

The university's President's Commission on the Status of Women named **Jeanne Jones** the Outstanding Faculty Woman.



Terry Amburgey retired in 2009 after 30 years of exemplary service to the forest products department, the College of Forest Resources and the university.

LaDonna Bullman and **Beverly Smith**

completed the 2009 MSU Staff Leadership program. They recently received graduation plaques during a recognition ceremony.

Wes Burger has been appointed associate director for agriculture and natural resources in the Geosystems Research Institute.



Faculty were recently recognized for publications and radio programs from the annual Southern Regional Extension Forestry Awards Program. They include **John Auel, Don Bales, Leslie Burger, Trey Deloach, Steve Demarais, Steve Dicke, Andy Ezell, David Evans, Debbie Gaddis, Linda Garnett, Bill Hamrick, Britton Hatcher, James Henderson, John Hodges, Glenn Hughes, Daryl Jones, John Kushla, Alexis Londo, Andrew Londo, Lisa McReynolds, Marc Measells, Evan Nebecker, Randy Rousseau, Bronson Strickland, and Timothy Traugott.**

Ian Munn received the Outstanding Research Faculty award at the annual university Research Banquet.



Wood pellet production has potential for state



Mississippi's forest industry is poised to take advantage of an old technology that turns sawmill residues into environmentally friendly energy sources for heat and electricity.

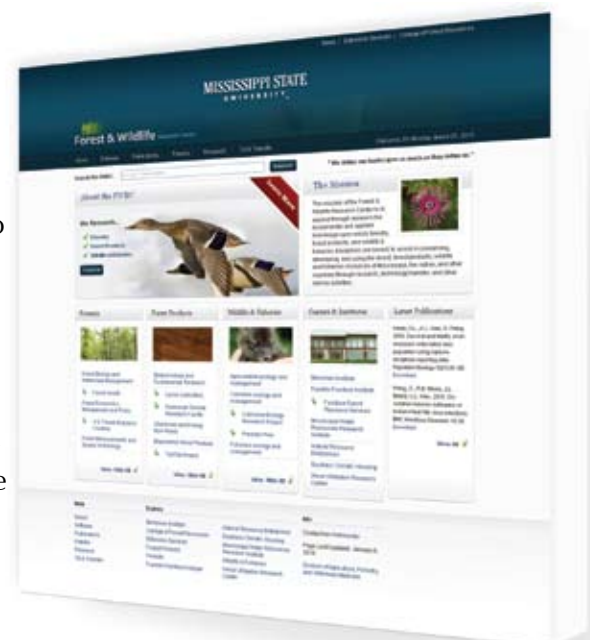
Wood pellets are made of the waste products of lumber production, and they can be burned for heat in homes and used to produce energy for industry.

Currently, there is a 4-year-old wood pellet mill in Amory and a 1-year-old mill in Wiggins. Nearly all the wood pellets produced in Mississippi are shipped to Scandinavian countries, with some going to the northeastern United States.

"This market continues to grow," said David Jones, forest products assistant extension professor. "As more countries are trying to find greener alternatives to produce heat and power, they are turning to wood pellets."

Mississippi is ideally situated to become a major producer of wood pellets. The state has significant furniture production, which creates a great deal of sawdust and planer shavings that can be turned into wood pellets. The state's climate is perfect for timber production, and the production of wood pellets is a good use of the small trees that are thinned from stands.

The Forest and Wildlife Research Center web site was selected in two different categories as one of the top three university web sites in the nation by eduStyle. The comprehensive site was picked as one of the Best Research Sites and one of the Best Sub-Sites.



Wildlife student named 12th Goldwater Scholar

A senior wildlife and fisheries major at Mississippi State is a national Barry M. Goldwater Scholar.

Mitchell D. "Mitch" Weegman of Winona, Minn., was among nearly 280 university students honored in 2009 with the official U.S. tribute to the late Arizona Republican senator and prominent American statesman.

In addition to membership in MSU's Shackouls Honors College, Weegman is a member of the Bulldog track team. The son of Dale and Lise Weegman, he is a Winona High School graduate who simultaneously took classes at Winona State University before coming to the Magnolia State in 2007.

Established more than two decades ago, the awards are presented annually by the Springfield, Va.-based Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation. Provided for one or two years, they cover the cost of tuition, fees, books, and room-and-board up to a maximum of \$7,500 per year.

Weegman, who is specializing in wildlife science and planning a career as a waterfowl biologist, earlier was awarded an undergraduate research award by MSU's College of Forest Resources. Mitch is studying under Rick Kaminski, and has focused his research on population declines of the lesser scaup.

The lesser scaup (*Athya affinis*) is considered among the most abundant and widespread of North America's diving ducks.

In addition to his academic achievements, Weegman is a member of the M-Club athletic letter organization and campus chapter of the Mississippi Wildlife Society. He also served as editor of the College of Forest Resources Dean's Council.



MSU student forestry group now 'tops' for a decade

Mississippi State University's student chapter of the Society of American Foresters continues among the top organizations of its kind in the nation. The 46-member body recently placed first in the SAF student chapter Web site competition and now ranks third overall in the outstanding student chapter category. The group has finished atop the overall chapter rankings for the past decade, capturing first place in the 1996-97, 2000-01, 2003-04, and 2005-06 school years; second place in 1998-99, 2001-02 and 2004-05; and third place in 2002-03 and 2007-08. With this year's achievements, the chapter has achieved first place for six years in Web site competition. Designed and maintained by members, the site—www.cfr.msstate.edu/studentorgs/saf/—was judged on design and content, among other criteria.



Habitat for Humanity is one of the service projects the student chapter undertakes each year. Others include Project Learning Tree and Adopt-A-Highway.

ACCOLADES

Priyanka Bhattacharya (FP graduate student) placed third at the eighth annual Southern BioProducts and Renewable Energy Conference for her poster presentation on the reactions of methanol and other alcohols with hydroxyacetaldehyde in bio-oil. Her research is under the direction of Leonard Ingram.

Michael Crosby and David Wilkinson (FO graduate students) received third place for their poster on carbon losses in an urban setting using Landsat at the annual meeting of the Society of American Foresters. The duo are under the direction of Emily Schultz and Tom Matney.

Charles Dagino (WFA undergraduate student) won second place in MSU's Maroon Edition Essay contest.

Heather Fleming (WFA graduate student) received best student poster presentation award from the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Under the direction of Jeanne Jones, her research is on the roost selection of Rafinesque's big-eared bats and Southeastern myotis.

Sanjeev Gajjela (FP graduate student) received second place at the eighth annual Southern BioProducts and Renewable Energy Conference for his poster presentation on upgrading bio-oil to bio-fuels. His research is under the direction of Phil Steele.

Heath Hagy and Jake Straub (WFA graduate students) received second place for their poster presentation on recovery of moist-soil seeds

from core samples at the fifth North American Duck Symposium. Their research is under the direction of Rick Kaminski.

Ray Iglay (WFA graduate student) received the outstanding poster award for research on plant biomass in intensively managed pines at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies meeting. His research is under the direction of Bruce Leopold.

Andrew Little (WFA graduate student) received the outstanding presentation award from the Oklahoma Chapter of The Wildlife Society for his research on the effects of hunter density on male white-tailed deer movements in Oklahoma. His research is under the direction of Steve Demarais.

Lauren Mangum (FP graduate student) received first place for her oral presentation on treatment of Timtek process water at the 2009 Mississippi Water Resources Conference. Mangum's research is under the direction of Hamid Borazjani and Susan Diehl.

Mark McConnell (WFA graduate student) received the best presentation award at the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Under the direction of Wes Burger, his research is on using technology to optimize conservation profitability in agricultural landscapes. McConnell also received the best student paper award at the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Jay Palmer (FO graduate student) won the poster competition at the 2009 Mississippi Water Resources Conference for his presentation on correlations among simple visual disturbance estimates and hydrologic and edaphic parameters in forested headwaters. His research is under the direction of Andy Ezell.

Matt Rigdon (FO undergraduate student) placed first in orienteering, a compass exercise, at the annual Wildlife Society Conclave.

Elizabeth St. James (WFA graduate student) received second place for her poster presentation at the fifth North American Duck Symposium. Under the direction of Rick Kaminski, her research is on the effects of hunting frequency on waterfowl use, harvest, and hunt quality on Mississippi Wildlife Management Areas.

Jessica Tegt (WFA graduate student) was honored by the university's President's Commission on the Status of Women with the Outstanding Graduate Woman Award.

Stephen L. Webb (WFA graduate student) finished in second place at the 32nd Southeast Deer Study Group Meeting for his oral presentation on movement patterns of white-tailed deer related to moon phase and weather. His research is under the direction of Steve Demarais.

Homecoming Tailgate success



The first Homecoming Tailgate party was a success, thanks in a large part to an anonymous donor who generously provided free tickets to the game. About 350 alumni and their families, as well as former faculty and friends, attended the inaugural event. Here is what a few of our alumni had to say:

"Just to say, thank you. Our family had a great time. If you have contact with the donor tell them we would not have come except for their generosity. Even though our Dawgs didn't win, we still had a great time and my daughter will always remember her first MSU game." Joshua Skidmore (forestry, 2002)

"My son and I very much enjoyed the game and tailgate on Saturday. If you are able to do so, please let the donor know that we appreciate his/her gift." Jonathan Carraway (forest products, 1985)

"We had a great time. The food and company were the best! Thanks to everyone so much for having us to the game." Jim Steeby (wildlife and fisheries, 2002)

"A special thanks to all of you for a job well done. We thoroughly enjoyed the game (even if it was a loss) and the tailgating at the CFR tent. Please share our appreciation with the donor of the tickets." Ron McRee (wildlife and fisheries, 1981)



Alumni Society

As the alumni representative for the College of Forest Resources, I want to thank everyone for making the 2009 tailgating event a great success. We had approximately 350 alumni and guests attending. We need to capitalize on the success of this event, and, as such, have plans to hold a similar event during the 2010 football season. As we try to revitalize the Alumni Society, we need everyone to renew their membership since there has been a considerable drop in renewals. Please send your annual membership dues (\$25) to Will Bowlin at 407 Brushboro Cove, New Albany, MS 38652. This is extremely important as we are expecting to reorganize the formal structure of the society. We currently have two officers, Will Bowlin, treasurer and Steve Smith, president. Although, we have a CFR Alumni Committee at school, the society needs a more formal off-campus structure. While most of the efforts for such events, as the tailgating event can be handled through Thompson Hall, I think it is important to have this outside voice to provide input and direction. Thank you for your participation.

Randy Rousseau (forestry, 1980)
rousseau@cfr.msstate.edu

2009 Conservationist of the Year

Mississippi Wildlife Federation selected Curtis Hopkins (forestry, 1971; wildlife and fisheries, 1973) as the 2009 Conservationist of the Year. Hopkins, director of Ducks Unlimited's Southern Region, has been contributing to conservation for nearly 40 years.

"It is truly an honor to recognize Curtis as our 2009 MWF Conservationist of the Year," Cathy Shropshire, MWF executive director, said. "His efforts have helped to protect and restore vital wetland habitats and ensure that associated species continue to be part of Mississippi's natural resource treasures."

From the time he served as the first president of the Mississippi State student chapter of The Wildlife Society, Hopkins has been influencing wildlife conservation in the state of Mississippi. Throughout nearly 40 years in the field working for the U.S. Forest Service, Mississippi State and Texas A&M universities, and Ducks Unlimited, he has continually developed programs that put habitat conservation on the ground.

Hopkins is an MSU Alumni Fellow and has received several awards for his conservation efforts, including The Wildlife Society's Jim McDonough Award, Renew America – National Award for Environmental Sustainability, and DU's Outstanding Regional Director Award.



Team coach Drew Stafford (forestry, 1984) (right) led the state champion 4-H forestry team from Tate County to represent Mississippi at the 4-H National Forestry Invitational held in Weston, W. Va. The team placed 10th nationally. Participants include (left to right) Tate County Extension Director Shelli Benton, Rob Barber, Rachel Gaines, Jessie Gilbert, Cameron Hadley, and Stafford. Stafford works for the Mississippi Forestry Commission.

1970s

Les Shelby (forestry, 1976) recently received the Mississippi Chapter of the Society of American Foresters Service Award. Shelby is a consulting forester at May and Associates in Brandon.



Rodney Kellum (forestry, 1977) is the forestry instructor at the Swainsboro Technical College in Swainsboro, Ga. He worked for the Union Camp Corp. for 20 years before he began his teaching career.

1980s

Bruce Carroll Young (forestry, 1981) is the president/owner of Timber Resources Inc. in Meridian.

Tommy Tadlock's (forestry, 1982) daughter Anna was recently crowned Miss Mississippi. Tommy is a forester for Plum Creek in Brandon.

William Quigley (wildlife and fisheries, 1983) is the district manager for Health Care Services Group. He and wife Kathryn live in Southaven.

Mark King (forestry, 1985) is a wood procurement manager for CraftMaster and the vice president of the Pennsylvania Hardwood Council, Northern Tier. He lives in Pennsylvania.

Bryan Maddox (forestry, 1988) is a teacher at Bruce High School.

1990s

Shane Kitchens (forest products, 1993, 1997, 2008) recently won first place in the university-affiliated division of the Mississippi Technology Alliance business plan competition for his company TermiSys. The company delivers products and services for termite control.

Marc Avary (forestry, 1995) is the 16th section land manager for the West Jasper School District. Avary also works as a private forestry consultant and real estate agent specializing in land in Bay Springs.

Matt Gray (wildlife and fisheries, 1995) recently received the Excellence in Research Award from the University of Tennessee Chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta, the honor society of agriculture. An associate professor at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, Gray earlier received the 2009 W.F. and Golda Moss Outstanding Teaching Award from U.T. College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

Ivan Messinger (forestry, 1995) is a wildlife biologist for the USDA Forest Service, Mancos-Dolores Ranger District, San Juan National Forest. He and wife Erica live in Dolores, Colo.

Shad Morgan (forest, 1996) and wife Lisa are living in Cantonment, Fla. Shad is the vice president of Total Landscape Service Inc.

Jason Watson (forestry, 1996) recently went to work for the CellFor Corp. as the business development manager for the eastern region. Watson and wife Kathryn live in Lexington, S.C.

Bobby Bond (wildlife and fisheries, 1999) and wife Nicole are the proud parents of a new son, Caleb Thomas. Bond is a senior wildlife biologist for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and resides in Fort Valley, Ga.

Scott Woodruff (wildlife and fisheries, 1999) is a wildlife disease biologist for the USDA Wildlife Services and resides in Zachary, La.

2000s

Jim Griffies (forest products, 2000) and wife Kim are living in Hendersonville, Tenn. Griffies is working for Spherion Staffing.

Scott Edwards (forestry 2001, wildlife and fisheries 2004) enjoys some rest and relaxation with his son. Edwards is a wildlife biologist for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks.



James Holman (forestry, 2002) is a conservation officer for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. He and wife Michelle live in Amory.



Matthew Raff (forestry, 2002) received the Mississippi Chapter of the Society of American Foresters young foresters award. Raff is an assistant vice president for the Land Bank of North Mississippi.

Amy Casale-Choisser (wildlife and fisheries, 2003) is working as a mental health counselor in Satellite Beach, Fla. She and husband Andrew are the proud parents of Noah, born in March 2009.

Liney Hashim (wildlife and fisheries, 2005) received the award of excellence in the publication category from the Universiti Sains Malaysia. The paper was coauthored by Liney's advisor, Donald Jackson and printed in the refereed journal *Hydrobiologia*.



Theresa Childers (wildlife and fisheries, 2006) is a wildlife biologist for the National Park Service. Childers resides in Gunnison, Colo.

Edith Parks Fogarty (wildlife and fisheries, 2007) was named Teacher of the Year by the West Point High School North Campus.

Jonathan David Harrell (forestry, 2007) is a district forester for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Harrell lives in Raymond.

Austin Shelby (forestry, 2008) is working in Montrose, Colo. He works with private landowners who are rehabilitating stands affected by Sudden Aspen Decline Disease, among other things.



IN MEMORY

Frank Switzer (friend), 50, of Madison and Vaughan, died Thursday, December 10, 2009 at his home. Mr. Switzer was born January 5, 1959 in Starkville to the late Dr. George Lester Switzer and Meadie Montgomery Switzer. He was a 1977 graduate of Starkville High School and a 1981 graduate of Mississippi State University where he also received his MBA.

Davis L. Fair (friend), Louisville, died March 13, 2009. Fair served as president of the Mississippi Forestry Association in 1957 and 1958.

Ralph Richmond Robertson (friend), 89, of Dothan, Ala., died Feb. 4, 2009. Robertson earned degrees from Louisiana State University and Yale University. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II. Mr. Robertson was employed with the Mississippi Forestry Commission before being employed for over 25 years with the Mississippi Extension Service at Mississippi State.

Charles Kelton Baxter (friend), 61, of Vicksburg, died February 7, 2009. Baxter spent his career conserving wildlife and waterfowl. He worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and was the former director of the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture.

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May 30-June 3, 2010 Cost: \$325/\$300

For students 10 and older. Parents/grandparents/guardians may attend.

Register: www.cfr.msstate.edu/wildlife/conservation_camp



Natural Resources Summer Camp

June 6-10, 2010 Cost: \$175

For high school students and recent graduates

Register: www.cfr.msstate.edu/summer_camp



Basic Insect and Plant Ecology

June 13-17, 2010 Cost: \$325/\$300

For students 10 and older. Parents/grandparents/guardians may attend.

Register: www.cfr.msstate.edu/wildlife/conservation_camp



Wildlife, Fisheries & Aquaculture Camp 2

June 27-July 1, 2010 Cost: \$325/\$300

For students 10 and older. Parents/grandparents/guardians may attend.

Register: www.cfr.msstate.edu/wildlife/conservation_camp



A Natural Resource Adventure