

HORTICULTURE

Happenings

LSU Department of Horticulture Newsletter

Winter 2003

From the Department Head



David G. Himelrick

In this issue I would like to highlight what is perhaps the single most important event in terms of impact on the future of horticulture in Louisiana in recent memory.

In the spring of 2002, Chancellor Richardson asked that a Horticulture Summit take place involving all LSU AgCenter faculty and county agents with primary horticulture responsibilities statewide and faculty in other units that have projects or programming related to horticulture. Because a CSREES review of the statewide horticulture program by a team of peer scientists from other land-grant universities was scheduled in March 2002, we decided to conduct the summit after the final report from the review team.

The goal was to establish the foundation for development

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Horticulture Team Wins Research Award

The LSU AgCenter has presented the Ken Tipton Research Award to the Sweet Potato Research and Extension Team.

This group combines the best qualities of the LSU AgCenter's research and extension branches, says Dr. Mike Cannon, coordinator of the Sweet Potato Research Station and the team's leader. The team works directly with growers to promote the industry and to develop new varieties. Its most significant accomplishment thus far has been the development of the

Beauregard sweet potato variety, which revitalized the industry in Louisiana and has been one of the most popular varieties ever.

The 15-member team includes Cannon; plant breeder/horticulturist Dr. Don LaBonte; plant pathologist Dr. Chris Clark; entomologists Gene Burris, Dr. Abner Hammond and Dr. Rick Story; post-harvest physiologist Dr. David Picha; processing food scientist Dr. Paul Wilson; horticulturist Dr. Arthur Villordon; virologist Dr. Rodrigo Valverde; weed scientist Dr. Steve Kelly; and county agents Earnest Freeman, Gerald Roberts, Dr. Chris Robichaux and Myrl Sistrunk.

Congratulations to everyone for this well-deserved recognition.



First Annual Baton Rouge Spring Garden Show

The LSU AgCenter and the Department of Horticulture will sponsor the first annual Baton Rouge Spring Garden Show Saturday, March 29, and Sunday, March 30, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. The event will be held at John M. Parker Coliseum and Nelson Memorial Building on Highland Road on the LSU Campus in Baton Rouge.

The show will tell gardeners where to obtain gardening products, where to obtain gardening services, what garden clubs or

plant societies are located in the greater Baton Rouge area and what new and traditional woody and herbaceous plants are appropriate for our area. It also will provide information about improved plants and new garden products that will be sold at local garden centers and encourage gardening activities, stimulate the horticultural industry and provide a sales area that makes available quality plants and garden products to the general public.

A mass media blitz will inform everyone of this exciting new spring gardening event. With gardening being the number one outdoor leisure activity in America, we are confident of a great turnout of gardening enthusiasts.

The Spring Garden Show will feature vendor displays for plant sales, production, garden accessories, crafts and other products and services related to the industry. Also featured will be educational programs, food and drinks, special events and clinics.

Department Promotion

Dr. Ed Bush was promoted to associate professor and full member of the Graduate Faculty on July 1, 2002. He continues his research and teaching efforts on working with commercial ornamental crops.

Departure

Kelly Bracy, one of our dedicated office student assistants, graduated in December with a B.S. degree in English and a minor in Spanish. Congratulations and best wishes. We will miss you!

Department Head

(continued from page 1)

of a statewide horticulture program in the LSU AgCenter. Three objectives were determined: 1) To develop a mission statement for the statewide horticulture program in the LSU AgCenter, 2) To improve communication and collaboration among LSU AgCenter horticulturists, 3) To identify priority needs for LSU AgCenter horticulture programs. Before the summit, a Horticultural Research and Extension Faculty Directory was published. It contained the photographs, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses and a brief description of each faculty member's responsibility. This directory is available on the LSU AgCenter Web site

at (<http://www.louisianalawnandgarden.org/faculty.htm>).

The other item addressed before the summit was the development of a mission statement: *"To provide quality education, research, and outreach programs to the people of Louisiana and the global community for improving production, marketing, storage, use and appreciation of horticulture crops."*

To address the development of a statewide horticulture program, the Steering Committee developed a set of eight questions related to enhancing communication and cooperation among AgCenter horticulturists; leadership of statewide horticulture programs; professional

development and in-service training for horticultural personnel; the purpose, function and effectiveness of the horticultural AgCenter ACE groups; priority setting for horticulture commodities; and the changes needed in the AgCenter horticultural programs to better serve the needs of the public and industry. Facilitated breakout sessions addressed the questions.

We are continuing to use the ideas generated at the summit to make specific recommendations to Chancellor Richardson to effect meaningful short- and long-term changes in the culture and structure of the AgCenter's horticultural effort. We will keep you updated.

Tiger Athletic Foundation Awards New Scholarship

Justin Smith, a senior turfgrass major from Baton Rouge, has received the first Tiger Athletic Foundation scholarship in association with the LSU men's and women's golf teams.

Smith receives full tuition and books, similar to those on an athletic scholarship. In return he is responsible for the daily maintenance of the golf team's practice facility located at the University Club golf course. This includes regular mowing of the practice green, tee and driving range, as well as any spraying, aeration, overseeding or repair needed.



Senior Justin Smith of Baton Rouge sits atop a mower at the LSU golf teams practice facility at the University Club golf course.

The scholarship is truly a joint venture between TAF, the LSU golf teams and the University Club. In the past, the University Club was fully responsible for all maintenance at the practice facility.

New UC superintendent Jeff Brocatto and assistant Daniel Folse, both department alumni, fully support the new scholarship and plan to work

closely with scholarship recipients. Most of the equipment used at the facility is owned and maintained by the University Club, so all scholarship recipients must be fully trained and competent.

Upon acceptance of the scholarship, Smith became an employee of the University Club. He has had experience as a student worker for Dr. James McCrimmon and his turfgrass research and completed a summer internship at Zephyr Field in New Orleans.

During the Fall 2002 the LSU Golf Team Clubhouse was completed. The new clubhouse located on the site of the practice facility supports offices, locker rooms, meeting rooms and indoor hitting bays. Landscape improvements will complete the facility and add other responsibilities to the scholarship recipient. The Department of Horticulture looks forward to working with the TAF, the LSU golf teams and the University Club to provide qualified applicants for such a prestigious scholarship.

Fall 2002 Graduates

B.S. Ornamental area:

Valda Butler, Zachary
Juan Albier Gonzalez, Santiago, Panama

B.S. in Turfgrass Management

Lance Paul Heltz, Garyville
Ian M. MacDougall, Baton Rouge
James C. Ransom, III, Ponchatoula
Sergio Javier Sosa, Guayaquil, Ecuador
Russell Wayne Woods, Ferriday

Master of Science

Julio E. Hasing, Riobama, Ecuador
(Major professor, C. Motsenbocker)

Visit our Web site at:
www.horticulture.lsu.edu

Picha Presents at Meetings and Receives Grants

Dr. Dave Picha presented an invited talk at the International Society of Horticulture Science meetings in Toronto, Canada, in August. The title was "International Horticulture: An Interdisciplinary Course for Agriculture Undergraduates." He also gave a featured presentation on "Postharvest Handling of Vegetable Crops" at the Deep South Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference in Biloxi in December.

He has been awarded two research grants from the USDA to fund the following projects: "Value-Added Packaging and Nutritional Quality Evaluation of 'Beauregard' Sweet Potatoes for Improved European Union Market Penetration" and "Postharvest Satsuma Research."

James F. Fontenot Horticulture

After Hurricane Lili unceremoniously disrupted homecoming and the original dedication, the re-scheduled dedication of the James F. Fontenot Horticulture Classroom Building took place November 15, 2002.

The afternoon luncheon and dedication reunited former faculty, students and friends, as well as current faculty and students. All joined members of the Fontenot family in the celebration. Dr. Kenneth Koonce, dean of the College of Agriculture, and Dr. David Himelrick, department head, formally dedicated the structure in Dr. Fontenot's memory. Dr. Bill Young, Dr. Ed O'Rourke, Dr. Jake Schales and others also reflected on Dr. Fontenot's personality, career and contributions to the department

Located near Dr. Fontenot's former research plots on the Hill Farm, the James F. Fontenot Horticulture Classroom Building stands in the heart of the new teaching facility and is the center of student activity. Almost all horticulture courses use the facility's laboratories. It is also the home of the Horticulture Club, Agricultural Student Council and the Hill Farm Community Garden, and other clubs and organizations have expressed interest in using the facility. Along with the new photo display celebrating the 75-year history of the Hill Farm, a display recognizing Dr. Fontenot was presented. The following text can be found on the display.



The Fontenot Family — Chuck, Lou, Julie, Dee Dee and Carl (l to r) gather outside the newly dedicated James F. Fontenot Horticulture Classroom Building.

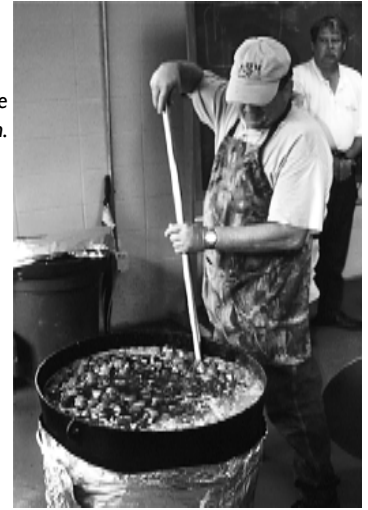


Classroom Building Dedicated

Dr. James F. "Smoke" Fontenot

During a career that spanned almost 50 years, Dr. James F. Fontenot dedicated his life to the students of the Department of Horticulture and Louisiana State University. Born in Grand Prairie, Louisiana, James F. Fontenot arrived on the campus of LSU in 1942. Interrupted by service in the US Navy during World War II, James F. Fontenot earned Bachelors and Masters degrees in horticulture in 1948 and 1949 respectively. During his years as a student, he was active in the Horticulture Club, serving as president of the club in 1948. He also lived and worked on the Hill Farm as a student worker and graduate student. Upon graduation he became an assistant professor in the department. Known respectfully as "Smoke" by faculty and students alike, Dr. James F. Fontenot became a beloved instructor, advisor to the Horticulture Club and research scientist on vegetable crops. His research in Irish potatoes, okra and peppers was known not only in Louisiana and throughout the south, but internationally as well. Selections from his breeding program in Irish potato including 'Red LaSoda,' 'LaBelle,' 'LaChipper,' and 'Fontenot' (released posthumously) are still grown today in the United States. During his years of service, Dr. James F. Fontenot contributed greatly to the scientific community, but never lost focus of his family, friends, colleagues and students at LSU. He was considered the "glue" that held the department together through many challenging decades. Above all, Dr. James F. Fontenot was a professor that always put his students first; becoming a trusting mentor and friend to many. Those who knew him, remember him as a quiet man who gave so much, without asking for anything in return. Let us who follow, strive to be more like him.

Dr. James Boudreaux prepares the jambalaya for the luncheon.



Onlookers gather to listen to Chuck Fontenot reflect upon his father's career.

LSU Horticulture Club News

In August, Horticulture Club members attended the meeting of the 26th International Horticultural Congress in Toronto, Canada. Besides participating in the presentation of horticulture research around the world, members toured the region including the Royal Botanic Gardens and Niagara Falls. The trip was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many of the students.

During the final preparation for the dedication of the James F. Fontenot Horticulture Classroom, club members joined farm supervisor Larry Leger to complete the painting of the facility. The project included the entire exterior of the building and floors in the classroom and lab.

Despite the constant threat of rain, the weather did not dampen spirits during the 4th Annual Fall Plant Sale in October. With umbrellas in hand, customers shopped the wide variety of fall bedding plants, houseplants and fruit crops offered.

The club has built a loyal clientele during the fall and spring sales. The Hort Club would like to thank all the alumni and friends who have participated. Plans are to further expand the sale and selection of plants. The greenhouses at the Hill Farm are already filling with plants propagated this fall for the spring sale. The 5th Annual Spring Plant Sale will be April 10 and 11 and will again be held at the corner of South Stadium and Highland. For all of you early birds, the Hort Club will also have plants for sale at the Spring Garden Show.

Nursery and Landscape Golf Shootout Scheduled

The 2003 LSU AgCenter's Nursery and Landscape Golf Shootout will be Friday, May 30, at the LSU Golf Course in Baton Rouge. This is the third annual event. The tournament is a four-person scramble. Registration is \$50/player or \$200/team. Hole sponsorships are available. Contact Dr. Allen Owings at 225/578-2417 or Dr. Ed Bush at 225/578-1044 for additional information.



Hort Club president Tim Quebedeaux and Ann Gray put the finishing touches on the newly dedicated James F. Fontenot Horticulture Classroom Building.



Teri Schexnaydre and Pili Paz overlook Niagara Falls during the Hort Club's trip to the International Horticultural Congress in Toronto, Canada.



The rainy weather did not discourage Randi Hodges as she assisted another happy customer, Terry Shirley.

James F. Fontenot Building Fund

Dedication of the teaching building has initiated the establishment of the James F. Fontenot Building Fund. This fund will serve many purposes including: purchasing a permanent sign for the building and supporting student workers who will help maintain the landscape around the building.

Your contribution will help ensure that this facility remains something that honors the memory of Dr. Fontenot. There are six categories for giving. Please mark the level of your contribution.

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunflower | \$50 to \$99 | <input type="checkbox"/> Camellia | \$1,000 to \$4,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gladiolus | \$100 to \$499 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tulip | \$5,000 to \$9,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sasanqua | \$500 to \$999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Rose | \$10,000 or more |

A plaque listing the contributors to this fund will be placed in the building. Please tell us how you would like to have your name(s) listed.

Name(s) _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ E-mail Address _____

Please make your check payable to the *LSU Foundation* and indicate Fontenot Building Fund on the memo line. Contributions are tax deductible.

Charge to my Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

Acct No. _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature as shown on card _____

Please mail this form to:
LSU Department of Horticulture
137 Julian C. Miller Hall
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Alumni Update

Travis L. Burnett (58 B.S. and 60 M.S.) Travis retired from the USDA in 1994 after 32 years of employment in Louisiana, Florida, Missouri and Texas. He now lives near where he was raised in Beauregard Parish. Travis's wife is Shirley Long Burnett and sons are Michael Burnett (Houston, Texas), Gregory Burnett (Temple, Texas) and Steven Burnett (Columbia, Mo.).

Robert Duplechin (80 M.S.) When Robert graduated with an M.S. in Horticulture, his name was Robert Duplechin. He has since changed it to Lekoma Akate. He uses a wheelchair for mobility as a result of the bends from scuba diving in 1985. After the injury, he earned an M.Ed. in Counseling from UNO and worked as an advocate for people with disabilities. He is now retired and doing a lot of work as a Master Gardener.

Alumni - Where Are You Now?

Tell us what is going on with your life and career. Classmates like to know what other classmates are doing! Here's your chance to share your news with the LSU Department of Horticulture alumni and friends. This information will appear in an upcoming *Horticulture Happenings*.

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME TEL: () _____ WORK TEL: () _____

E-MAIL : _____ CLASS OF: _____

FAMILY MEMBERS: _____

NEWS: _____

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Baton Rouge, LA 70803

or Tel: (225) 578-2158
Fax: (225) 578-1068
E-mail: ebush@agcenter.lsu.edu

John Quebedeaux (65 B.S. and 66 M.S.) John retired from 25 years of overseas service. For the past 12 years, he had worked with the World Bank in Saudi Arabia. His family members

include: Dr. Bruno Quebedeaux, Jr., (brother), Timothy Quebedeaux (son, 02), Patrick Quebedeaux (son) and Dr. Teme P. Hernandez (father-in-law).



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The LSU Agricultural Center provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. The Louisiana State University and A&M College is an equal opportunity/equal access employer.

From left, Dr. Bill Richardson, LSU AgCenter chancellor, congratulates Dr. Allen Owings, Rob Trawick and Dr. Ed Bush, winners of the AgCenter's Web Incentive 2001 Award for "Best Management Practices

for Home Gardens." The Web site is at www.lsuagcenter.com/subjects/homelandscapes/

Poinsettia Open House Held in December

Floriculture professor Dr. Jeff Kuehny and research associate Pat Branch hosted the annual poinsettia open house at the Nelson Memorial Building on the LSU Campus in Baton Rouge in early December. Again this year, more than 100 poinsettia varieties were on display. Greenhouse growers attended to gain valuable information on the new varieties, and home gardeners enjoyed seeing the large number of poinsettias available for their use.

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