

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Forest Resources

winter 2009 | alumni newsletter

James C.

Kennedy Chair

*endowed in waterfowl and
wetlands conservation*





DEAN'S comments

This is an exciting time to be in the College of Forest Resources family. We have received our first endowed chair and one of the largest at Mississippi State University. James C. Kennedy, an avid conservationist and chairman of Cox Enterprises, has established the Endowed Chair in Waterfowl and Wetlands Conservation. We appreciate Mr. Kennedy's generosity and leadership in establishing this chair, ensuring waterfowl and wetlands research, education, service

and outreach forever.

The establishment of this chair provides an opportunity to appoint a professor as the chair holder. Rick Kaminski, a 25-year veteran and waterfowl biologist, will assume this position, along with the position of associate dean. Rick has been serving as interim associate dean and now has been appointed to the position full time. An additional administrative change was made in the college with the appointment of Jim Shepard as associate director for research. Jim has served the department of forestry for four years as head and will do a great job as associate director. Andy Ezell is serving in the department as interim head and a nationwide search for a replacement has begun.

The college had an excellent year in 2008 in fundraising. Our development officer, Jeff Little, has done an outstanding job, raising \$3.9 million for scholarships, endowments and professorships in the fiscal year 2008. Jeff has already raised over a million in fiscal year 2009. An additional four properties have been added to the Bulldog Forest. We continue to see land gifts as an area in which many of our alumni and friends are interested. This approach has wonderful benefits, including lower estate taxes, charitable trusts and life annuities, providing continuous income immediately to the donor. The Bulldog Forest now has a total acreage of over 14,000 acres. These lands will forever bear the name of the donor as recognition of their support of the university and the college. Thanks to our many friends and alumni for their generous gifts and support of the College of Forest Resources. Our alumni have continuously provided funds for scholarships for our students and we are all appreciative.

Our students, like our alumni, are the best in the country. The last three years the College of Forest Resources student body has grown dramatically. Our doctoral program is at an all-time high with 57 Ph.D. students. We have exceeded our goal of 50 doctoral students, but will continue to expand. We have 86 master's students, on our way to our goal of 100 master's students. Our undergraduate program also has grown significantly. In the fall, we had 242 undergraduate students, evenly distributed in forestry and wildlife and fisheries. If you know of someone interested in a career in natural resources, please give their information to our recruiter, Tedrick Ratcliff (tratcliff@cfr.msstate.edu).

Thank you for all you do to ensure the growth and productivity of the College of Forest Resources. I hope you enjoy the newsletter. If you are in the area, please stop by for a visit; I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

George M. Hopper
Dean

On the cover

James Kennedy enjoying a duck hunt at his property, York Woods—a 5,500-acre conservation-easement property located near Charleston in Tallahatchie County.

2008 Alumni Fellow

James Earl Kennamer

The College of Forest Resources 2008 Alumni Fellow is James Earl Kennamer of Edgefield, S.C. Kennamer is the senior vice president for conservation programs for the National Wild Turkey Federation. Kennamer received his master's degree in wildlife management in 1967 and then a doctoral degree in wildlife management in 1970. A former professor of wildlife, Kennamer has forged strong ties between hunters and wildlife agencies, corporations and conservation groups, to help restore turkey populations across North America.



Accolades



Three College of Forest Resources faculty members were honored recently with outstanding achievement awards. Receiving the 2008 awards are (in left photo, l-r) forestry professor **Ian Munn** for research; wildlife and fisheries assistant professor **Sam Riffell**, teaching; and wildlife and fisheries assistant professor **Daryl Jones**, service. The awards were presented at the college's annual advisory banquet.

Changyou "Edwin" Sun, an assistant forestry professor in the College of Forest Resources (in center photo), is the first to receive the college Early Career Achievement Award. Established to recognize an outstanding faculty member who holds the rank of assistant professor, assistant extension professor or assistant research professor, the award is based on a distinguished record of teaching, research and service within the college. A faculty member since 2003, Sun is a forest economist. The award was presented at the college's annual advisory banquet.

Mississippi State University wildlife and fisheries research technician **Rodney Reed** (l) and account supervisor **Annice Hill** were honored recently with 2008 Doris Lee Memorial Staff Awards for outstanding service. Reed assists with the maintenance of the facilities at the South Farm Aquaculture Unit. Reed, an eight-year veteran, handles water quality, feeding and harvest in the 90 ponds located in the aquaculture unit. Hill manages the accounting for wildlife and fisheries including the Mississippi Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit and has been employed at the university for 16 years.

MSU announces first

*waterfowl,
wetlands*
endowed chair

Waterfowl- and wetlands-related teaching, research and service are being greatly enhanced at Mississippi State through a significant gift from the chairman of Cox Enterprises Inc.

James C. Kennedy recently established an endowed professorship in the university's College of Forest Resources to focus specifically on the two areas.

The Kennedy Chair is the first of its kind for the academic program that came together in the mid-1950s as the School of Forestry. Expanded and renamed the School of Forest Resources in 1967, it was elevated to college status in 1996 and remains the only one of its kind at a Mississippi institution of higher learning.

"This gift demonstrates Mr. Kennedy's dedication to conservation and his support of waterfowl and wetland resources," said college Dean George Hopper.

An endowed chair is a prestigious faculty position filled by a nationally prominent scholar and teacher. A minimum of \$1.5 million is required to create an endowed MSU chair.

A native of Hawaii, Kennedy is a longtime conservationist and philanthropist. His love and respect for waterfowl is well-known, both internationally and in Mississippi.

York Woods, his 5,500-acre conservation-easement property, is located near Charleston in Tallahatchie County.

When Kennedy is not in Atlanta, Ga., leading Cox Enterprises—one of the nation's major media companies and automotive service providers—he may be found on his North Delta property.

"I find great pleasure in restoring land and improving habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife," Kennedy said.

His passion for conservation also is demonstrated through service on the executive board of Ducks Unlimited Inc. and as former president of Wetlands America Trust for 15 years.

"The endowed chair at MSU is one way that I can give back and ensure that future generations will have waterfowl and wetlands, and people to study and steward these valuable natural resources," Kennedy explained.

Hopper said the Kennedy Chair also holds distinction as "the first endowed waterfowl and wetlands university chair among the 14 states

of the Mississippi Flyway, which includes land around the Mississippi River and its tributaries."

The Magnolia State is recognized by wildlife researchers and hunters alike for its strategic location on the waterfowl migration path stretching between Canada and the northern United States and warmer winter climates found in the southern states and beyond.

Taking advantage of this natural geographic circumstance, MSU researchers have, over the decades, worked hard to develop a nationally respected program in wildlife science and management.

"For that reason alone, it seems fitting for our college to house the chair," Hopper observed.

Throughout much of North America, university-based programs focusing on waterfowl and wetlands conservation are declining in number.

"This decline in programs was one of Mr. Kennedy's major reasons for establishing the chair," added Hopper, an alumnus of the MSU college.

Senior MSU forest resources faculty member honored, promoted

Richard M. Kaminski is being named holder of the James C. Kennedy Endowed Chair in Waterfowl and Wetlands Conservation in Mississippi State's College of Forest Resources.

Kaminski, a 25-year faculty veteran at the university, also is being promoted to associate college dean. He is a professor of wildlife and a nationally recognized North American waterfowl and wetlands scientist.

"Dr. Kaminski has spent his career studying waterfowl, their habitats and educating future

professionals," said Dean George M. Hopper in making the announcement. "He has mentored and graduated more than 40 graduate students and authored nearly 100 peer-reviewed scientific publications."

Last year, Kaminski was included on Outdoor Life magazine's list

of 25 individuals making major contributions to hunting, fishing and other outdoor sports. He was among the first U.S. scientists in the 1970s to conduct wetland management experiments examining waterfowl use and aquatic invertebrate responses to various wetland management situations.

Over his career, the Manitowoc, Wis. native has received campus and other honors, including the MSU Alumni Association Graduate-level Teaching and John Grisham Faculty Excellence awards. He also holds the Mississippi Wildlife Federation Wildlife Conservationist of the Year and Ducks Unlimited Wetlands Conservation Lifetime Achievement awards.

In addition to teaching and research, Kaminski has assisted the College of Forest Resources in securing major private gifts, including the Scenic Homes-Dr.

Richard M. Kaminski Scholarship in Waterfowl and Wetlands Conservation that was given in his honor.

Hopper said one of Kaminski's passions "is recruiting the next generation of waterfowl conservationists through the organization of youth hunts, summer camps, and classroom and field settings." Research by Kaminski determined that university-based programs focused on waterfowl and wetlands are declining in number throughout the U. S. and Canada, he added.

In addition to overseeing the college's academic affairs, Kaminski currently supervises nine graduate students working in various areas of waterfowl and wetland ecology and management.

The Kennedy Chair is a first for the MSU college and among the largest endowed professorships at the land-grant institution. "The endowment was established by James C. Kennedy, chairman of Atlanta-based Cox Enterprises Inc., and is a very significant achievement for the university," Hopper said. (For more, see www.cfr.msstate.edu/kennedychair.)

Kaminski holds a bachelor's degree in wildlife management and biology from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and master's and doctoral degrees in wildlife ecology from Michigan State University. Prior to coming to Mississippi, he was a research biologist for Ducks Unlimited-Canada.

He is a Fellow of The Wildlife Society and associate editor for the international organization's professional journals, "Wildlife Society Bulletin" and "Journal of Wildlife Management."



Kaminski (l) looks at wetland vegetation with a manager.



MSU College of Forest Resources announces new leadership



The Mississippi State forestry's department head is being promoted to a new administrative role in the university's College of Forest Resources.

James P. "Jim" Shepard now is associate director of research for the Forest and Wildlife Research Center and Mississippi Water Resources Research Institute.

Shepard, an MSU alumnus, joined the faculty in 2005 after 15 years with the Florida-based National Council for Air and Stream Improvement. He holds the academic rank of professor of forestry.

"Dr. Shepard has done an outstanding job as department head," said college Dean George M. Hopper. "He has a wealth of research planning and project management experience, including a vast knowledge of hydrology and wetlands, which will serve the research center and water institute well in the future."

Shepard held several positions at NCASI, including manager of the sustainable forestry and forest wetlands programs, and forest environmental scientist. He also has served as a research scientist with the State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry and as a courtesy associate professor at the University of Florida.

Shepard's bachelor and doctoral degrees from MSU are in forestry and forest soils, respectively. He

also completed a master's in tree physiology at Purdue University.

Professor Andrew Ezell is serving as the forestry department's interim head. A national search will be conducted to fill the vacant head position.

The Forest and Wildlife Research Center was established by the Mississippi Legislature with the passage of the 1994 Renewable Natural Resources Research Act. Its missions involve state and regional research and technical assistance programs relevant to the efficient management and utilization of forest, wildlife and fisheries. FWRC scientists also focus on the protection and enhancement of natural environments associated with these resources.

Established in 1964 and part of the Forest and Wildlife Research

Center since 2006, the Mississippi Water Resources Research Institute is a statewide center of expertise in water and its associated land-use.

Dean Hopper is director for both the center and institute.



Shepard visits with an alumnus during Super Bulldog Weekend.

Liam E. Leightley is the new executive director of the Virginia-based Institute for Advanced Learning & Research in Danville, Va. Leightley served as interim associate director of the Forest and Wildlife Research Center for two years. He began his new job on October 6, 2008.

welcome **NEW FACULTY**

Jerry Belant

Trapping, hunting, hiking, and playing banjo are just a few of Jerry Belant's hobbies. The father of three is a new assistant professor in wildlife and fisheries. Jerry received his bachelor and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in wildlife biology and natural resources, respectively. He received his doctoral degree from the University of Alaska. A native of Merrill, Wis., Jerry's research interests include carnivore ecology and management, resource selection and human-wildlife conflict management. He is teaching mammalogy and human-wildlife conflict management.



David Jones

A native of Hampton, Ga., David joined the forest products faculty in March 2008. David is the first extension assistant professor in the department. He received his bachelor's degree in forest resources from Clemson University, a master's in forestry from Stephen F. Austin State University, and a doctoral degree in forestry from the University of Georgia. David successfully organized the Wood Magic Science Fair this year. His research interests include wood quality and rapid assessment techniques of wood properties. David enjoys helping those throughout the state with wood-related questions and problems.



Robbie Kröger

Robbie and wife Lisa Blair Kröger moved to Starkville in January of 2009 from Oxford. A native of Johannesburg, South Africa, Robbie grew up loving the outdoors. He has a passion for hunting, fishing, soccer, and martial arts. Throughout his tenure in the U.S. he has trained in Korea Hapkido, a traditional defensive form of Korean martial arts that is relatively new to the U.S. He was the first American/South African student to travel to Daejeon, Korea to grade for his first-degree black belt. An assistant wildlife and fisheries professor, Robbie earned a double bachelor's degree in botany and biology from the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. He earned his master's degree in river and wetland ecology from Witwatersrand and a doctoral degree in biology from the University of Mississippi. Robbie's research interests include aquatic biogeochemistry, contaminant management, and wetland and aquatic ecology.



Shane Kitchens

A native of Utica, Shane received his bachelor, master's and doctoral degrees in forest products at Mississippi State University. After receiving his master's degree, Shane spent about 10 years working in industry. Shane and wife Laura returned to their Alma Mater and he received his doctoral degree and became an assistant professor. He enjoys cooking, working in the yard, hunting, fishing, and golf. Shane is quite the entrepreneur with three companies; TASKpro, TermiSys and TermiSys Technologies. Shane, and colleagues Kevin Ragon and Terry Amburgey received the first Thad Cochran Entrepreneurship Award from the university. Shane loves MSU sports and frequently may be found in "Left Field Lounge" firing up the grill and watching MSU baseball. His research interests include log and lumber quality and wood protection.



Wes Neal

Wes Neal joined the wildlife and fisheries faculty as an assistant extension professor in July 2008. A native of Virginia, his specialty is sport fish management, and his research interests range from the smallest ponds in Mississippi to reservoir sport fisheries in the tropics. Wes came to MSU from a similar position at the University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff, where he spent five years doing extension fisheries programming. He received his doctorate in zoology and a master's degree in fisheries and wildlife sciences from North Carolina State University. He earned his bachelor's degree in forestry and wildlife from Virginia Tech. Wes lives with his wife, Diana, and two boys, Nicolas and Jacob. He enjoys fishing, hunting, playing the guitar, and is an avid college football fan.



Fei Yu

Fei Yu graduated from the University of Minnesota with a doctoral degree in biosystems and agricultural engineering. He taught Biochemistry and Biosynthesis of Pharmaceuticals in China for four years. He received a bachelor's degree from Hubei University of Technology and a master's degree from Dalian Institute of Light Industry, both in fermentation engineering. A native of Wuhan, China, Fei is an assistant research professor in forest products. He currently teaches the chemical basis of wood-based bioenergy in the Department of Forest Products. His research interests are renewable energy productions from lignocellulosic biomass by thermochemical and biological processes. His hobbies include spending time with his family, fishing, swimming, reading, and stamp collecting.



FORESTRY



Mississippi State continues as the home of a top Society of American Foresters student chapter. The 47-member university organization recently placed first nationally in the 2007-08 Web site competition and third place overall among outstanding campus chapters. The group has been atop the overall chapter rankings for the past nine years. This is the sixth year the student chapter has won first place in the Web site competition.

Scientists discover bacteria aiding Southern pine beetles

Researchers may have found the secret to controlling a tiny insect that robs Mississippi landowners of an estimated 12 million cubic feet of pine forest each year.

Though only an eighth of an inch long, the Southern pine beetle is a big pest and difficult to contain.

Scientists at Mississippi State University's Forest and Wildlife Research Center, along with colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Harvard and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, have made a breakthrough with the discovery of an antibiotic-producing bacterium.

Beetles use the bacterium to protect their food against other microbes.

Published in the refereed journal *Science*, the research found that adult female Southern pine beetles carry a previously unknown bacterium. The bacterium produces a unique antibiotic that is highly effective against a fungus that can attack the beetles' food source.

"The beetles have established an association with a beneficial fungus," said Cetin Yuceer, forestry assistant professor and co-investigator in the finding. "Beetles bore holes through the outer bark of Southern pines to create galleries within the inner bark and phloem. During this process, the females inoculate the galleries with this beneficial fungus, which is carried in a specialized beetle storage compartment."

The fungus colonizes the galleries and serves as an important food source for developing beetle larvae, Yuceer added.

However, an antagonistic fungus can out-compete the beneficial fungus in these galleries and disrupt Southern pine beetle larval development.

"Our findings indicate that another beneficial connection also has been established between the Southern pine beetle and the newly discovered bacterium, which produces an antibiotic that inhibits the antagonistic fungus," Yuceer said.

Beetles are basically protecting their food from pathogens using a bacterium with a potent chemical inhibitor.

Hunting leases help fund K-12 education

The 600,000 acres of 16th section land located in 67 Mississippi counties generate more than \$45 million each year and supplement a budget of more than \$2 billion for K-12 education.

Sixteenth section land is public acreage set aside when the state was first surveyed to help fund education and other programs. The 15 counties in North Mississippi that do not have school trust lands receive annual appropriations to compensate for this lost source of local education funding.

Mississippi Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann reported there were 875 hunting leases on 16th section lands generating more than \$2.5 million in 2005. Currently, there are about 300,000 acres of 16th section lands leased in 52 counties for hunting in the state. School districts advertise lease sales in local newspapers for two consecutive weeks before the lease auction, and award hunting leases to the highest bidder in a sealed bid auction.

Nearly 75 percent, or 447,261 acres, of 16th section land is classified as forest. This forestland is managed by the Mississippi Forestry Commission, which estimates that more than 100 timber sales occur each year on about 11,000 acres. Revenues from those timber sales average \$15.2 million annually.

"An added benefit to school districts of classifying their 16th section land as forestlands and planting them in timber is that this same land can be for hunting and fishing purposes," Hosemann said.

To understand the value of hunting leases on these lands, scientists in Mississippi State University's Forest and Wildlife Research Center initiated a study of 16th section land.

"Information from hunting leases on private forestlands is not ideal for determining values because these leases are typically priced in a noncompetitive manner," said Ian Munn, forestry professor and economist.

Most hunting leases on nonindustrial private lands are not advertised or competitively issued, so they are inefficient and do not capture the full market value, Munn added.

The MSU study not only provides valuable information on factors affecting hunting lease prices, but it also will allow counties to determine ways to increase revenue on the public trust lands.

"We examined hunting leases on 16th section lands in Mississippi to determine the role that lease length, size of the lease area, habitat quality, market segmentation, game quality, and distance to the closest urban area have on hunting lease prices," Munn said.

The study revealed that the average annual lease price was \$8.73 per acre with an average lease size of about 348 acres. Sixteenth section land can only be leased for hunting if it is forested. Pine stands represented 35 percent of the leased land, but findings indicated that hardwoods generate more revenue.

Results of the study also indicated that leases for smaller amounts of land brought higher per-acre prices than leases for larger tracts.

Accolades



Robert Grala



Juanita Mobley



Emily Schultz

Robert Grala, assistant professor, has been asked to serve on the MSU Faculty Leadership Program.

Juanita Mobley, research associate, retired after 28 years of service to the university. Mobley worked in the tree physiology laboratory.

Emily Schultz is on the SAF Educational Policy Review Committee. The five-member committee is charged with monitoring all aspects of professional forestry education, including the SAF accreditation standards and procedures.

FOREST PRODUCTS



The Wood Magic Science Fair returned to campus last fall. The week of October 20-24, some 3,000 fourth-graders attended the fair to learn about Mississippi's most abundant natural resources. Events included a sawmill, wood sandwiches, furniture testing, wildlife, termites, rock stars, daily wood, papermaking, and bubbling bazookas, among others.

MSU researchers reduce building material chemicals

Formaldehyde exposure grabbed recent media attention because of air quality problems associated with Federal Emergency Management Agency trailers, but Mississippi State University researchers have been addressing these concerns for years by investigating new materials and detection methods.

About 29,000 FEMA trailers still house Gulf Coast residents displaced three years ago when Hurricane Katrina struck. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported formaldehyde levels nearly 40 times higher than normal in some of the trailers because of materials used in their

manufacture.

Formaldehyde is a chemical compound found in many products, so people have a hard time escaping some level of exposure. It can be released as gas from plastics, foams, vinyl tile, carpet, upholstered furniture and some wood composites. Formaldehyde also is contained in gas that causes the "new car smell" in vehicles.

Toxic levels of formaldehyde can cause respiratory trouble, headaches, nosebleeds, and a host of potentially long-term health problems. Additionally, some individuals are sensitive to relatively low levels of the compound.

"Years of research and testing related to composite panel products have yielded significantly reduced formaldehyde emission levels and have helped tighten up air pollution quality standards," said Rubin Shmulsky, head of the MSU Department of Forest Products.

Scientists in MSU's Forest and Wildlife Research Center are developing formaldehyde-free adhesives for composite wood products such as plywood and particleboard. Their work is helping ensure that composite panels are not a significant source of formaldehyde gas in homes.

"A patent is pending on a resin developed by MSU scientists

Accolades

Terry L. Amburgey, professor, is a new Fellow of the International Academy of Science.



Lindsey Harris has been hired as an administrative assistant.

Leonard Ingram, professor, retired after 32 years of service.



Rubin Shmulsky, department head, was accepted for the Fall 2008 Food Systems Leadership Institute, a top-tier leadership development program for academia, industry and government.



that produces 80 percent less formaldehyde emissions and has similar cost, strength and durability," Shmulsky said.

MSU scientists also have assisted in development of a low-cost, real-time sensor that detects formaldehyde and other chemicals in the air.

"Since 1990, MSU scientists have contributed to federal standards that address methods for measuring formaldehyde and other chemicals emitted from wood products," said Leonard Ingram, MSU forest products professor. "We were one of the first universities to demonstrate the use of a pilot-scale kiln for effectively measuring

volatile organic compounds. This equipment has become a federally recognized and acceptable means of pollution measurement."

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency based its standards on formaldehyde exposure, in part, on MSU studies, he added.

The investigation on ways to improve indoor air quality in homes is a collaborative effort of the Southern Climatic Housing Coalition. The coalition includes MSU's College of Forest Resources; Bagley College of Engineering; College of Architecture, Art and Design; and the Department of Landscape Architecture, as well as

the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

The program includes a demonstration house that highlights methods of design and construction to improve indoor air quality, reduce energy consumption and increase durability.

"For many individuals along the Gulf Coast, the issue of airborne formaldehyde is a focal point of life," Shmulsky said. "We hope there is some level of comfort in knowing that our efforts are working directly toward addressing indoor air quality to protect the health and well-being of Mississippians and others today and well into the future."

WILDLIFE & FISHERIES



Wesley Howell (center) is the newest recipient of the CFR Heroism award. Howell, a summer intern with the Russian River ferry station in Alaska, saved someone who had fallen in the Kenai River while fishing. Dean George Hopper presented a compass to Howell at the CFR awards banquet. Also pictured are Howell's parents.

Study abroad brings lectures to life

When students enrolled in the MSU College of Forest Resources tropical biology course last spring, they had no idea it would take them to another world.

A semester of lectures on tropical rain forests, coral reefs, sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation was followed by a 10-day voyage to the Central American nation of Belize.

"Study abroad experiences are a great way to teach students by immersing them in the natural and cultural history of an area," said Francisco Vilella, course instructor and wildlife and fisheries professor.

"When I first offered the course, I was sure a trip to a tropical rain

forest would enhance the students' learning experience."

The first course in the College of Forest Resources with a study abroad component, the extended field trip accomplished all that Vilella had hoped.

The first stop on the journey was in the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary and Jaguar Preserve. Located in southern Belize, the sanctuary covers about 150 square miles of tropical forest and is the world's only jaguar preserve.

"Actually experiencing the rain forest made everything we had learned in class come alive," said Alisha Workman, a senior wildlife and fisheries student. "Our alarm

clock early in the morning at the Cockscomb Sanctuary consisted of (what sounded like) hundreds of birds, and it was awesome."

Next, the students went north to the La Milpa Biological Station. This is a private reserve owned by the Programme for Belize. Students were able to visit a mature mahogany forest, walk through recently uncovered Mayan ruins and observe neotropical mammals.

"Throughout the trip, students observed a large number of neotropical birds," Vilella said. "In the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary and Jaguar Preserve, there are over 300 recorded species."

The final leg of the trip included a water taxi ride to Caye Caulker, an island in the Great Barrier Reef of Belize. Students spent a day snorkeling in this marine sanctuary, the second largest barrier reef in the world.

"Snorkeling in the reef allowed students to observe a vast diversity of coral reef fish species and close encounters with manatees, sea turtles, stingrays, and nurse sharks," Vilella said.

While in Belize, students visited more than 10 distinct areas that ranged from wet to dry forests. Students also discovered Mayan ruins and a medicine man in the country. Every student member of the group came back from Belize with a new appreciation of study abroad experiences, as well as the wonder and excitement of life beyond the United States.

"It was almost surreal for me to be walking down a path at one of the excavation sites and look up and see a family of monkeys," Workman said. "I wanted to go to Belize for the wildlife, but ended up appreciating the people and their culture as well."

Register for a camp today! Intergenerational Summer Camps

Basic Wetland Ecology & Outdoor Sports
May 31-June 4, 2009

Basic Insect & Plant Ecology
June 14-18, 2009

Basic Upland Ecology & Outdoor Sports
June 28-July 2, 2009

Advanced Concepts & Skills
July 12-16, 2009



Lou D'Abramo



Jeanne Jones



Rick Kaminski

Accolades



Steve Miranda



Bronson Strickland



Steve Demarais

Wildlife and fisheries professor and aquaculture researcher, **Louis R. "Lou" D'Abramo** is the university's new graduate school dean. D'Abramo also serves as associate vice president for academic affairs.

Jeanne C. Jones, associate professor, has been named a Fellow of The Wildlife Society.

Richard M. Kaminski received the award for the best article in a peer-reviewed research journal from The Wildlife Society, Mississippi Chapter. Kaminski, along with colleagues Stephen Dinsmore, Ken Reinecke, and former graduate student Aaron Pearse, shared the writing honors for the Journal of Wildlife Management entry based on Pearse's dissertation.

Leandro "Steve" Miranda has received two patents for his work. U.S. Patent #7,350,479 is a system and method for controlling growth of aquatic plants utilizing bio-eroding means implanted in triploid grass carp. U.S. Patent # 7,156,049 is a release mechanism to interact with biota, in particular fauna that may outgrow available habitat.

Assistant professor **Bronson Strickland** and professor **Steve Demarais** were cited for the best article in a popular publication by The Wildlife Society, Mississippi Chapter. William McKinley, Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks biologist was their co-author for "Managing Bucks Means Managing Expectations." Published in Quality Whitetails, the piece explains the differences in antler growth on soil type and region.

COLLEGE news



The Mid-South Forestry Equipment show, the biggest show in the woods, was successful this year with over 6,000 in attendance. The show offered an expanded continuing education component with more than 2,000 individuals received nearly 6,000 CFE credits. The next equipment show is scheduled for 2010.

MSU forestry, forest products programs reaccredited

The Society of American Foresters is reaccrediting Mississippi State's academic program in forestry through 2017.

The university major includes five bachelor-degree options: environmental conservation, forest management, forest products, urban forestry, and wildlife management.

SAF is recognized by the Council on Post-secondary Accreditation and U.S. Department of Education as the sole accrediting body for forestry education.

In addition to the SAF, the major's forest products option is receiving reaccreditation from the Society of Wood Science and Technology. It is the only one in the nation holding this dual recognition.

"Forestry has been continuously accredited since 1966 and the forest products option has been accredited since 1987," said department head Jim Shepard. "Forestry also is the only accredited four-year program of its kind in Mississippi."

Dean George Hopper said the continuation of SAF's professional sanction follows an extensive and comprehensive review process.

"The College of Forest Resources has educated students for leadership roles since 1954 and this recent notification by the society allows us to continue that critical mission," he added.

Hopper noted that the forest products option "also is one of just

10 in the nation with accreditation from the Society of Wood Science and Technology."

Register for a camp today!

Natural Resources Summer Camp

June 7-11, 2009

This summer camp is for ninth-12th graders and is sponsored by the College of Forest Resources, Mississippi Forestry Commission and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality.

Accolades



LaDonna Bullman



Leslie Hammons



Curtis Griffin



Sam Jones



Don Parish



Rachel Singleton

LaDonna Bullman has joined the Dean's Office as the grants and contracts coordinator. LaDonna has worked in the Department of Forest Products for the past three years as an administrative assistant.

Leslie Hammons, grants and contracts coordinator, retired December 31 after 28 years of service. Leslie began her career in the Department of Forest Products before moving to the Dean's Office in 1994. Leslie is the daughter of former professor Frank Miller.

Curtis Griffin, building supervisor, retired on December 31 after 30 years of service.

Sam Jones has joined the Dean's Office as the new building supervisor.

Don Parish, building supervisor, retired January 31 after 25 years of service.

Rachel Singleton, coordinator of student services, received the National Academic Advising Association's 2008 Outstanding Advising Award and the Mississippi State University 2008 Jefcoat Excellence in Advising/Primary Role Award.

SUPER BULLDOG WEEKEND

April 18, 2008

Join the College of Forest Resources for food and fellowship as we celebrate Super Bulldog Weekend. Look for the tent near the Bryan Athletic Building.



DEVELOPMENT news

Inaugural Billy Joe Cross Golf Tournament and Wildlife Dinner



Renowned game chef Billy Joe Cross (right) prepared a feast for the wildlife dinner. The event raised more than \$10,000 for scholarships and will be an annual activity for the college.



Golfers Henry Hamill, Tommy Smith, Dr. Dave Boles, and Malcolm Wesson enjoyed the nice November weather on the links. Below, golfers have a great time at Old Waverly.



LandBank and the Mississippi Forestry Association sponsored the Golf Tournament held at Old Waverly Golf Course.



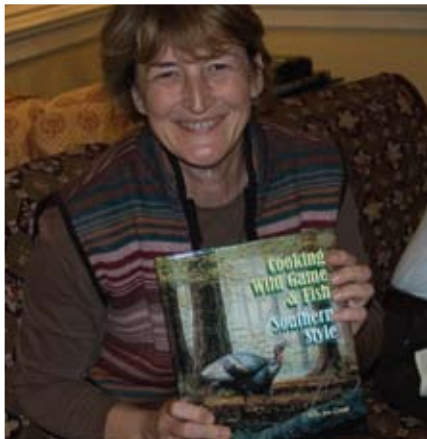
Vance Watson (left) presented Billy Joe Cross with a special honor during the evening. Forestry alumnus Roy Holder, a procurement forester for Georgia Pacific, auctioned items during the event.



Two new avenues for giving announced for MSU donors



Wildlife and fisheries graduate student Aaron Posner (right) played golf with his father Alan during the tournament.



CFR alumna Ruth Cook bid on a Billy Joe Cross cookbook during the auction. Below, alumni and friends enjoyed the reception and dinner.



The Mississippi State University Foundation now has two new ways to support the institution, both dealing with real estate and timberland.

Assets of real property may be given for charitable purposes through either the Bulldog Properties or Bulldog Forest programs. Both offer benefits to donors, including the designation of support to a specific academic college or other area on campus.

"The new focus on real estate assets is a natural progression in the foundation's growth," said John P. Rush, MSU's vice president for development and alumni.

"Bulldog Properties and Bulldog

Forest enable us to become more proactive in assisting alumni and friends who are interested in making a significant charitable gift through methods other than outright gifts."

Rush said, among others, types of real estate gifts include:

- Residential homes;
- Vacation homes and condominiums;
- Timberland and recreational property;
- Agricultural, commercial, investment, and undeveloped property; and
- Mineral interests.

"As much as 50 percent of the assets of an individual's wealth commonly are held in real estate," said Bo Hemphill, the foundation's

executive director of development. "It is our hope that this often overlooked method of giving will allow donors to transform their real assets into meaningful gifts for Mississippi State."

As part of the organization's expanded mission, veteran fundraisers Jud Skelton and Jeff Little are assuming additional administrative roles. Skelton directs the Bulldog Properties program, while Little coordinates Bulldog Forest.

"We have great confidence in Jud and Jeff because of the practical knowledge and experience they

have gained through the years in steering these types of gifts within their

colleges," Hemphill said.

Donors who choose to support Mississippi State through gifts of real estate may benefit in a variety of ways. In addition to lifetime incomes, they eliminate the burden of ownership and gain certain tax advantages.

Donating timberland to Mississippi State's Bulldog Forest program also allows donors to leave 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 assessments, and other means being used by the university for donor-specified charitable purposes.

Grow a Legacy
BULLDOG FOREST
Mississippi State University

STUDENT news



The College of Forest Resources is pleased to present the May 2008 graduation class (left) and the December 2008 graduation class (below).



Accolades

Wildlife and fisheries master's student **Sarah Fleming** received the best student oral presentation award at the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society annual meeting. She was selected from a field of nine for her work on management of wetland reserve program lands in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. Fleming is completing her research under the direction of wildlife and fisheries professor Richard M. Kaminski.

Luke Jones took first-place honors among a field of 15 students in a visual display contest at the Seventh Annual Bioproducts and Renewal Energy Conference. Jones, a 2005 MSU cum laude bachelor's degree graduate in forestry, has focused his master's-level research on factors for determining the best location for a bio-energy mill. His investigation is directed by associate professor Emily Schultz and professor Tom Matney.

Katya Kovalenko received top honors for a research report given at the annual meeting of the Arkansas and Mississippi chapters of the American Fisheries Society. A doctoral student in wildlife and fisheries, her study is directed by professor Eric Dibble and examines the impact of invasive aquatic plants on fish feeding habits. Kovalenko, a Russian native who received an

MSU master's degree in 2001, was among approximately 30 students from the two-state region taking part in the 2008 AFS competition.

Competing among a field of 13, wildlife and fisheries doctoral candidate **Dawn H. Manning** received the best student visual display award at the Mississippi Chapter of The Wildlife Society annual meeting. Under the direction of associate wildlife and fisheries professor Jeanne Jones, Manning's research deals with mourning dove use of cornfields grazed by cattle.

Forestry doctoral student **Prakash Nepal** finished in third place among more than 100 others in a visual display competition held as part of the Society of American Foresters' national convention. MSU was among some 40 universities represented in the student challenge. Under the direction of assistant professor Robert Grala and associate professor Donald Grebner, Nepal is investigating the financial trade-offs associated with carbon sequestration in trees and wood products.

Vanessa Oquendo, a wildlife and fisheries master's student, received a third-place award in the Southeastern Wildlife Conclave Essay Contest. Her impromptu entry

described appropriate advocacies by wildlife professionals in dealing with land development and human population issues. Oquendo's research is directed by associate professor Kevin Hunt and focuses on gender differences as potential motivations to hunt in Mississippi, as well as other activities considered suitable substitutes for hunting.

The Wildlife Society recently presented a College of Forest Resources' student group with its 2008 Special Recognition Service Award for the inaugural Natural Resources Graduate Student Symposium it organized on campus in March. Symposium team members honored with the award include wildlife and fisheries doctoral students **Heath M. Hagy** and **Jessica Tegt**, and forestry doctoral student **David W. Wilkinson**. Wildlife and fisheries master's students **Susan F. Baker** and **Alicia J. Wiseman**, along with forest products master's student **Robert J. Bucci**, were among others being recognized.

Alicia Wiseman, wildlife and fisheries master's student, received the 2008 Mississippi State University Outstanding Woman Award, Graduate Student category, by the President's Commission on the Status of Women.

ALUMNI news

Westervelt's Dave Edwards earns Al Brothers Professional Deer Manager Award

Dave Edwards, manager of Westervelt Wildlife Services, has been named the Quality Deer Management Association's 2007 Al Brothers Professional Deer Manager of the year. Edwards was honored during the 2007 QDMA National Convention and Whitetail Expo, in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Named for former Texas Wildlife Biologist Al Brothers, who is generally recognized as the father of Quality Deer Management, the award annually goes to a full-time wildlife and habitat manager for contributions to deer, deer hunting and deer management.

Edwards, of Tuscaloosa, Ala., earned a bachelor's degree in

wildlife and forest conservation from the University of Florida, and a master's degree in wildlife management from Mississippi State University. He has extensive habitat-management experience and is certified as a burn manager, herbicide applicator and Quality Vegetation Advisor.

In his role as manager of Westervelt Wildlife Services, he oversees a team of biologists and other staff that implements Quality Deer Management guidelines on more than one million acres across the southeastern U.S.

Edwards has numerous credits as a contributor to Quality Whitetails magazine, the QDMA's

membership journal, and he has been a featured member of the experts team on Quality Whitetails

Television. He also has been a featured speaker at dozens of QDMA educational events and at several QDMA National Conventions.



Heather and Dave Edwards

Peairs named division forester of the year

Stephen Peairs recently was named the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry's Forester of the Year. The award is presented annually to a division forester who exemplifies the highest level of professionalism in serving the citizens and forest landowners of Tennessee.

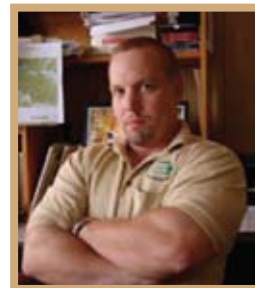
Peairs received his bachelor of science degree in forestry under the wildlife management option from Mississippi State University in 2001. He continued his education at Mississippi State and received his

master of science degree in forestry with an emphasis on hardwood silviculture in 2003. Peairs began working for the division following his academic career in 2004, serving as forest inventory analysis forester. Based on his exemplary performance in that position, he was offered an area forester position.

"I really enjoy having the opportunity to do my part in benefiting society by providing the necessary services to help forest landowners of Tennessee better

manage their property," said Peairs. "One of the most rewarding aspects of my job comes when I deliver a tailor-made management plan to a landowner and see the appreciation they have with the level of detail provided."

Peairs currently resides in Dickson County with his wife Melinda.



Stephen Peairs

Accolades

Becky Barlow (forestry, 2005) received the Auburn University Student Chapter of the Society of American Foresters Teacher of the Year Award. Becky is an assistant professor in forest biology and ecology at Auburn University.

Brian Cobble (forestry, 2000) received the Florida Society of American Foresters 2008 Young Forester Award. The award was for recognition of demonstrated leadership in forestry and community, and outstanding achievement in professional and civic organizations. Brian is a senior forester with the Florida Division of Forestry.

Sharon Fuller (wildlife and fisheries, 2006) was recently honored with the Regional Director's Honor Award from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Sharon was honored for her work on a recruitment team. She is a wildlife biologist at the Black Bayou National Wildlife Refuge in Monroe, La.

Mark Smith (wildlife and fisheries, 2001, 2004) received the Auburn University Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society Teacher of the Year Award. Mark is an assistant professor in wildlife sciences at Auburn University.

McNair named chief of the regulatory branch



Michael F. McNair

Michael F. McNair recently was named chief of the regulatory branch in the operations division of the Vicksburg

District Corps of Engineers.

In his new position, McNair will serve as program manager for the District's Regulatory Program and have responsibility for executing a \$4 million budget annually. He also will be responsible for administering the Department of the Army permit program in navigable waters of the United States and in wetlands and other waters within the 66,000-square-mile area of the district. This includes

areas of Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. The regulatory branch is comprised of an interdisciplinary team of 30 professionals that is responsible for regulating all work in navigable waters and for regulating the discharge of dredged and fill material into rivers, lakes, bayous, wetlands, and other waters of the United States.

McNair began his career with the Vicksburg District at the Grenada Lake field office in 1977 and later moved to the headquarters office in 1979. He worked in various positions in the operations division, where he served as project manager and was later promoted to permit section chief in 1989. He deployed to the Mississippi Gulf Coast in support of Task Force Hope Mississippi after

Hurricane Katrina's destruction, where he served as NEPA Specialist for the Temporary Public Structures Mission.

McNair is a graduate of South Vicksburg High School. He earned a bachelor of science degree in forestry from Mississippi State University. He is a registered forester in Mississippi, former chairman of the Combined Federal Campaign and has twice received the Army Achievement Medal for Civilian Service.

He is married to Mary Leclair McNair from Augusta, Ga., and they have three children. He is the son of Pat McNair of Vicksburg and the late Forrest McNair.

ALUMNI news

1950s

William E. (Bill) Bustin (forestry, 1957) and wife Theresa live in Brandon. Bill is still practicing forestry on a part-time basis and has six grandchildren. He also presents programs on humor.

1960s

Hurston O. Nicholas (forestry, 1964) has retired from the U.S. Forest Service. Hurston and wife Mary Ann recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a trip to Maui. The couple have three children and four grandchildren. They enjoy traveling, recently making a visit to Wrangell, Alaska, where they once lived. Hurston and Mary Ann's son **Allen** (forestry, 1981), is supervisor of the Shawnee National Forest in Harrisburg, Ill.

Harold Anderson (forestry, 1969) is a proud grandfather. Max was adopted in Moscow by Harold's daughter and son-in-law. Harold fed



him grits for his first breakfast in the U.S., he is now an authentic Southerner.

1970s

Bryan D. Stringer Jr. (wildlife and fisheries, 1977) and wife Sandra are living in Natchez. Bryan recently retired from the USDA-NRCS after 34 years of service. He has one son and two grandchildren.

Phil Turnipseed (forestry, 1977) is a hydrologist for the U.S. Geological Survey in Reston, Va.

1980s

Alvin Feltman (forestry, 1980) is living in Cross Anchor, S.C. with his wife Diane. Alvin retired from the U.S. Forest Service after 30 years of service. He formed his own consulting business to assist landowners in the upstate of South Carolina with resource management practices and reports that business is great. Alvin and Diane have three children, Charlotte, Tyler and Joel, as well as son-in-law Jason.

Brian Reed (forestry, 1980) recently accepted a position with Zilkha Biomass in Houston, Texas as biomass resource manager. His responsibilities will be an advisory role to the technical manufacturing side of the biomass/energy business that Zilkha owns/operates. Also

Zilkha is interested in long-term resource acquisition to satisfy manufacturing operations. Brian lives in Columbus.

1990s

Ricky D. Flynt (forestry, 1991) has been employed by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks for 15 years. He is a wildlife biologist and has served in the position of alligator/furbearer program coordinator since 2003. He lives in his childhood home in Clinton with his wife Dai and two daughters Amber, 14, and Bradi, 11. One of his proudest career accomplishments is the development of the first-ever alligator hunting season in Mississippi in 2005. Previously, as an associate conservation biologist, Ricky was involved in the initial development of four MDWFP Wildlife Management Areas (Mahannah, Twin Oaks, Black Prairie, and Hell Creek WMAs).

Robert Haupt (forest products, 1992) is a self-employed consultant and a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech University. Robert and wife Julia live in Christiansburg, Va., and have a son, Daniel, 4. Robert worked for Dynea/Dyno for 15

ALUMNI news

years before deciding to pursue his doctoral degree.

Jason Watson (forestry, 1996) is the eastern region manager, business development, for the CellFor Corp. Jason develops and manages the company's sales in the Eastern Gulf region, including Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Florida, and Alabama.

Shane Jackson (wildlife and fisheries, 1998) and wife Jennifer are the proud parents of Houston Roy Jackson, born on August 7. Congratulations!

2000s

Have a job opening? Need a job?

The College of Forest Resources Web site makes finding a job and posting a job a little easier for students, alumni and industry. Just go online to www.cfr.msstate.edu/jobs. Summer jobs and internships welcome!

Damon Blakeley (forestry, 2000) and wife Dawn are the proud parents of Chloe Grace. Chloe was born on May 22, 2008. Dawn recently graduated from nursing school and Damon was promoted to GIS program manager at the Grenada Lake Field Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Adam Wright (wildlife and fisheries, 2005) and wife Jennifer are living in New Mexico with their children Ethan and Logan. Adam is a conservation

officer with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.



IN MEMORY

Thomas H. Harris Jr. (forestry, 1957)

Thomas Henry Harris Jr., 73, died Monday, February 9, 2009, at his residence. Tommy, as he was known, was born in Laurel and grew up attending Laurel City Schools. He also attended Marion Military Institute and was a member of the first class graduating in forestry at Mississippi State University. He remained a great fan and supporter of the university and enthusiastically promoted the Bulldogs. He served on the board of directors of the Laurel Little Theatre and Mississippi State University's Bulldog Forest. He was retired from Harris-Wilcox Lumber Co., where he was owner and president. Harris was one of the first individuals to donate land to the Bulldog Forest. Tom and Page Harris gave MSU approximately 430 acres of timberland in Newton County. The property has been owned by the Harris family since 1932. The College of Forest Resources is managing the property, and funds generated from its management have been used to create two life charitable gift annuities for the Harris. Future funds generated by the proper management of the timber will be used by the college to establish the Tom and Page Harris Endowment for Forestry Excellence. The land is used as a teaching tool for forestry students and as a demonstration forest for forestry extension activities.

Hugh H. Thomasson (longtime supporter and advisory board member)

Hugh Hudson Thomasson, 80, died October 11, 2008, at his office. Thomasson, president of Thomasson Co., was still active in, among other things, the Rotary Club, the Republican Party, his church, and the United Way of Neshoba County, which he had co-founded in 1966. Thomasson loved the lumber and pole business and considered each of his employees part of his family. Thomasson was a Mason, past president of Mississippi Lumber Manufacturers and was named Football Official

of the Year. He served on the board of directors of the Montgomery Institute since its inception. He was also on the forest products department advisory committee. A consulting Rosarian, he nurtured more than 300 hybrid-T rose bushes in his garden near his office on St. Francis Drive. A leader in the lumber industry, he received the Mississippi Lumber Manufacturers Association distinguished service award in 1994.

Leo W. Seal Jr. (long-time supporter)

Leo W. Seal Jr., 84, died November 17, 2008, following an extended illness. Seal, succeeded his father as president of Gulfport-based Hancock Bank in 1963 and continued to serve as president of Hancock Holding Co., parent company of Hancock Bank, until his death. Seal, a native and lifelong resident of Bay St. Louis, began his Hancock Bank career in 1947 as a runner and worked in every department of the bank. Seal was a passionate and active champion for well-planned economic development and held principal positions in every major Mississippi banking and economic development association. The former Mississippi State University Alumnus of the Year and World War II veteran was a man of great faith, a patriot and an avid Bulldog. Seal's father loved natural resources and was one of the first "tree farmers" in Hancock County. Seal Sr. actively promoted reforestation, selective thinning and maintaining firebreaks. Leo Seal Jr. established a scholarship in the College of Forest Resources in memory of his father. The Leo W. Seal Sr. Memorial Forestry Scholarship is given to a student residing in Hancock, Harrison, Pearl, or Stone counties. The award is given to a sophomore, junior or senior in the College of Forest Resources. Academic achievement, financial need and personal character are factors considered in the selecting of recipients.

ALUMNI updates

We want your news!

To be included in the update, complete and return this form to Karen Brasher, Box 9680, Mississippi State, MS 39762-9680 or e-mail kbrasher@cfr.msstate.edu.

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. Please use the form below to share career changes, recognitions or honors received, family updates, or other news. If you need more space, include a separate sheet of paper.

Name _____ Spouse _____

CFR Degree(s) and Year(s) Received _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Business Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

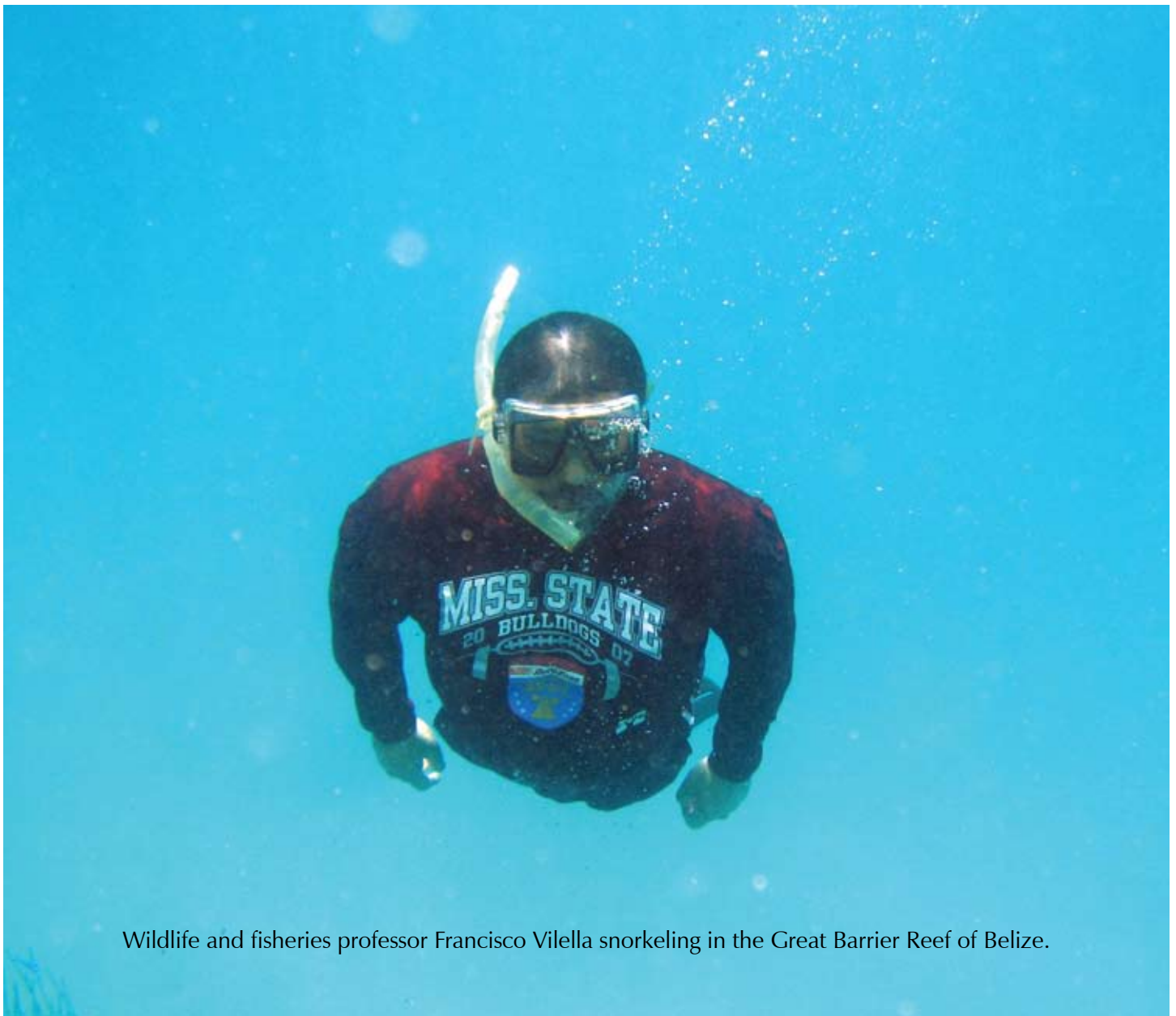
Occupation _____

Name of Business _____

Children/Grandchildren _____

Update Information _____

Please make plans to attend a special reunion of alumni and friends this fall at Homecoming 2009. We are already making plans for a party on campus on October 10, 2009! Randy Rousseau is coordinating the festivities with our alumni society, so be watching for more news to come.



Wildlife and fisheries professor Francisco Vilella snorkeling in the Great Barrier Reef of Belize.

Discrimination based upon race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran's status is a violation of federal and state law and MSU policy and will not be tolerated. Discrimination based upon sexual orientation or group affiliation is a violation of MSU policy and will not be tolerated.

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