

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Forest Resources

2011 | alumni newsletter



renewable energy

MSU alumnus unlocks keys to biofuels



DEAN'S comments

I hope that you and your family are having a great summer. Summer is an exciting time on campus with summer camps and field programs in full swing. The college is offering four summer camps this year for individuals aged 10 and older. We also have numerous short courses and workshops offered this summer. I hope you will take advantage of continuing education opportunities provided through the college.

This has been a busy year in the college. Perhaps the most significant of our efforts, with your help, was level funding for the 2012 fiscal year from the Mississippi Legislature. While this does not restore over \$800,000 that we have been cut since 2008, it is good to not receive a cut in funding. We were planning for a worst case scenario for fiscal year 2012 and were concerned that the anticipated cuts would mean lost jobs and productivity. I am so grateful to legislators for their support and to the many alumni and friends who petitioned on our behalf. I know many of you were directly involved in helping us, and I can say, whole-heartedly, that the faculty, staff, and students appreciate your tireless support for the college and FWRC.

While we received level funding from the Legislature, we are keeping a watchful eye on federal funding. The loss of earmarks will affect our budget. We receive special grants for the Wood Utilization Research Center, the Berryman Institute, and Natural Resource Enterprises. These programs are important and have produced measurable impacts for the citizens of our state and nation. The grants are also significant to our research and educational activities, especially our graduate students. We continue to see record enrollments at all levels: undergraduate, master's and doctoral students. At the undergraduate level, enrollment has increased by 65% from 202 students in 2006 to 334 students in 2010. This is clearly a step in the right direction as we prepare natural resource leaders for the future. Equally important has been the growth in master's and doctoral students. The number of students enrolled in the master's program has increased 42% from 76 to 108 in the last 5 years and our doctoral enrollment has also grown 68% from 38 to 64. These students, particularly at the graduate level, are often supported on assistantships, many from federally-funded grants. We are excited to see the number of students pursuing degrees increase and expect our graduates to have great success in their careers.

In light of the loss of funding that we have sustained, we have been working to consolidate services and have left numerous positions vacant. We continue to look for other areas to improve efficiencies.

You will see in this issue of the CFR Alumni Newsletter, we have spotlighted three of our professorships that were awarded in November. The college now has 10 named professorships. These professorships are available, in large part, from your gifts. Thank you for helping us support, reward, and acknowledge our faculty. Also, many of our alumni have provided support for the faculty StatePride awards and student scholarships. I am grateful to all of you.

I hope you all will begin to make plans to return to campus on November 5 for homecoming. Our 3rd CFR Homecoming Tailgate event on that day will be the biggest and best yet. Please make your plans to return to campus and watch your Bulldogs defeat UT-Martin. Thanks again for your support, I look forward to seeing you soon. Please stay in touch.

George M. Hopper
Dean

2010 Alumni Fellow



Wayne H. Smith

The College of Forest Resources 2010 Alumni Fellow is Dr. Wayne H. Smith. The 1962 and 1965 graduate holds a master's and doctoral degree from Mississippi State. Smith currently serves as a professor and director emeritus in the School of Forest Resources and Conservation at the University of Florida. His extensive research has covered the areas of forest soils, nutrition and biogeochemical cycling, biomass energy, and organics composting and utilization. Prior to attending MSU, Smith earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida. He and his wife Mitzi now reside in Melrose, Fla.

2010 Alumnus of the Year

Bently Wigly Jr.

Bently Wigly Jr. is the College of Forest Resources' 2010 Alumnus of the Year. One of the most respected leaders in the nation in the field of forestry and wildlife, he received a bachelor of science in forestry in 1975, a master's in wildlife ecology in 1977 and doctorate in wildlife ecology and botany in 1981. As manager for the Sustainable Forestry and Eastern Wildlife Program of the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, Bently has excelled in improving the performance of forestry and logging systems. Bently developed a love for natural resources at an early age. He has taken that passion into his career, and every day he works to conserve our forests, wildlife, and water resources.



CFR Professorships

The College of Forest Resources currently has 10 professorships. Three of the newly awarded professorships are highlighted in this newsletter. Below is a list of all professorships in the college.

Mike Barnes, Warren S. Thompson Professor of Wood Science and Technology

Wes Burger, Dale H. Arner Professor of Wildlife Ecology and Management

Louis D'Abramo, W.L. Giles Distinguished Professor

Steve Demarais, Dale H. Arner Professor of Wildlife Ecology and Management

Andy Ezell, George L. Switzer Professor of Forestry

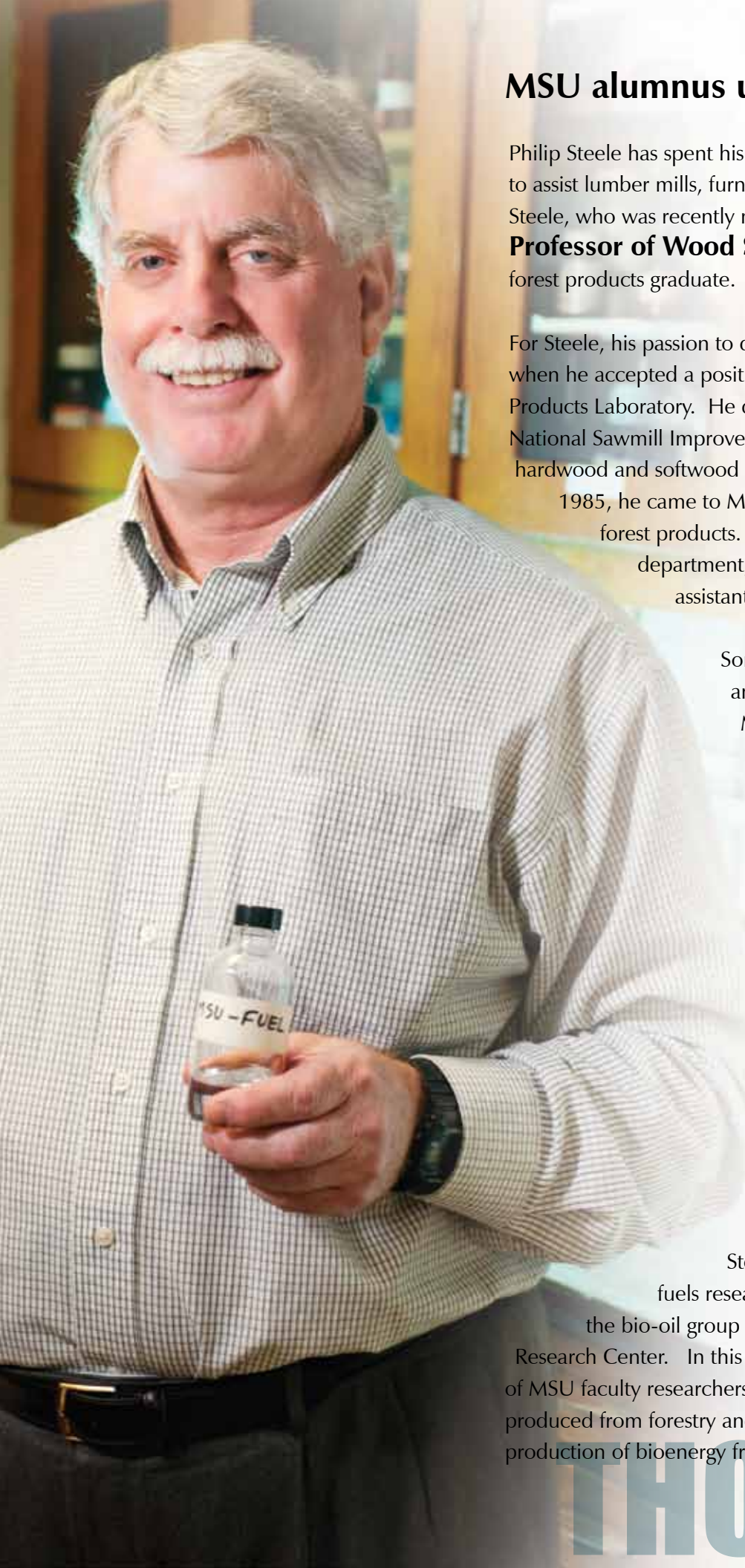
Steve Grado, George L. Switzer Professor of Forestry

Richard M. Kaminski, James C. Kennedy Endowed Chair in Waterfowl and Wetlands Conservation

Donald Jackson, Sharp Professor of Fisheries

Bruce Leopold, Sharp Professor of Wildlife Ecology

Philip Steele, Warren S. Thompson Professor of Wood Science and Technology



MSU alumnus unlocks key to biofuels

Philip Steele has spent his 23-year career developing technologies to assist lumber mills, furniture manufacturers and now landowners. Steele, who was recently named the **Warren S. Thompson Professor of Wood Science and Technology**, is a 1987 forest products graduate.

For Steele, his passion to develop new technologies began in 1974 when he accepted a position with the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Products Laboratory. He developed computer software for the National Sawmill Improvement Program. The software analyzed hardwood and softwood sawmill lumber recovery efficiency. In 1985, he came to Mississippi State to pursue a Ph.D. in forest products. When a faculty position opened in the department, Steele applied and was hired as an assistant professor.

Some four patents, five software packages, and one licensing agreement later, the Maryland native was not comfortable sitting around waiting for the next big idea to come around. In 2006, after a trip to see a bio-oil pyrolysis reactor in operation, Steele decided he could improve on the technology and offer a market for the first thinning of pine plantations.

"Landowners needed a market that would pay more than pulpwood prices," Steele said. "Being a landowner myself, I wanted to develop something new that could generate capital for the numerous landowners who had established pine plantations."

Steele quickly came to the forefront in bio-fuels research. In 2006, he became thrust leader of the bio-oil group within the university's Sustainable Energy Research Center. In this role, he coordinates the research activities of MSU faculty researchers focused on developing fuels from bio-oil produced from forestry and agricultural products. His research area is production of bioenergy from pyrolysis of forestry biomass.

THOMPSON

“As a result of his visionary leadership, MSU is highly recognized for work in biofuel technology.”

“Phil Steele initiated and fostered the science of biomass pyrolysis,” said Dean George Hopper. “As a result of his visionary leadership, MSU is highly recognized for work in biofuel technology.”

The ultimate goal of Steele’s research program is development of intellectual property that can be commercialized by industrial entities. Already successful at patents and licensing, Steele has several patents in the works on bio-oil technology. A patent has been filed on a method and device for increasing the proportion of bio-oil comprised by anhydrosugars—sugars from which water molecules have been eliminated. The technology will allow production of glucose for ethanol or butanol production from lignocellulosic biomass utilizing pyrolysis technology. Steele has also filed a patent to cover an improved auger pyrolysis reactor design that has already been adopted by two companies. A patent to develop a biofuel has also been filed to protect the technology of incorporating low-cost byproducts of the petroleum refining process, olefins, into a product that can be utilized as a heating fuel or to fuel a slow-diesel engine to produce electricity. Much of the work on the latter patent was contributed by retired chemistry professor Charles U. Pittman, Jr. and former graduate student Sanjeev Gajjela.

Gajjela, who received his doctoral degree in 2009, is now an assistant research professor in the department. He also developed technology that converts bio-oil to a hydrocarbon mixture of gasoline, diesel and jet fuel weight components. The catalyst produces hydrocarbons without water or oxygen content. This is the first time that zero oxygen content hydrocarbons have been produced by catalysis of bio-oil. The achievement is recognized both nationally and internationally as a major step forward in conversion of bio-oil to drop-in fuels.



Sanjeev Gajjela and Phil Steele work on a new version of bio-oil. The duo will be working with Kior, a biofuel company based in Pasadena, Texas. The company plans to build five new biofuel production plants in Mississippi.



Warren Thompson, center, congratulates Steele as Dean George Hopper looks on. Steele was named the Warren S. Thompson Professor of Wood Science and Technology in November, 2010.

PROFESSORSHIP

MSU hardwood expert's roots run deep throughout the South

Growing up in middle Tennessee's Highland Rim instilled an appreciation for hardwoods and laid the foundation for a profession in forestry for Andrew Ezell. He and his older brother would often wander in the hardwood forests on lands originally settled by his family. As a youth, he was fascinated by the mystique of hardwoods, their sturdy branches, abundant fruit and diversity among species.

When Ezell began to pursue his undergraduate degree at the University of Tennessee, he knew that the career he chose would need to provide opportunities for him to spend time in the woods.

Some 43 years later, his educational pursuit has led him to a career he enjoys and a great place to work. And the results of his research have been applied on millions of acres of forest land in the South.

Ezell is considered a leader in the use of herbicides for hardwood regeneration. In fact, every major use of herbicides in Southern forests today incorporates findings from his research.

His research in hardwood management not only spans time, but geography. In the mid-80s, he began working with Jimmie Yeiser in Texas and Larry Nelson in South Carolina. The trio conducted the same experiments at three different geographic locations. Ezell remembers the experience as ground breaking.

"We collaborated for nearly two decades on numerous experiments using identical protocols but in three different geographic areas—Mississippi, Texas, and South Carolina," Ezell said. "Our work and the subsequent results provided information for the entire Southern region on the use of herbicides in forest vegetation management."

His research set new trends for collaborative work throughout the South; however, it was his teaching appointment which brought him the most pleasure.

Ezell began teaching in 1975 while pursuing a doctoral degree at Louisiana State University. Even when he did not have a teaching appointment, he still found a way to mentor students. He has been the major professor for nearly 50 graduate students, which is a testament to the quality of his instruction.

The awards he has received from students is also evidence of his teaching skills, inside and outside of the classroom. Ezell has twice been honored by the MSU student chapter of the Society of American

SWITZER

“His legacy is the instruction he has given to traditional and non-traditional students in forest management and silviculture.”

Foresters as outstanding faculty member and has also received the college's teaching award. During his tenure at Texas A&M, he received the outstanding professor award on three separate occasions.

“Andy has the ability to instantly establish rapport with students and includes the right amount of humor into his lectures,” said Dean George Hopper. “His legacy is the instruction he has given to traditional and non-traditional students in forest management and silviculture.”

Landowners and foresters attest to the excellent training he provides in workshops and short courses. Two of the workshops he offers, vegetation management and hardwood management, are often full within a week of being announced.

While teaching is his passion, the road to Mississippi State was not through instruction or research but through Extension. After working at Texas A&M University and Georgia's Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Ezell was lured to the People's University by the collegial nature of the faculty.

“I had worked with John Hodges, Sam Land, and others in the department and really liked the collegiality of the faculty,” Ezell said. “An Extension position opened up at Mississippi State and it felt like a good fit for me.”

It was indeed a good fit. Ezell has served as an Extension specialist, professor and now as forestry department head.

While not a Bulldog by diploma, he has certainly immersed himself in maroon since 1985 and both of his children are graduates of Mississippi State. Son Eric graduated in 2008 with two bachelor's degrees, forestry and geosciences. Eric also received a master's in geosciences from MSU and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Florida. Avery, his daughter, received a bachelor's degree in elementary education and is now pursuing a master's.

A consummate worker, Ezell has found a place in the Bulldog family and the university is better because of him. Southern forest management, particularly hardwood forest, is also improved because of his contributions.

“I have stayed here for 26 years because this is a great place to work,” Ezell said.

In recognition of his research, teaching and outreach efforts, Ezell was recently named the **George L. Switzer Professor of Forestry**.



Andy Ezell accepts the George L. Switzer Professor of Forestry honor from Dean George Hopper. In 2010, Ezell was named Fellow in the Society of American Foresters.

MSU alumnus values opportunities to teach wildlife management

Steve Demarais' clientele includes students, landowners, hunters, legislators, wildlife biologists, and a NASCAR driver. So many individuals vying for his time doesn't seem to faze the MSU alumnus who has spent the last 27 years researching and educating others about white-tailed deer management.

For Demarais, who fully exemplifies the land-grant mission of teaching, research, and outreach, the reward is seeing recommended practices being used to meet the objectives of his clientele.

"I really like it when we develop or refine a management practice that is of value to landowners, deer biologists, and hunters," Demarais said. "When I see them implement practices that help them meet their wildlife management goals, it is truly rewarding."

Demarais has seen this happen more than once throughout his career. In 1979, he came to Mississippi State to pursue a master's degree under the direction of Harry Jacobson. His experience working with Jacobson and biologists in the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks persuaded him to pursue a doctoral degree at MSU.

His work was first recognized when his dissertation was turned into a field guide for wildlife biologists to

evaluate deer herd health in the spring and summer. The guide, developed in 1984, is still used today by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and other biologists throughout the region. This was the first in a long list of management practices he has prescribed for the Southeast's most important game species, white-tailed deer.

The recent legislative change in hunting seasons and buck harvesting was a direct result of the work by Demarais and former graduate student and now colleague Bronson Strickland.

"We found that the four-point rule was reducing antler size at older age classes," Demarais said. "We developed software that allowed deer biologists to evaluate the effects of various harvest strategies based on antler criteria. This tool showed that changing from a harvest criteria based on number of points to one based on antler spread and beam length permitted younger bucks to live longer and produced a quality older age distribution of bucks for hunters."

Yet another Demarais project has made an impact for a couple of his graduate students and may change how deer herds are managed. Demarais and Strickland supervised wildlife graduate student Jeremy Flinn in the development of a software program that converts trail camera photographs into management tools. The software, named BuckScore, estimates the age and antlers on living deer using photographs.

While conducting research, Flinn often worked with graduate student Emily Clemons. Clemons was also researching white-tailed deer under Demarais' supervision. The couple married and now Jeremy is the general manager of the BuckScore division and Emily is a wildlife biologist for the company which purchased the software, Texas-based NBFog.



Dale and Julia Arner congratulate Demarais upon being named the Dale H. Arner Professor of Wildlife Ecology and Management.

“Most of his nearly 30 graduate students are serving our nation today as scientists or biologists, managing wildlife populations.”

While the love story was not planned by Demarais, the research concept and a rewarding career were engineered by the Massachusetts native. Demarais has been described as an excellent educator and guide.

“Steve is truly a mentor to his students, providing relevant research topics and opportunities to interact with numerous agencies,” said Dean George Hopper. “Most of his nearly 30 graduate students are serving our nation today as scientists or biologists, managing wildlife populations.”

His teaching, research and outreach efforts are focused: with the goal of providing for healthy deer populations. An experienced hunter, Demarais understands first-hand the thrill of the hunt and appreciates individuals who enjoy the sport of hunting. He is also a strong advocate for hunting, knowing that herd health is largely dependent on population density and habitat quality.

In fact, his reputation for developing quality deer herds has reached far beyond the boundaries of Mississippi. Two-time NASCAR champion Tony Stewart is turning his 414-acre Hidden Hollow Ranch into a laboratory for Demarais and his colleagues to study habitats and deer-related issues. The land, located in Indiana, will provide an opportunity to determine whether wildlife management policies translate from the Southeast to the Midwest.

As an acclamation to his many accomplishments, Demarais was named the **Dale H. Arner Professor of Wildlife Ecology and Management** by the College of Forest Resources. He was also named Fellow of The Wildlife Society in 2010.

PROFESSORSHIP

Ruth Cook takes forestry career to new heights, supports MSU

Nearly 25 years ago, when alumna Ruth Cook entered the forestry profession, there were few opportunities for women in operational roles. In achieving industry success, Cook has gained confidence she now shares with others.

“Women can successfully manage forest operations—logging crews, woodyards, chipmills, procurement purchases, and the list goes on,” she proudly acknowledged. “During my career, I’ve placed a value on people—men and women—and tried to help them further develop their skills.”

Cook’s extensive resume is marked with experience she acquired after receiving her bachelor of science degree in forestry from MSU in 1982. Cook is a registered forester in Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas. She is immediate past president of the Mississippi Forestry Association and a member of the Society of American Foresters, the Louisiana Forestry Association and the National Alliance of Forest Owners.

In 2007, Cook was honored as one of Mississippi’s 50 Leading Business Women for her many accomplishments and leadership roles. Cook credits her mother, Dorothy, as her role model.

“She instilled in me a curiosity in the world around me. She’s a nurturer of family and friends and she gave me the drive to always do my best,” Cook said.

Today, Cook lives in the Covington County town of Seminary and works in nearby Hattiesburg for a timberland investment management organization. She has a demanding job as director of client information and reports for Molpus Timberlands Management LLC. In this role, she is responsible for the

coordination of efforts in relation to client reporting, operational budgeting and property valuations.

Cook previously was director of strategic planning for the company. She provided support services, technical information and analyses for leadership within its parent company, The Molpus Woodland Group, which is based in Jackson. Before joining Molpus in 1999, Cook spent 17 years in forestry management operations, much of it with Scott Paper Company, and later with Kimberly-Clark Corp.’s Southeast Timberlands after the two companies merged.

“My college education and job experience have enhanced the scope of my forestry knowledge in the southeastern United States,” she said. “My technical disciplines include silviculture, biometrics, GIS, computer applications, forest law, and accounting and business practices.”

Cook was initially intrigued by forestry at an early age. As the Cook family traveled and camped across the country, she developed a love of the outdoors. From there, the fascination grew as she excelled in her studies.

Since MSU’s College of Forest Resources is the only nationally accredited forestry educational program in the state, it was logical for Cook to enroll as a student in the late 1970s. She followed her older sister, Sally Cook, into the forestry program.

Ruth and Sally, along with two other siblings, Peggy and David, grew up in Canton and graduated from Mississippi State. They learned an appreciation of the university from their father, James Cook, who also attended.

Today, Cook remains involved with MSU and the College of Forest Resources. She was recognized as Alumna of the Year for the college in 2005. Cook has served as the college's alumni president and continues to be active in alumni relations.

"My work with the college alumni group has helped me build relationships with a new set of professors I would not otherwise have met," she said. "I view it as an honor to serve on advisory boards for the Bulldog Forest and the College of Forest Resource's Department of Forestry."

Despite a busy career, Cook sets aside time for special projects. Her focus has centered around work with the Crosby Arboretum Foundation since she was elected president of the group in 2006.

The Crosby Arboretum, located in Picayune, was established in 1980 as a living memorial to timber pioneer and philanthropist L.O. Crosby Jr. It is part of MSU's Coastal Research and Extension Center, and has become a premier native plant conservatory in the Southeast.

Maintaining a connection with her alma mater is important to Cook. Her most recent gift in support of MSU has funded a faculty award. The award, created through *StatePride*, will recognize a meritorious member of the College of Forest Resources faculty for the individual's teaching, research or service activities in accordance with the university's mission.

"During my professional career, I've been lucky to work for companies that awarded performance," she said. "I see the award as the little something extra an individual needs as recognition for a job well done."



Scholarship memorializes U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Head



Sam Hamilton learned an appreciation of wildlife and nature from his father, Lt. Col. Samuel Davis Hamilton Jr., a professor of air science with Mississippi State University's Air Force ROTC. Together, they fished the nearby Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, and the youngster developed a fondness for the area.

A decade later, Hamilton took the first step in his conservation career as a Youth Conservation Corps employee at the

refuge. He learned to band wood ducks and Canada geese, build waterfowl pens and understand the importance of managing wildlife habitats. His ties with the refuge continued as he graduated from Starkville High School and enrolled as a student at Mississippi State University.

After graduating from MSU in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in biological sciences, Hamilton began his long career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He and wife, Becky, lived in many parts of the country but settled in Atlanta, Ga., when he became director of the Southeast Region.

Hamilton became national director of the Fish and Wildlife Service in 2009 after being asked to consider the appointment on several occasions. As a federal agency head, he oversaw 128 national wildlife refuges, including Noxubee, and protected more than 350 federally listed threatened and endangered species.

Hamilton passed away in 2010 at the age of 54. His connection with the east-central Mississippi refuge and with his alma mater is now perpetual. A premier scholarship endowment in Mississippi State University's College of Forest Resources serves as a tribute to him.

The **Sam D. Hamilton Friends of Noxubee Refuge Graduate Conservation Scholarship** salutes Hamilton and his prestigious career. The scholarship is funded with contributions from friends, industry associates and organizations.

"Sam Hamilton was an exceptional wildlife biologist with profound vision, and he was an ardent supporter of Mississippi State," said Bruce Leopold, professor and head of wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture. "I can't think of a more fitting tribute to such an extraordinary professional than to establish this scholarship to support graduate student research, something that Sam held very dear to his heart."

Friends of Noxubee Refuge initiated the scholarship in honor of Hamilton's tireless efforts and diligent service to refuges throughout the country.

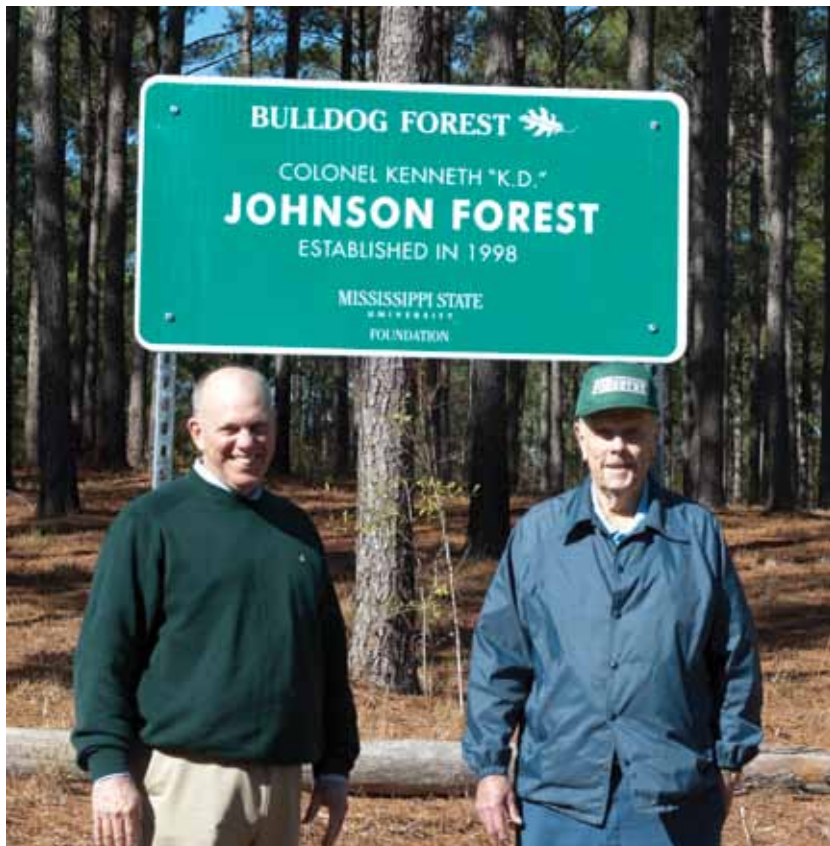
As a legacy to Hamilton, the scholarship will be awarded to graduate students who demonstrate efforts in conservation volunteer work and to those who have served internships on National Wildlife Refuges. The award commemorates Hamilton's encouragement of students seeking graduate degrees in the natural resource conservation field.

Individuals may contribute online at www.msufoundation.com or contact Jeff Little, director of development for the College of Forest Resources, at jlittle@foundation.msstate.edu or 662-325-8151.

Wetland Education Theater



A major bequest from a West Point native and longtime conservationist will establish a demonstration wetland, outdoor classroom, and associated upland prairie in the heart of Mississippi State's Starkville campus. The bequest from Carsie Clark Young Sr. provides resources for developing a site expected to become one of the most outstanding wetland education theaters on a university campus. Ducks Unlimited and MSU also are providing significant financial support for WET. Young was president of Clark Vending Co. and served as a director and secretary of both C.C. Clark Inc. and Clark Distributing Co. In addition to being active in civic organizations such as Rotary, he also served as a national trustee and volunteer with Ducks Unlimited and supported Delta Waterfowl. Pending approval by the state Board of Trustees, Institutions of Higher Learning, the theater will be known as the Carsie Clark and Diane Worthington Young Wetland Education Theater, honoring both Young and his wife of more than 50 years. Diane Worthington Young died in 2008. The theater will be located on open land east of the Department of Landscape Architecture and north of Thompson Hall and will consist of four water retention cells and a network of walks, trails, and bridges that will weave through the site and lead to outdoor classrooms and an adjacent restored prairie site.



A Bulldog Forest sign was placed on Colonel K.D. Johnson's timberland in December. Johnson donated timberland in Scott and Leake Counties to the university to fund the Colonel K.D. Johnson Endowment of Excellence. The Johnson family has owned the land since his retirement from the military. Serving multiple purposes, the timberland is a field-based learning resource for forestry students and generates income from timber harvesting for the CFR. Administration within the CFR has established a management plan for the property with the best science-based forestry principles and practices. Dean George Hopper and Colonel Johnson pose in front of the first sign recognizing property in the Bulldog Forest. If you are interested in creating a lasting legacy through the gift of timberland, contact Jeff Little at 662-325-8151 or at jlittle@foundation.msstate.edu.



Mid-South Forestry Equipment Show

The Sept. 17-18 Mid-South Forestry Equipment Show showcased the newest technology and machinery being used to advance the South's timber industry. The biennial event, in its 14th season, is the longest running live, in-woods demonstration of forestry equipment in the South. This year's show had a two-day attendance at just over 5,600.

The star of Discovery Channel's Swamp Loggers Show, Bobby Goodson, made an appearance at this year's show. The N.C. native is a fourth-generation logger whose all-terrain crew works in the swamps of his home state.

Sixty exhibitors included companies such as Bandit, Caterpillar, John Deere, Rotobec, Tigercat, and Stribling Equipment. The show also offered continuing education for foresters and loggers. Participants received slightly over 4,200 CE hours for attending multiple sessions that embraced topics ranging from timber markets to ethics.

The show featured a children's area with games such as the Little Folks Skidder Contest, Log Rolling Contest and Sawdust Pile of Prizes.

Well-known MSU aquaculture specialists honored by national peers

Faculty members **Louis R. D'Abramo** and **James A. "Jim" Steeby** were honored by the U.S. Aquaculture Society. D'Abramo is dean of the university's Graduate School, associate vice president for academic affairs and professor of wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture. Steeby is associate extension professor and extension aquaculture specialist at the Stoneville-based Thad Cochran National Warmwater Aquaculture Center. D'Abramo received the Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award, the organization's highest honor. An MSU doctoral graduate, Steeby was recognized with the 2010 Distinguished Service Award for his work with producers to decrease fish production costs and increase farm safety.

MSU student adviser Rachel Singleton to hold regional post

Rachel L. Singleton, coordinator of student services, was selected by her peers as chair of the Southeast Region, National Academic Advising Association. Singleton also received the Joyce Jackson Volunteer Award by the regional organization.

Extension professor recognized for volunteer efforts

John Guyton, an associate Extension professor in the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture, was honored with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Regional Director's Honor Award for Volunteer Service. Cindy Dohner, director of the Southeast Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service praised Guyton for his work on the Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge. In 2009, he taught or participated in nearly one-third of the refuge's programs.



Susan Diehl, forest products professor, was recognized for teaching contributions. A visionary instructor, Diehl is always striving to enhance the skills of students and anticipate future needs of the clientele they will serve.



Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture professor **Wes Burger** was recognized for service contributions. Burger has worked with numerous private, state and federal agencies throughout the Southeast during his nearly two decades of quail research.



Jerry Belant, wildlife, fisheries, and aquaculture assistant professor, was honored for outstanding achievement in research by the College of Forest Resources. A three-year veteran, Belant has garnered over 2.4 million dollars in extramural funding.

Award Winners



Robbie Kröger, an assistant wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture professor, received the Early Career Achievement Award. A two-year veteran, Kröger has garnered over 2 million dollars in extramural competitive grants at Mississippi State University.



Forestry professor **Andy Londo** received the Extension/Outreach Award. Londo conducts approximately 37 extension programs statewide annually. He has also garnered over 73 awards for Extension programming.



Office associate **Diane Weeks** and facilities coordinator **Mack Fondren** were recipients of the 2010 Doris Lee Memorial Staff Awards. Both in the wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture department, the awards recognize outstanding service to the department, college, and university.

Forest Landowners award MSU Extension professor

Stephen Dicke, Extension professor in MSU's College of Forest Resources, has been named Extension Forester of the Year by the Forest Landowners Association.

A certified arborist and tree farm inspector, Dicke was praised in the nomination for his intensive work in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Dicke led an educational effort to help landowners determine casualty losses, develop management and recovery strategies, and assist with urban tree losses along the Mississippi coast.

A Mississippi registered forester, Dicke is active in the Tree Farm Program, serving as a tree farm inspector and inspector trainer. He also serves on the state tree farm committee.

Dicke received his doctoral degree from MSU.



Kevin Hunt receives top MSU, national advising honors

Kevin M. Hunt is the 2010 winner of recognition given by the National Academic Advising Association. He received the Outstanding Academic Advising Award in the Faculty Category.

Hunt is an associate professor in the department of wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture.

He advanced to national competition after selection during the spring semester for MSU's Irvin Atly Jefcoat Excellence in Advising Awards.

Hunt, a Texas A&M University doctoral graduate, joined the MSU faculty in 2001 and currently directs the department's Human Dimensions and Conservation Law Enforcement Laboratory. He previously received campus awards for achievements in teaching and diversity efforts.



MSU professor awarded high honor

Bruce D. Leopold was honored with the prestigious Henry S. Mosby Award at the National Wild Turkey Federation's 35th annual National Convention and Sport Show in Nashville, Tenn.

The Mosby Award is named for Henry S. Mosby, whose research during the mid-1900s set the standard for wild turkey management. He also helped found The Wildlife Society and won its highest honor—the Aldo Leopold Medal.

For more than 30 years, Bruce Leopold has dedicated his career to conservation. He is a professor at Mississippi State University and head of the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture and serves as co-director of the Berryman Institute, which is dedicated to improving human-wildlife relationships and resolving human-wildlife conflicts through teaching, research and extension.

Leopold's research interests include predator-prey relationships, wildlife biometry, habitat management, population ecology, and wildlife population monitoring.

ACCOLADES

Wes Burger and **Kristine Evans** received the Outstanding Technical Publication Award by the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society for Managing Working Lands for Northern Bobwhite.

Hal Schramm was awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award by the American Fisheries Society.

Faculty and staff were recently recognized for publications and radio programs from the Southern Regional Extension Forestry Organization. Winners include: **John Auel, Leslie Burger, Stephen Demarais, Stephen Dicke, Debbie Gaddis, Linda Garnett, Bill Hamrick, James Henderson, Glenn Hughes, David Jones, Richard Kaminski, John Kushla, Andy Londo, Marc Measells, Emily Overbey, Randy Rousseau, Bronson Strickland** and **Adam Tullos**.

Bill Hamrick, wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture extension associate, received the Zacharias Distinguished Staff Award from Mississippi State University.

Several faculty received promotions in 2010 and 2011. The faculty promoted in 2010 were **Sam Riffell**, promoted to associate professor with tenure; **Don Grebner**, promoted to professor; **Debbie Gaddis**, promoted to Extension professor; **Emily Schultz**, promoted to professor. Faculty receiving promotions in 2011 are **Jerry Belant**, promoted to associate professor; **Bronson Strickland** promoted to associate Extension professor; **Robert Grala**, promoted to associate professor with tenure; and **Scott Roberts**, promoted to professor.

The Mississippi mammals website received the Outstanding Video Product Award by the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The site was designed by **Jerry Belant, Karen Brasher, Dave Ammon** and **John Goodman**.

MSU forest resources announces online degree program

Mississippi State now offers an online graduate degree program in forestry to help working professionals and others expand their education.

The College of Forest Resources is providing a master's of science degree program through distance learning capabilities of the university's Division of Academic Outreach and Continuing Education.

The 30-hour graduate curriculum covers forest management, natural resource policy and law, and forest economics, said Andy Ezell, forestry department head.

Ezell said this expansion of traditional campus study is expected to quickly attract participants currently working around the state and region.

"We have numerous former students and others that would like to expand their education but are restricted by work schedules, location, and family obligations," he said. "We believe this new distance-learning option will provide a winning professional situation for both the students and their employers."

The degree program also is "military friendly" in its willingness to assess all military experience that may apply toward an academic program of study, Ezell observed.

Admission to the master's program is open to all who have earned at least a "B" grade average in the last 60 hours of a relevant undergraduate major, as part of a bachelor's degree earned at an accredited academic institution. Admission to the university also is required.

"We are extremely pleased to offer this opportunity to students who desire to expand their education and professional standards," said George Hopper, dean of the College of Forest Resources. "We feel this new program is filling a vital niche, especially for many non-traditional students."

For more information, visit www.distance.msstate.edu/forestry/index.html.





Frances Lewis (l), a Weyerhaeuser Co. representative, assisted Meghan D. Jordan and Guy P. "Print" Woodward in planting oak tree seedlings near Zacharias Residential Village. Jordan and Woodward are members of the Society of American Foresters student chapter taking part in the ECO Week/Earth Day program. Weyerhaeuser provided the seedlings.

MSU student forestry group maintains high ranking

Mississippi State's student chapter of the Society of American Foresters continues among the top organizations of its kind in the nation.

The 28-member university organization recently placed first in the 2009-10 SAF Student Chapter web site competition and placed third overall as the outstanding student chapter, competing among 75 chapters nationally.

The group has finished atop the overall chapter rankings for more than a 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, 2007-08 and 2008-09.

Advisor Robert Grala was also honored for his work with the student chapter.

MSU student group honored for service

Mississippi State University's student chapter of the Forest Products Society was recognized by the international organization as one of the top three groups in the nation. Though small in size, with a membership of 20, the student chapter ranked in the top three, competing against 18 chapters in the U.S. and two in Canada. The group was honored for their service to the university and community, and enrichment through programs offered with industry leaders.

Program receives accreditation

The graduate program of the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture received accreditation by the Southeastern Section of The Wildlife Society.

Work of two students displayed in Smithsonian

Mississippi State University students **Michael Crosby** and **David Wilkinson** collaborated on a tornado-modeling project that has piqued the interest of the Mississippi Forestry Commission and the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum. The duo developed a damage assessment model that provides a quicker, more accurate assessment of timber damage after a tornado or other natural disaster. The model compares pre- and post-storm satellite images, acquired through the U.S. Geological Survey's Earth Resources Observation and Science Center. Data is entered into a GIS program, and then the values (pre- and post-storm) are subtracted. The imagery developed by the duo is on display at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum as a part of the Looking at Earth exhibit, highlighting applications of satellite data.

ACCOLADES

Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture students **Mike Arnold** and **Rebecca Krogman** were winners for best research paper at the Mississippi Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting, winning second and third, respectively.

Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture student **Justin Burger** was named Youth Conservationist of the Year by the Mississippi Wildlife Federation.

Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture graduate students **Kamen Campbell** and **Emily Flinn** were the first and second place winners in the 2011 Southeast Deer Study Group student poster competition.

Forestry graduate students swept the poster competition at the Southern Hardwoods Research Group Meeting. **Jake Camp** won first place, **Brady Self** won second place and **Damon Hollis** won third place.

Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture master's student **Dan Dembkowsky** was runner-up in the National American Fisheries Society Student Writing Competition.

Katy Edwards, wildlife, fisheries, and aquaculture graduate, received the Best Student Poster Award at the SEAFWA annual meeting.

Forestry student **Emily Fleming** received the 2010 Mississippi Society of American Foresters Student Chapter Leadership Award. Forestry student **Amanda Miller** received the award in 2011.

Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture graduate students were winners at the 33rd Annual Southeast Deer Study Group awards. **Jeremy Flinn** presented two papers and placed first and second, while **Stephen Webb** placed third in the oral presentation competition. **Emily Flinn** won the best poster competition.

Forest products graduate student **Katie Jenkins** was runner-up in the 2011 American Wood Protection Association's Student Poster Competition.

Forestry student **Min Lee** won second place at the MSU Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Nathan Little, forest products graduate and current doctoral student in entomology, was the overall winner in the 2011 American Wood Protection Association's Student Poster Competition.

Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture master's student **Alex Littlejohn** was runner-up for his presentation at the annual meeting of Society of Wetland Scientists, South-Central.

Kyle Marable, wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture master's student, was awarded a National Science Foundation grant to work on pikas in Inner Mongolia.

Evan O'Donnell, wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture student, received the 2011 Spirit of State Award.

Heidi Puckett, wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture graduate student, received the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society's Outstanding Peer-reviewed Publication Award.

Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture doctoral student **Amy Spencer** received first place for her student presentation at the Mississippi Water Resources Conference.

Elizabeth St. James, wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture master's student, received the best student poster award at the 17th Annual Wildlife Society Annual Conference.

Forest products doctoral student **Beth Stokes** received second place for her student presentation at the Mississippi Water Resources conference.

Wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture graduate student **Tyler Stubbs** won first place in the poster competition at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society.

Brandon Allen Stuckey, wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture student, is recipient of a national Tillman Military Scholarship.

Matt Wegener, wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture graduate student, won best student paper at Southern Division American Fisheries Society annual meeting.

Auburn University names Jim Shepard as forestry dean

Jim Shepard, professor and associate director of the Forest and Wildlife Research Center at Mississippi State University, has been named dean of Auburn University's School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, effective Jan. 3, 2011.



Shepard earned his doctoral degree in forest resources from Mississippi State in 1985.

At Mississippi State, Shepard served as associate director of the Mississippi Water Resources Research Institute and as head of the Department of Forestry.

Prior to his employment with MSU, Shepard worked with the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement and the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Ratcliff named MFA executive vice president

J. Tedrick Ratcliff Jr. has been named the executive vice president of the 73-year-old Mississippi Forestry Association. A native of Brookhaven, Tedrick has been working as admissions coordinator /recruiter of the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences & Forest Resources at Mississippi State University.



Tedrick has a bachelor of science degree in forestry/forest management and an MBA, both from Mississippi State University.

Tedrick is a Registered Forester with the Mississippi Board of Registered Foresters and a Certified Prescribed Burn Manager through the Mississippi Forestry Commission.



Hodges named Forest Conservationist

John D. Hodges has been named Forest Conservationist of the Year by the Mississippi Wildlife Federation.

A nationally-known hardwood specialist, Hodges is a 1959 Mississippi State forestry graduate and professor emeritus in the Department of Forestry. He was one of the first students to earn a bachelor's degree from the young School of Forestry.

Hodges joined the MSU faculty in 1975 and taught silviculture and conducted research in the areas of hardwood silviculture, physiology, ecology and wetland restoration until 1996. He was honored as the College of Forest Resources' Alumni Fellow in 2007.

A senate concurrent resolution was passed honoring Hodges for his contributions. The resolution stated, "For the past 35 years, Dr. John Hodges has focused his research on the hardwood forests of the South. Beginning in the 1970s, John directed research producing the foundation for management and harvest practices for desirable oak species on bottomland areas across the region."



Chad Dacus



Jason Olive

Alumni honored for conservation

Chad Dacus and Jason Olive were recognized by the Mississippi Wildlife Federation for conservation efforts. Dacus (Forestry, 2000, Wildlife and Fisheries 2000, 2002) was named the Wildlife Conservationist of the Year. Olive (Wildlife and Fisheries 2002) was named the Fisheries Conservationist of the Year. Both employees of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, Dacus is deer program coordinator and Olive is a fisheries biologist.

Photos courtesy of Deborah Logan.

Alumnus named Florida and National Tree Farm Inspector of the Year

Brian Cobble, a senior forester for the Florida Division of Forestry, was named the top Tree Farm Inspector in the state.

According to the Florida Forest Stewardship Newsletter, Cobble has proven himself as a valuable asset to Florida's Tree Farm program, and is a very deserving recipient of the Tree Farm Inspector of the Year Award.

In recognition of his work, the American Tree Farm System is recognizing Cobble as the 2011 National Tree Farm Inspector of Year at its upcoming meeting in New Mexico.

Cobble is a 2000 forestry graduate.

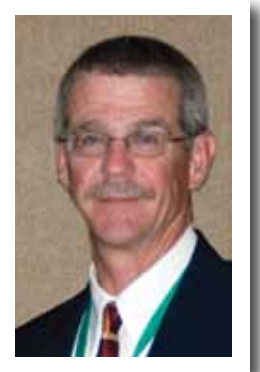


Mississippi's top tree man: Wiseman earns forestry's highest honor

Mike Wiseman is characterized by friends, family and colleagues as quiet, modest and low-profile. However, he had his "cover" blown recently when he earned the most prestigious award given by the Mississippi Forestry Association - Meritorious Service to Forestry.

A 1973 forestry graduate, Wiseman spent his nearly 35-year career at St. Regis and Georgia Pacific. He retired in 2010.

The Meritorious Service to Forestry award is for lifetime achievement and winners are selected by previous winners.



ALUMNI news

Alumna Edy Williams-Rhodes presented a shadow box to Dean George Hopper at the CFR student awards banquet. The box was given in honor of her father, Dan Williams, one of the first MSU forestry graduates. The box contains his compass, forestry log, a picture of Dan in a pine stand, a copy of the commencement handout from 1955, and a handwritten receipt dated April 13, 1950, for his summer camp registration fees.



ALUMNI updates

1950s

Don Bell (forestry, 1956) received the Golden Membership Award from the Society of American Foresters. Bell is retired and lives in Bruce.



1970s

Steve May (forestry, 1977) is the newest board member for the Alabama Board of Registration for Foresters.

Steve Bullard (forestry, 1977, 1980) is a new Fellow in the Society of American Foresters.

1990s

Chad Phillips (forestry, 1995) is working as an environmental specialist for the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

Matt Gray (wildlife and fisheries, 1995) recently received W.S. Overton Faculty Merit Award from the UT College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources in early April. This award acknowledges significant accomplishments in mentoring students. Gray is an associate professor at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

Houston Baker (forestry, 1998) is the new grants manager for the Mississippi Forestry Commission. Baker is involved with the management of all grants for all programs agency wide.

As part of the College of Forest Resources newsletter, the alumni updates help keep us all connected. Let us know about you, your careers and family so we can let your friends and classmates keep up with you. Send an e-mail to kbrasher@cfr.msstate.edu or complete the form on the CFR Web site at www.cfr.msstate.edu/alumni/update.asp.

2000s

Brad Stombock (forest products, 2002) is working for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection as director of the Office of Sustainable Initiatives. Brad and his wife Courtney live in Tallahassee, Fla. and have two sons. As director, he is responsible for overseeing the Green Lodging, Clean Marina and the Clean Vessel Act Programs, plus other environmental initiatives as they relate to sustainability.

Andrea Cooper (wildlife and fisheries, 2004, 2007) and co-authors Ben West and James Armstrong received the Outstanding Technical Publication Award from the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society for their paper on Managing Wild Pigs.

James Gibson (forestry, 2005) recently received the Mississippi's Outstanding Young Forester Award from the Mississippi Society of American Foresters. Gibson is a consulting forester with Pine Belt Foresters, LLC. The award recognizes professional achievements in forestry by young people just beginning their careers.



Kevin Brunke (wildlife and fisheries, 2007) received the Regional Director's Conservation Awards from the Southeast Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Brunke is the waterfowl lead with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

Erin Netterville (wildlife and fisheries, 2007) is working for her in-laws at T.A. Netterville Logging.

IN MEMORY

Linda Duckworth (former employee) passed away May 6, 2010 at the North Mississippi Medical Center of Tupelo.

Richard Jones (forestry, 1974) passed away April 30, 2011. Richard was regional woodland manager for Packaging Corporation of America in Counce, Tenn. He was a member of the National Guard, Center Hill Baptist Church and Tennessee Forestry Association.

Cecil Lynn Ellison (forestry, 1975) passed away on March 24, 2010 in Tupelo. He was a retired forester with National Resource Conservation Service and was a veteran of the United States Marine Corp.

Daniel Luther Williams, Jr. (forestry, 1955) passed away June 16, 2010 in Hattiesburg. He was an Eagle Scout, veteran of the U.S. Army and a graduate of Mississippi State University with two degrees, agriculture and forestry. He was one of the two graduates of the first class in forestry. His employment history included working as a forester for the Mississippi Forestry Commission and Crown Zellerbach Corporation. In later life, he established his own company, Woodco Inc., for land acquisition, forest management and wood products procurement services.

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MSU backpacks filled with school supplies were delivered to children in Afghanistan by Lt. Gen. John Bradley and his wife Jan. The backpacks and school supplies were provided by the College of Forest Resources and MSU faculty, staff and students to support the Lamia Afghan Foundation, a non-profit organization spearheaded by the Bradleys. The Lamia Afghan Foundation was chosen as one of the service projects in conjunction with the 2010 Maroon Edition, MSU's First-Year Reading Experience. The Lamia Afghan Foundation provides for needy children and families in Afghanistan.