

# Department of Horticulture

Saunders Hall, Blacksburg, VA 24061  
[www.hort.vt.edu](http://www.hort.vt.edu) (540)231-5451



Roger Harris, Department Head [www.hort.vt.edu](http://www.hort.vt.edu)

## January 2012

Greetings from USDA Hardiness Zone 6b everyone! Yes, the new map is out and its official; Blacksburg has not been as cold these last 15 years and we are no longer in Zone 6a. However, palms are still scarce and we still claim four seasons. Hopefully we won't have to mow grass in January any time soon. Spring semester is in full swing now and Plant Propagation students are busy making hardwood cuttings and planting seeds. Spring and summer must be around the corner! Alumni, we would love to hear from you. Please e-mail me with an update that you would like to share in our annual newsletter, "Seeds". One way to stay connected with VT is through the university [You Tube](#) channel. Please visit the [Horticulture](#) Department web site often for special departmental features. Enjoy!

With kind regards, *Roger*

### Congratulations to our new MS, MALS, and PhD alumni!

Bin Xu, PhD, Summer 2011

Will Wadlington, MS, Summer 2011

Sarah Holt, PhD, Fall 2011

Linda Taylor, PhD, Summer 2011

Kevin Harris, MS, Fall 2011

Charles Bow, MALS, Fall 2011

Ruby Mindy, MS, Fall 2011

Lauren Klingel, MS, Fall 2011

**Kevin Harris** is now working as Assistant Grower with Bell Nursery in Burtonsville, MD, a large wholesale grower of floriculture crops.

**Sarah Holt** is a post-doctoral fellow with **Vladimir Shulaev** at North Texas University in Denton Texas. Sarah won an award last summer for her oral presentation at the Society for *in vitro* Biology.

**Will Wadlington** is working at the Corporate Research center in Blacksburg designing vectors for transformation.

**Charles Bow**, recent MALS graduate (right side of photo with advisor Greg Welbaum on left) flew in from California for the fall graduation ceremony. Congratulations Charles!



### **New Faces**

Ms. **Jaimkin Miao** is a visiting PhD student from Sichuan Agricultural University (China) in Bingyu Zhao's lab and is working on characterizing the genetic diversity of switchgrass germplasm using molecular cytogenetic techniques. Welcome Jaimkin!

From the lab of **Mark Williams** and in their own words -- **Jinyoung Moon (Jude)** -- "Hi, I am from South Korea. My parents and family back home are very excited about me starting my Ph.D. program in the U.S. I am the baby of the family, however, and they are missing me a lot. My older brother is also working abroad in Japan. My mom, brother, and I love talking on Skype. My studies will focus on root-zone and soil microbial ecology, with an emphasis on how plants and microbial proteins contribute to soil processes and soil organic matter formation." Welcome Jude!

**Rosana Pineda** ... "I am from Colombia. My parents, sister and my dog are living there. As hobby I like reading, watching soccer games and watching art cinema movies. In the academic field, I have studied Agronomy and have M.S. in Biotechnology from Colombia. I am very excited to start my doctoral studies in Department of Horticulture and my research on metagenomics of microorganisms in soil and rhizosphere. One main study will be assessing the relationship between fungal community development in ecosystems and how they co-vary with plants and soils." Welcome Rosana!

"My name is **Amy Vu** and I am from Overland Park, Kansas. I did my undergraduate studies at Kansas State University, majoring in Agronomy-Soils and Environmental Science with a minor in International Agriculture. I have a profound passion for traveling and have traveled to many different countries, including a 6 month study abroad in Ecuador, which has had a significant impact on who I am today. I consider myself a thrill seeker and my favorite hobby is scuba diving; it provides me the exhilaration of being in a new, mysterious, and unique environment. In my free time, I enjoy going on walks and enjoying the outdoors with my two huskies, Maya and Mowgli. I am interested in studying root-zone and soil microbial ecology under Dr. Mark Williams, and will probably be studying variation in microbial communities due to plant species. I am very excited to see all that VT has to offer." Welcome Amy!

**Earl Petzold** and Xiaoyan (Isaac) Jia, both PhD students co-advised by **Eric Beers** and Amy Bruner (Forest Resources and Environment) have passed their written and oral preliminary exams. Congratulations Earl and Xiaoyan!

**Buy roses for your sweetheart (and send a Hokie to Kansas)!** This sale is sponsored by the Horticulture Club. All profits help fund the trip to PLANET Student Career Days at Kansas State University.

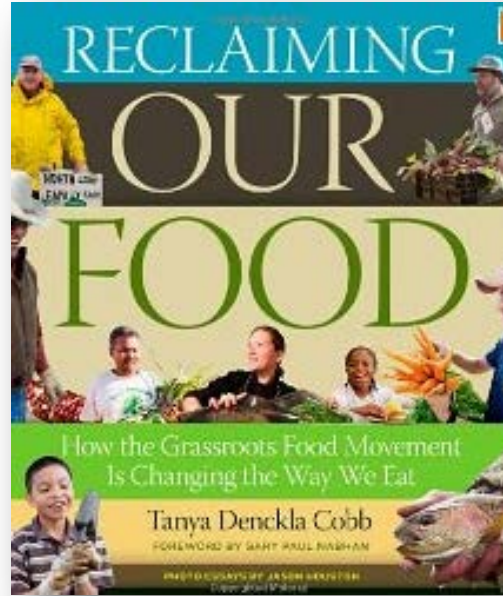
A poster for a Valentine's Day rose sale. The title "Valentine's Day Roses for Sale!" is written in a red, cursive font at the top. Below it, the text "Support the PLANET Club!" is in a smaller, green, sans-serif font. The poster lists preorders due by Friday, February 10th, and booth sales on February 13th and 14th, 2012. It provides the email address VTROSES@vt.edu and lists locations: Squires, Litton Reaves, and Saunders Hall. A price list follows, with two columns: "Wrapped" and "Arranged in a vase". The prices are: 1 Rose - \$3 (wrapped) / \$5 (arranged), 3 Roses - \$8 / \$10, 6 Roses - \$16 / \$20, and 1 Dozen - \$30 / \$40. At the bottom, it notes that white and red roses are available, vase arrangements are for preorder only, and all roses come with greenery and baby's breath. The poster is decorated with several red roses and green leaves.

### Recent publication

Bartens, J., H. Grissino-Mayer, **S.D. Day**, and P.E. Wiseman. Evaluating the potential for dendrochronological analysis of live oak (*Quercus virginiana* Mill.) from the urban and rural environment-An explorative study. *Dendrochronologia* 30:15-21



PhD student **Scot Lowman** and Lynchburg Grows are highlighted in the recently released book *Reclaiming our Food*. This book tells the stories of people across America who are finding new ways to grow, process, and distribute food for their own communities. Their successes offer both inspiration and practical advice. *Reclaiming Our Food* is a practical guide for building a local food system. Where others have made the case for the local food movement, *Reclaiming Our Food* shows how communities are actually making it happen. This book offers a wealth of information on how to make local food a practical and affordable part of everyone's daily fare.



The **Horticulture Club** wrapped up the fall semester with their annual holiday gift exchange and dinner. They reunited February 1st at their first Horticulture Club meeting of the new year (left photo).

Look for new additions to come to Saunders Hall's landscape this semester! Plans include a dry stream, new plantings, continued re-mulching and maintenance of older plantings (center photo).

Horticulture Club members continue to stay active with our younger generation, as they help out with Harding Avenue Elementary's Green Club from 3-5 on Tuesday afternoons. **Barbara Kraft** plans to lead an effort to rejuvenate their on-site greenhouse and surrounding garden this semester (right photo).

**Get involved! The first meeting may be history, but we are just getting started. Please join us.**



The Virginia Tech  
Landscape Architecture Program,  
the Department of Horticulture,  
the Center for Peace Studies & Violence Prevention,  
and the VTV Family Outreach Foundation  
invite members of the community, alumni, and  
families of the victims of the April 16, 2007  
tragedy to join us at a meeting on the design of  
the future **Norris Garden**.

The garden will be designed by Virginia Tech  
students using **community input**. We want **yours!**

**Thurs. Feb. 2, 7 - 8:30 pm**  
**121 Burruss Hall, Va Tech Campus**

Contact 540-231-2345 [cpsvp@vt.edu](mailto:cpsvp@vt.edu) for more  
information.



From the archives: Do you recognize these proud students and their advisor?

MAY, 1967

EXTENSION SERVICE NEWS

## VPI Flower Judging Team 1st

BLACKSBURG — Virginia Tech's flower judging team took first place in the recent 26th annual Intercollegiate Flower Judging Contest held at Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.

For their win they received the coveted George Asmus cup, awarded by John Walker, executive secretary of the Society of American Florists, at the awards banquet.

Team members are: Linda Daley, Martinsville; Fred Duis, Bedford; and Donald Hyatt, McLean. Team coach is Frank Marousky of the horticulture department at Virginia Tech. Hyatt was high individual in the contest.

According to Marousky, a total of 15 teams entered the event. Second place went to California Polytechnic College and the third

place team was from the University of Missouri.

The coach adds, "The contest is an annual event sponsored by the Society of American Florists and Pi Alpha Xi, national honor society in floriculture and ornamental horticulture. This is the first time Virginia Tech has won top honors at Ithaca."

Contestants judged commercial cut flowers and potted plants.

