

Fall 2011



page 7



page 8



page 16



page 25



page 29

Table of Contents

Letter from the Department Head.....	2
In Memory of Tom Meacham.....	3
New APSC Faculty.....	4
Chicken Hill Named for Paul Siegel.....	6
Awards for Faculty, Staff and Students	
Paul Siegel – Sweden.....	7
Poultry Science Awards.....	8
CALs Employee of the Year.....	9
Undergraduate Activities	
Capstone Symposium.....	10
UK Trip.....	12
Hokie Harvest Sale.....	13
Groseclose Scholarship.....	14
Study Abroad Scholarship.....	15
VT Equestrian Club.....	16
Spring 2011 Dean’s List.....	18
Scholarship Recipients.....	19
New Faces in APSC.....	21
MARE Center Summer Internship.....	22
Graduate Students.....	23
Livestock Judging	
Virginia 4-H.....	24
Youth Livestock Leadership Forum.....	25
American Youth Horse Council Symposium.....	26
Horse Judging	
VT Judging Team Activities.....	27
4-H Horse Program.....	28
Dates to Remember.....	30
APSC Contact Information.....	30
Update Your Information.....	31

Letter from the Department Head

Dear Alumni:

This is such a magical time of the year with the Holidays in full swing and the anticipation of the New Year approaching. The attitude across campus and the college is positive, though some caution is warranted by uncertainty in the federal coffers. Regardless, the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences is focused on building for the future. With nearly 500 undergraduate majors and minors and a faculty of more than twenty and growing, there is much reason for optimism.

During the past calendar year, we have hired four outstanding faculty members to replace the four senior faculty members who retired last year. Of particular significance to this department is that each of these individuals was educated in an animal sciences program. We also have four positions open for which we are recruiting the very best and brightest individuals from across the country and the globe. We consider this to be extremely positive because it will have long-lasting effects on the department into the foreseeable future.

We have received considerable press during the 2011 calendar year, largely due to activity spear-headed by the department's blossoming meat center. This past summer two television networks in Roanoke reported on our newly created partnership with dining services. This partnership provides a segment of the student body with locally produced meat products through select dining halls. The excitement created by these segments then stimulated a story in the Roanoke Times and a number of smaller agriculturally based publications along the east coast. This exposure has aided us in communicating to our stakeholders that the Land Grant mission is alive and well in Blacksburg.

Our efforts to be good stewards for the Commonwealth have increased over the past year. We spent the entire spring upgrading the swine facility. We have added new gating, installed new feeders, expanded capacity and are currently retrofitting holding bins and flexible augers to simulate better those commercial practices normally used in the industry. This will dramatically lower our labor needs and allow employees and students the time to focus on managing the animals, rather than simply laboring to overcome facility shortcomings. We have also applied a fresh coat of paint and repaired a number of the other facilities along Plantation Road. We are extremely grateful to have such facilities and though new facilities are clearly warranted, we intend to care for those assets we currently have.

Finally, a very industrious set of students petitioned the office of academic programs for funds to improve and repair our facilities at Smithfield. During a work weekend this fall, some thirty undergrads descended on the facility and conducted extensively cleaning at the unit, painting and repairing much of the property. This pride in our program is what makes the department a great place to study and embodies the whole idea of a Hokie Nation.

May these Holidays find you in great physical and mental health. If you get a chance to visit, please do so. We would enjoy the opportunity to meet with you.

Sincerely,



David E. Gerrard
Professor and Head
Department of Animal and Poultry
Sciences



Dr. Dave Gerrard

In Memory of Dr. Tom Meacham

By Julia McCann

It was a great trail ride through life for **Dr. Tom Meacham**. Many Hokies and Virginians are better people and horsemen for the time they spent with him, but he quietly stepped down and slipped away from us on November 19, 2011.

Tom's California roots were deep as he grew up in San Luis Obispo and then attended Cal Poly where he earned a B.S. in Animal Science in 1953. One week after graduation he married his college sweetheart, Carol Beck - a very good decision for sure! He served in the United States Army for two years before returning to Cal Poly, earning a teaching certificate, and then teaching at Arbuckle High School in California.

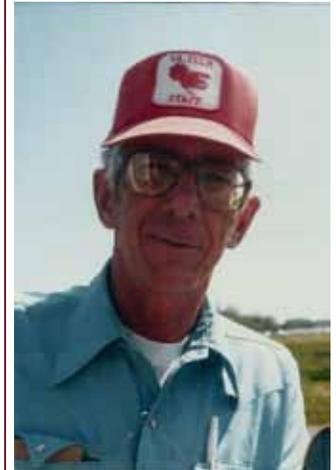
Tom and Carol reversed the seemingly natural "head west young man" mentality and moved to the University of Florida where Tom completed a Ph.D. in animal nutrition and reproductive physiology in 1958. Their destiny was set when Tom began his 32-year-long professional career at Virginia Tech in 1962.

Tom wore many hats while on the faculty and in his own quiet way, he became the pillar of the equine science program that was formed and nurtured under his watchful eye. He conducted research, trained graduate students, managed the Smithfield Horse Farm, bred the mares, taught many, many undergraduate classes, advised Block and Bridle, and guided the development of the Horse Judging Team and excellent riding program that both enjoy great success today. With his tall, cowboy image, one might swear that he had come from Texas. He was larger than life to the 4-Hers who crossed his path either as leader of the Montgomery County 4-H Club, coach, judge of state events, or leader for the pack rides at Mount Rog-

ers where he adjusted many a pannier to help make it across the mountains! Yet he served the industry too as a leader in the developmental days of the Virginia Horse Council and the Virginia Horse Center, all the while working to establish and ensure trail riding options remained in place in Virginia State Parks. Tom cleared many trails as he served as the park liaison, keeping administrators and horsemen on good terms and encouraging their communication for the future of trail riding that so many Virginians enjoy today.

There were many awards and honors bestowed upon Tom for his journeys in life, most notably as a Fellow of the Equine Nutrition and Physiology Society in 1993. But the real jewels in his crown were the friends that he made and the stories and laughs along the way. He and partner Carol opened their home for many a memorable meal for students, especially after a little quality time in the hay field and such! Tom was a humble man which helped make him a great horseman who could find a way to get along . . . even with a barely broke white mule with a pack filled with Christmas presents and destined for his first trip to town, the Blacksburg Christmas Parade on a very cold and dark evening. I always will marvel at how Tom, his horse, and the mule made it to the end of the parade route together, but the few remaining presents were barely hanging on and had lost their initial "tidy" appearance!

Dr. Tom Meacham was a true mentor to many Virginians, a wonderful, life long partner to Carol for 58 years and father to Susie and Vernon, both of whom now reside in Blacksburg with their families. Notes of condolences may be sent to Carol Meacham at 2502 Meadowbrook Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060.



Dr. Tom Meacham

New Faculty

Elizabeth Gilbert

Elizabeth R. Gilbert recently joined the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences as an assistant professor of adipose tissue and lipid biology. Gilbert earned M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Virginia Tech in molecular nutrition and conducted postdoctoral research in the Departments of Human, Nutrition, Foods and Exercise and Animal and Poultry Sciences at Virginia Tech. Then she moved to Uppsala, Sweden in 2010 to conduct research in the area of comparative genomics in the Department of Medical Biochemistry and Microbiology at Uppsala University.

Elizabeth's research interests include chromatin modifications and gene regulation in the context of body composition, obesity, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes, using both birds and mammals as models. Students conducting research in her laboratory will be exposed to a variety of molecular biology techniques as well as whole animal physiological procedures. She is delighted to be amongst outstanding colleagues and an exceptionally talented student body, remarking that "there's no place she'd rather be than at Virginia Tech".

Paige Pratt

Paige Pratt joined the faculty of the Animal and Poultry Science Department



Elizabeth Gilbert

in June as the Youth Livestock Extension Specialist. Pratt served as an Assistant Professor in Animal Science at Ferrum College, Ferrum, VA for one year prior to arriving at Virginia Tech. She completed her B.S. in Animal Science and M.S. in Education at Kansas State University and her Ph.D. in Animal Science at Texas Tech University.

Since joining the faculty Paige has organized several state youth livestock events including the State Livestock Judging Contest, State Stockmen's Contest, and the Youth Beef Show at the Virginia State Fair. She has also been practicing and traveling to contests all fall with the Virginia 4-H All-Star Livestock Judging Team. In addition to the normal contests and events, Pratt organized the Virginia Youth Livestock Leadership Forum as well as a Livestock Judging and Stockmen's Coaches workshop; over 70 high school-aged youth and 35 adults attended the events. The spring will be filled with great events including the Block and Bridle Livestock Contests in March and the Beef Expo in April. Additionally, she will be teaching Livestock Evaluation this spring.

Rob Rhoads

Robert P. Rhoads Jr. joined Virginia Tech as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Animal & Poultry Sciences in August. Rob hails from Northern Virginia



Paige Pratt



Rob Rhoads

New Faculty, continued

where he was born and raised. After graduating from Herndon High School, Rob traveled north where he received B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Animal Science from Cornell University involving research focused on ruminant lactation physiology, growth and metabolism. An NIH Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Department of Physiology at the University of Arizona broadened his research interests to include skeletal muscle biology.

Prior to joining Virginia Tech, Rob spent several years on the faculty as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Animal Sciences at the University of Arizona, building his research and teaching programs. His current research falls under the overarching theme of improving the efficiency of animal production in agriculturally important animals. Currently, two specific areas underpin his laboratory's research interests and focus. First, they are examining the contribution of skeletal muscle stem cells towards skeletal muscle development, growth or regeneration during disease or conditions noted for poor skeletal muscle performance or atrophy such as metabolic syndrome and muscular dystrophy. Second, the laboratory is focused on the impact of hyperthermia (as a result of environmental influences, exercise and the combination thereof) on the regulation of energy metabolism and physiology on whole body and cellular levels.

Rob comes to Virginia joined by his wife, Shelly, and three children, Evelyn, Jack and Josie.

Shelly Rhoads

Michelle (Shelly) Rhoads joined the faculty at Virginia Tech on August 10th as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences. She is originally from mid-Missouri, where she was born and raised on the family dairy farm just outside Jefferson City. Shelly completed her undergraduate educa-

tion in Animal Science at the University of Missouri while working on their dairy farm with related research experiments. As an undergraduate, she was selected to participate in a competitive internship sponsored by Select Sires. After finishing her B.S., she went on to complete an M.S. degree from Cornell University and then returned to the University of Missouri for her Ph.D.

Before coming to Virginia Tech, Shelly served as a USDA-funded post-doc and Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona. Her research interests are focused on improving the fertility of agriculturally important species, and primarily involve investigating aberrations in nutritional and/or endocrine profiles. Research projects currently being conducted in her laboratory involve cattle, swine and horses. Specifically, she is investigating the nutritional and metabolic regulation of fertility, and how gene expression within the reproductive tract changes during the estrous cycle and from non-pregnancy to pregnancy.

The primary aim of her research is to elucidate factors involved in fertility in order to develop management programs that optimize reproductive capacity.

Shelly moved to Virginia joined by her husband, Rob, and their three children, Evelyn, Jack and Josie.



Shelly Rhoads

Chicken Hill Poultry Barns Named for Paul Siegel

Posted on November 17, 2011 by *Insights* editor

If you have traveled on Tech Center Drive lately, you may have noticed a new sign at the poultry barns on 'Chicken Hill'. In acknowledgement of Distinguished **Professor Emeritus Paul Siegel's** service, generosity, and academic legacy, and in recognition of past and future benefits to the university, the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors has named the poultry research facilities the **Paul B. Siegel Poultry Research Center**. A dedication ceremony is planned for May 2012.

Siegel is a longtime faculty member at Virginia Tech in the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences and has served the university for more than 50 years. He has significantly advanced the quality of poultry education and research through his mentorship initiatives and lifetime commitment to the education and development of poultry industry professionals. His tremendous academic accomplishments include teaching more than 2,000 students and directing more than 50 master's theses and doctoral dissertations.

Siegel's research and teaching focus on the effects of selection on growth, reproduction, and immunology of chickens. He has published more than 400 journal articles, books, chapters, and reviews involving the role of genetics on the nutrition, disease, immunology, physiology, and behavior of poultry. The American Poultry Historical Society inducted Siegel into the American Poultry Industry Hall of Fame — the industry's highest honor — for devoting more than 60 years to researching and teaching poultry science. He also recently received an honorary doctorate from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Uppsala, Sweden.

The following link to the Virginia Tech Research Magazine (summer 2011) provides more information about Dr. Siegel's research achievements:

<http://www.research.vt.edu/resmag/2011summer/chickens.html>



Awards for Faculty and Students

Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences Awards Honorary Degree to Virginia Tech's Paul Siegel By Michael D. Sutphin

A Virginia Tech faculty member whose decades-long career has contributed to international research in animal genetics and breeding has earned a top honor from a Swedish university. **Paul Siegel**, University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Animal and Poultry Sciences in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, received an honorary doctorate from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sci-

ences in Uppsala, Sweden. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science presented the honorary degree at an awards ceremony in Uppsala on October 8, 2011.

Since 1957, Siegel has built his career at Virginia Tech on understanding the effects of breeding on the growth, reproduction, and immunology of chickens. His most famous study involves a simple experiment that created high-growth and low-growth poultry lines from a common flock of White Rock chickens. After breeding the heaviest and lightest chickens with others of similar weight for more than half a century, the high-growth chickens now

weigh an average of 10 times more than their low-growth counterparts by the time they reach the eight-week selection age.

This experiment, which has improved the scientific understanding of everything from animal appetites to genetics, has garnered the attention of National Geographic and the scientific journal Nature in recent years. In 2010, the American Poultry Historical Society inducted Siegel into the American Poultry Industry Hall of Fame, the industry's top honor.

Siegel received his bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut and a master's degree and Ph.D. from Kansas State University.



Top, Paul Siegel with his three children, Alec, Amy and Audrey, who accompanied him to Sweden for the festivities.

Bottom, Paul Siegel with other honorees.



Awards for Faculty and Students, continued**Poultry Science
Association Awards**

Members of the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences had a strong showing at the annual PSA meeting in St. Louis, MO (July 16-19, 2011) where four individuals (Chasity Cox, Jackie Speier, Audrey McElroy, and Rami Dalloul) were honored at the Annual Awards Banquet.

Chasity M. Cox won the Alltech Student Research Manuscript Award for the presentation and publication as senior author of an outstanding research manuscript in Poultry Science. Of note, only students previously awarded Certificates of Excellence for research presentations at the annual PSA meeting are allowed to compete for this award.

Jackie Speier won a Student Research Paper Certificate of Excellence for her poster entitled "Expression of nutrient transporters and digestive enzymes in the yolk sac membrane and intestine of the embryonic chick".

The Novus International Inc. Teaching Award was presented to **Dr. Audrey McElroy** to recognize her excellence in teaching over several years.

The Hy-Line International Research Award was presented to **Dr. Rami Dalloul** who in the preceding calendar year, as sole or senior author, published outstanding research in poultry science.



Virginia Tech PSA Awardees: (l-r) Chasity Cox, Dr. Audrey McElroy, Dr. Rami Dalloul, Jackie Speier.

Patricia Williams Named College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Employee of the Year

By Kelly Robinson

Patricia Williams of Ironto, Va., has been named the 2011 Employee of the Year for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech. Williams is a laboratory senior specialist for the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences.

Each year, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences recognizes a staff member who performs tasks above normal work expectations, demonstrates consistently good work and dedication to the position, and completes job requirements in an exemplary way.

“Pat’s talents extend far beyond the lab. She is a kind, selfless person, always interested in the welfare of others,” said Elizabeth Gilbert, assistant professor of animal and poultry sciences. “Pat’s hard work, curiosity and interest in science,

consideration for others, and exceptional abilities have made her a figure of authority in the department.”

Williams has worked in the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences since 2004. She constantly works to promote lab safety and frequently helps students and colleagues with their research. Williams is also the manager of the Litton Reeves animal facilities, where her responsibilities include overseeing animal trials. Numerous students and co-workers praise her enthusiasm, commitment, and willingness to help.

“Her professionalism and enthusiasm are contagious,” Gilbert said. “She is an outstanding role model for students in our department.”



Patricia Williams (center) with David Gerrard (left), head of the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences, and Alan Grant (right), dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Undergraduate Activities

Fall 2011 APSC Capstone Symposium Largest Yet

By C. M. Wood

Beginning with the Fall 2007 entering class, students majoring in Animal and Poultry Sciences complete a capstone experience as part of their degree requirements. The two-credit requirement must be completed within 45 credits (three terms) of graduation. Students plan their individualized experiences in consultation with their academic advisors to utilize knowledge and skills already learned to acquire new skills, synthesize information, and solve problems in the animal sciences. Each capstone must show evidence of the use of critical thinking skills; problem-solving; verbal, visual, and written communication skills; and team effort. Upon completion of the capstone experience, each student should be able to assess and describe potential contributions from that experience and should be better prepared to compete effectively for career positions and/or post-baccalaureate opportunities like graduate school or veterinary medicine.

Potential capstone experiences in the animal sciences could include, but are not limited to: Study Abroad, Field Studies, Internships, Undergraduate Research, Independent Studies, and formal coursework at the senior or master's level. A specific course (APSC 4954 Capstone Experience in Animal and Poultry Sciences) has been developed to coordinate many of the individualized projects students undertake. To earn credit for the APSC 4954 course, a student must 1) complete the proposed capstone experience; 2) submit a written report detailing how the experience met the learning objectives; and 3) participate in the APSC Capstone Symposium.

Originally designed to give students in APSC 4954 a way to share their experiences, the Capstone Symposium has grown to include students undertaking other capstone experiences. The first

symposium was held in September 2010 with 23 students participating. Using a template, the students prepared a PowerPoint poster summarizing their experiences. They were then available during the two-hour symposium to answer questions from students, staff and faculty. Students from two courses that include capstone development as part of the course content (APSC 1504 and APSC 2004) were required to attend, which provided an audience and also gave the freshman and sophomore students some good ideas to consider for their future capstone experiences. The symposium was repeated in February 2011, with another 16 students presenting posters. The vast majority of the students participating in the first two symposiums were enrolled in the APSC 4954 course.

For Fall 2011, a concerted effort was made to invite ALL students completing their capstone experiences over the summer to present posters. In addition, the "best" posters were recognized this semester. There were two categories: (1) a panel of faculty evaluated posters on a defined set of criteria; and (2) a "People's Choice" Award recognized the one poster all attendees (participants and audience) liked best. A total of 41 students participated in the



Top, the Fall 2011 APSC Capstone Symposium "People's Choice" winner for Best Poster by Devon Reed.

Bottom, registration at the Fall 2011 Symposium.



Undergraduate Activities, continued

symposium held on September 9, 2011. Of those, 33 were enrolled in APSC 4954.

es, please visit our web site at www.apsc.vt.edu. Inquiries about potential capstone partnerships may be directed to Dr. Cindy Wood, piglady@vt.edu, 540-231-6937.

For more information about degree requirements in Animal and Poultry Scienc-



Top, taking notes for future reference.

Middle, the faculty panel confers on posters.

Bottom, the Fall 2011 Symposium in full swing.

Fall 2011 APSC Capstone Poster Presentations

PRESENTER	POSTER TITLE
Ayersman, Nathan	Salisbury Zoological Park
Banning, Chelsea	Shenandoah Crossing Equestrian Center
Barton, Chrissy	Summer Experience in Equine Management
Bradbery, Amanda*	An In Depth and Comparative Study of Equine Nutrition
Brooks, Leanne	Internship at North Georgia Zoo
Burns, Becky	Delineating Perceptions of Calf Behavior
Caudle, Lindsey	Study Abroad: Culture and Agriculture of Italy
Chase, Allyson	VT in the UK
Chrostowski, Sandra*	Internship in Reproductive Technologies and Genetics
Church, Chelsie	Illnesses, Diagnoses, and Treatments at Ridge Animal Hospital
Cockerille, Ben	Strip Grazing Project Conducted at Locust Hill Farm
Collett, Julia	The Benefits of Split-Suckling Piglets
Dransfield, Devon	Soybean and Small Grain Production
Elliott, Alyssa	Do You Know Where Your Dinner Comes From?
Esteppe, Candice	Animal Medical Center of Frederick County
Evans, Kimberly*	Feeding Lambs: Does grain feeding affect worm count?
Gilbert, Jessica	My Dog Ate WHAT?!?!.....
Gregg, Maggie	Adventures at the Southeast District 4H Horse Camp
Griffith, Carly	United Kingdom Study Abroad
Hall, Shaylen	Swine Reproductive Management Project: A Three Year Plan
Harris, Rosella*	Animals of the Andes: Summer Internship in Cusco, Peru
Jefferson, Shawnique	The Effect of Breed and Diet on Pregnancy Rate of Hair Sheep Ewes
Joyce, Colleen	Summer Internship at the VT MARE Center
Kerner, Leah	Virginia Tech in the United Kingdom
Kessler, Ashley	Outreach Education Internship
Leith, Caitlin	Dropping the Reins: Emotional Renewal Through Contact with Horses
Lowrey, Aubrey*	Equine Field Fencing and Working with a Non-Profit Organization
Mautone, Jessica	Lyme Disease in Canines
Messer, Melodie	EcoLife Expeditions: Vets-in-the-Wild
Miles, Jay	Parasite Resistance in Horses/Deworming of Feeder Calves
Mills, Pamela	Choosing, Socializing, and Training an Adopted Shelter Dog
Nixon, Danielle	Walnut Spring Stables Summer Fun Show
Petree, Kaitlynn	Parasitic Resistance in Prescription Dewormers
Reed, Devon**	Philadelphia Zoo Environmental Education & Animal Behavior
Ritzi, Miranda	Equine Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction
Sedlak, Danielle	Animal Care in Ecuador
Sizemore, Michele	High Meadows Dressage Center
Spivey, Mandy	Operations Intership
Swisher, Sarah	Modern Procedures of Equine Reproduction and Breeding
Tench, Lelia	Dream Catchers at the Cori Sikich Therapeutic Riding
Washington, Cassy	Enteroaggregative Escherichia coli

*Faculty Panel Choice (top five posters, no particular order)

**People's Choice

Undergraduate Activities, continued

APSC Students Explore Animal Behavior and Welfare in the UK By C. M. Wood

This past summer, eight undergraduates (seven Animal and Poultry Sciences and one Biology) participated in a short-term study abroad program in the UK that focused on applied animal behavior and welfare. In preparation for the trip, which took place the second half of May, students met several times to discuss assigned readings on the topic of applied animal behavior and welfare. Each student was also assigned a stop on the itinerary to research prior to departure. Verbal briefings on each stop were presented in the airport departure lounge.

In addition to keeping daily journals during the trip, each student wrote a research paper comparing and contrasting US and UK approaches to applied animal behavior and welfare. Topics chosen by the students included equine slaughter, swine welfare, animal pain, companion animal regulations, primate environmental enrichment, animal welfare in conventional and organic farming systems, animal welfare in food labeling, and animal welfare policies.

The group departed Washington, DC for London, England on May 16 and returned to Dulles on May 27 from Glasgow, Scotland. The trip itinerary included overnight stops in London, Stratford-Upon-Avon, York, and Edinburgh. Other highlights included tours of Windsor Palace and Warwick Castle, a visit to the town of Oxford, a day trip to Harper Adams University College (with tours of the dairy center and swine center), and a stop at Hadrian's Wall between England and Scotland. In Edinburgh, one day was devoted to a visit with Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) scientists researching applied animal behavior and welfare in farm animals, including beef and dairy cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, and horses. The program included seminar presentations as well as

tours of the beef cattle, sheep, and swine centers. A behind-the-scenes tour of the Edinburgh Zoo, which has a major focus on species conservation and animal welfare, capped the last full day of the stay in the UK.

During their whirlwind tour of the UK, the group explored cities, towns and the countryside both as tourists taking in the sights and sounds (including the musical "Wicked") and as animal scientists comparing approaches to animal behavior and welfare in the US and UK. Direct comparisons were possible through the visits to Harper Adams University College, SAC, and the Edinburgh zoo while indirect observations were made throughout the trip. At Warwick Castle, for example, one of the attractions was a falconry show.

Planning for a repeat trip the summer of 2014 is currently underway. Anyone interested in joining us should contact Dr. Cindy Wood (piglady@vt.edu; 540-231-9637).



Rear, (l-r) Camilla Hughes, Kristen Ulmer, Michelle Piluso
Middle, (l-r) Dr. Cindy Wood, Allyson Chase, Carly Griffith
Front, (l-r) Emily Thomas, Leah Kerner, Courtney Hoang

Undergraduate Activities, continued

Strong Support at the 2011 Hokie Harvest Sale By Dan Eversole

Despite the cold, inclement weather, the 2011 Livestock Merchandising Class at Virginia Tech entertained a standing-room-only crowd of over 600 supporters and friends in the Livestock Judging Pavilion at the 17th Annual Hokie Harvest Sale on Friday, October 28th. As many of you know, the Hokie Harvest Sale has developed a significant reputation for selling high quality, university-owned livestock. Since 1995, which was the inaugural year of the Hokie Harvest Sale, there have been 1160 students enrolled in this mer-

chandising class and a grand total of 362 horses, 46 pigs, and 728 head of beef cattle have been offered at public auction, totaling \$1,921,042 in gross revenue.

This year's sale grossed \$97,275 and featured 44 lots of purebred and commercial beef cattle and five bred gilts. Since the equine warm-blood program moved to the Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension Center in December, 2009, there were no horses offered in the 2011 student-run sale. There were 171 registered buyers from New York,

Illinois, Tennessee, Maryland, Missouri, Ohio, North Carolina, West Virginia, and Virginia, who attended the sale which was broadcasted live over the internet by Mr. Aaron Ray Tompkins, Cowbuyer LLC of Mt. Airy, NC. The beef cattle sale featured 13 head of commercial bred cows and 41 animals representing three different purebred breeds – Angus, Hereford, and Simmental.

There were 10 spring-calving pairs in the cow/calf division, which averaged \$3,420. Lot 4 was the sale topper at \$4,400. This four-year-old Angus cow is a daughter of SAF Strategy and ranks in the top 10% among current dams for \$B at \$58.88. She has recorded progeny ratios of IMF @ 105, REA @ 103, and YWR @ 103. Both she and her phenomenal January heifer calf sired by GAR Progress sold to Mike and Tim Wells of Rocky Mount, VA for \$2200 each.

In the Hereford division of four cow/calf pairs and two breeding-age bulls, Lot 26 commanded the highest bid at \$3,100. This stout, yearling bull, sired by SHF Rib Eye M326 R117, ranks in the top 10% for BW and the elite 3% for CHB\$. Both spring-calving cow/calf pairs were maternal half-sisters sired by Gerber Watchfire 117F and each pair sold for \$3,000.

Lot 15 was the top-selling lot in the Simmental breed. Round Meadow Farm from Meadows of Dan, VA purchased the SimAngus cow by G 13 Structure at \$1,900 and her January ¾ Simmental bull calf sired by SVF/NJC Built Right N48 sold to ACE Livestock, Allison and Andrew Echols of Gap Mills, WV for \$1,550.

The breeding-age bull division of 10 yearling bulls was topped by Lot 21 at \$3,100. This Angus yearling bull is sired by SS Objective T510 0T26 and out of a daughter of TC Total 410 and our featured donor cow, HHF Alli Rita 704 317. This popular herd-sire prospect ranks in the elite 1% of non-parent sires for WW and YW EPD, top 2% for \$F, and upper 4% for



Top, (l-r) beef clerks Mary Elmer, Garrett Cook, Amber Crews, Shasta Sowers, and Kayla Chittum are poised and ready for settlement.

Bottom, Lot 9, a popular Hereford cow/calf pair is auctioned off.



Undergraduate Activities, continued

\$B. Wilson Cattle Company of Abingdon, VA is the new owner.

The 13 lots of young, commercial cows, mostly Angus or SimAngus breeding, drew considerable interest among cattlemen and averaged \$1,511. Moreover, five pregnant gilts were sold via live auction and grossed \$2,075.

The 69 students did a superb job of preparing for the sale. They gained 'hands-on' experience in sale management, budgeting, cataloging, advertising, livestock photography, clerking, and health requirements. Special thanks are extended to Col. Ken Brubaker of Brubaker Sales and Marketing, Harrisonburg, VA for serving as the sale consultant and auctioneer. Students **Will Fiske**, Greenville, VA; **Haydon Garland**, Callao, VA; **Evan Jeuck**, Dublin, VA served as bid-takers for the sale while **Daniel Fleishman**, Dayton, VA worked the ring. **Alyssa Elliott**, Harrisonburg, VA served as the student clerk in the block.



(l - r) Student clerk Alyssa Elliott, Dr. Dan Eversole, and auctioneer Ken Brubaker welcome the enormous crowd.

The Food and Beverage Committee, with assistance from the Block and Bridle Club in the Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences, served a complimentary BBQ dinner to nearly 600 guests. Their support and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Interest in the Hokie Harvest Sale continues to be overwhelming in favor of hosting future student-run livestock sales. However, purebred animal inventory numbers have dwindled in recent years which make it difficult to continually offer quality livestock at public auction. We are hopeful to host the 18th Annual Hokie Harvest Sale on Friday, October 26, 2012.

Virginia Tech Senior Wins the Groseclose Scholarship

Emi Scott, a senior in APSC who intends to attend veterinary college, has received an extraordinarily generous scholarship funded by the late Margaret "Peggy" Groseclose Skelton, a former associate professor at Virginia Tech who died in July 2010.

Skelton grew up in Smyth County and named the scholarship for her parents, Roy E. and Thelma R. Groseclose, who had a dairy farm. The scholarship is endowed so that it will provide thousands of dollars to two students each year. First preference is given to dairy science students from Smyth County. If no such students are available, the scholarship can go to dairy science majors from other counties in Southwest Virginia. Students from Smyth County who are majoring in different subjects within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences are eligible as well. Both Skelton and her husband – William E. Skelton, a former Virginia Tech dean of Extension who passed away in August 2008 – were highly involved in the commonwealth's 4-H program.

Emi Scott is from Marion, a town in Smyth County, Virginia. Professor Dave Gerrard, who heads the Department of Animal and



Emi Scott (photo credit: Creative Images)

Undergraduate Activities, continued

Poultry Sciences, said many students in his program are aspiring veterinarians, but most tend to be interested in the companion animal side of the discipline, as opposed to the large animal, food production-based side that appeals to Scott. While Scott was a girl, she spent a good deal of time on her uncle's dairy farm. "I always liked working with the cows," she said. "I know there's more money in small animals, but there's more of a need for large animal veterinarians, especially in this region, and I want to stay in Smyth County."

Although she was not aware of the scholarship until recently, Emi was familiar with Peggy Skelton's generosity. "I have been involved in 4-H since I was nine," Scott said. "Mrs. Skelton's estate also endowed several thousands of dollars for my church [in Marion]. So with all that, and the scholarship, she's really affected many areas of my life."

During her long association with the university, Peggy Skelton affected the lives of numerous students through her activities both as a faculty member and as one of the university's most generous donors. The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is just one of many Virginia Tech programs to benefit from her generosity. The university's College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Athletic Department and University Honors program also have scholarships created by Skelton. Though she technically was an alumna of James Madison University and the University of Tennessee, the Virginia Tech Alumni Association made Skelton an honorary, lifetime member in 2001. Even beyond her lifetime, Skelton created a legacy of helping Virginia Tech's students that is ongoing, as can be seen in the story of Emi Scott.

Rosella Harris Wins an International Scholarship to Study Abroad

By Erza Rudi

Rosella Aurora Harris of Clinton, Md., a senior double majoring in animal and poultry sciences in Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Spanish in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, was awarded a \$3,000 Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship to study abroad. Harris used this scholarship in association with her volunteering in Cuzco, Peru on a llama and alpaca farm in the summer of 2011. "I chose Cuzco because I am half Peruvian and it has always been a dream of mine to go and live in the country of my heritage," said Harris.

Harris spent the first half of the summer working on a llama and alpaca farm. In addition to helping with the animals, she assisted in the production of textiles made from their wool. This work fulfilled the requirement of a capstone experience for her animal and poultry sciences degree.

During the second half of the summer, she completed a traditional study abroad experience — taking classes, visiting tourist attractions, and living with a host family. "I am so excited that I have found a way to integrate my two areas of study," she said. Harris will graduate in December of 2011 and hopes to find employment in international agriculture.

The Gilman Scholarship Program offers awards for U.S. undergraduate students who are receiving federal Pell Grant funding to participate in study abroad programs. The program encourages students to choose destinations outside of Western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Scholarship applicants are required to submit two essays: one about the impact the study abroad will have on their academic goals, and another describing a follow-up project they plan to do after they



Rosella Harris

Undergraduate Activities, continued

return from the study abroad. The Gilman International Scholarship Program has awarded over 6,000 scholarships since its inception in 2001. It is funded through the International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000 and is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

The Virginia Tech Equestrian Club By Marion Carroll

The Virginia Tech Equestrian Club has had an incredibly fun, successful and rewarding fall semester here in Blacksburg!

We are currently the largest sports club on Tech's campus with 117 members. We've utilized the Big/Little program to welcome new members into to the club and pair them with "veteran members." New members can depend on their "bigs" for everything from college advice to rides to the barn. We feel that this feature of our club has truly made everyone's experiences more enjoyable and freshman can feel included from the very start of the semester.

To help everyone get to know each other, we've had social events ranging from trips to the Homeplace Restaurant to ice cream socials. Our social chair Krissy Peacock recently orchestrated a "Horse Christmas Pageant" where club members came out to the barn and dressed up some of our horses for the local Blacksburg community.

We had skits of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and "The Night Before Christmas" before allowing the kids and their parents to feed the horses treats and peppermints. We wanted to find a way to make ourselves more open to the Blacksburg community, and to contribute to the community. The event had a great first-year turnout, and was completely free of charge for all those that attended. We hope to make it an annual event!

Earlier in the semester, the Equestrian Club put together a Virginia Tech team for 'Ride for the Cure', a trail ride created to raise money for Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, which took place on October 1st in the Culpeper, VA area. We had a total of five club members attend, with two members riding, two volunteering and one walking the trail with her miniature horse! All together, our team raised \$2,335.91 to benefit Susan G. Komen.

We also participated as a club in service projects on campus. Two of our members, **Christine Thomas** and **Vicki Morrison**, decided to hold a Smithfield Horse Center project day at the end of October. Club members, along with members of Block and Bridle, spent the day cleaning up and painting Smithfield Horse Center, essentially making it more functional as a learning center and as a breeding facility.

Besides hosting both an IHSA Hunter show and an IDA Dressage show this semes-



Top, Hokie horses grazing (photo credit: Marion Carroll).
Middle, Cara Barskey, orchestrator of 'Dressage for a Cure', warming up on a VT horse, Pumba (photo credit: Marion Carroll).
Bottom, Western, Hunter and Dressage Teams in front of Burruss Hall, Virginia Tech (photo credit: Colleen Hill).

Undergraduate Activities, continued

ter, the Equestrian Club, with the help of Zeta Tau Alpha Fraternity, hosted 'Dressage for the Cure', a dressage show benefitting the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. 'Dressage for a Cure' was created in honor of **Teresa McDonald**, our beloved dressage coach and head instructor at Virginia Tech, as a way to show our support in the fight to find a cure for cancer.

The show featured 64 entries with horse and rider combinations from Virginia Tech, Appalachian State University, and Virginia Intermont College as well as local barns from the Blacksburg area. Both horses and riders were decked out in pink as they rode dressage tests from Introductory through 4th Level. Resulting from the show, the Equestrian Club raised \$1,530 for Susan G. Komen.

Other accolades include our Hunter Team Manger, **Olivia Wymer**, receiving the Sports Club Officer of the Month award for August. Along with Olivia's success, we've had members from both the Hunter Team and the Western Team qualify for regional competition in the spring. For the Hunter Team, **Anna Norwood** qualified for Intermediate Fences and **Marion Carroll** qualified for Walk, Trot, Canter. From the Western Team, **Aubrey Lowrey** qualified for Intermediate II. In terms of overall team standings, the Hunter team is second in our region! Virginia Tech is the only team in Virginia with a Western Team, so our team competes against all North Carolina schools and is currently 3rd in the region!

Also, Hunter Team open flat and fences rider **Jennifer Osterman** is one of the top runners in our region for the Cacchione Cup, which is awarded every year to the top hunter seat open rider in the country.

For more information on this prestigious award visit this website: <http://www.campusequestrian.com/story/2010natlccup.html>. Jennifer was also the high point rider at the UNC-Greensboro/Elon horse show in November!

We're proud of the amazing semester we've had and are incredibly excited about the spring activities! We look forward to welcoming new club and team members in the spring! Let's go Hokies!



Top, two Hokie equestrians before 'Dressage for the Cure.'

Bottom, members of the Western Team pose for a picture on campus (both photo credits: Colleen Hill).



Undergraduate Activities, continued

Spring 2011 Dean's List

Elizabeth A. Alexis	Christina S. Hall	Shauna R. Prasse
Jackson T. Ames	Martha A. Helbert	Crystal M. Prom
Katherine C. Amos	Brittany L. Hendrix	Kelly E. Quesinberry
Christopher M. Andrews	Hanna J. Herdegen	Devon N. Reed
Emily E. Baird	Patrick C. Hilson	Heather F. Reeves
Chelsea D. Banning	Alyssa L. Homyk	Jessica D. Repep
Christine M. Barton	Maureen E. Howren	Jessica S. Rich
Latoshia R. Belcher	Katie L. Huffman	Corbyn E. Riddell
Morgan L. Bell	Camilla Hughes	Maria C. Rittenhouse
Amanda N. Bradbery	James M. Hunt	Miranda M. Ritzi
Amy M. Brandon	Kaitlin N. Jacobs	Ashley C. Roberts
Patrick J. Brennan	Emma L. Jefferies	Amber L. Rosser
Ann C. Brindley	Margaret-Katherine C. Jeter	Kristina M. Ruffner
Sabrina N. Brooks	Colleen E. Joyce	Jaime K. Rutter
Kaitlyn N. Budge	Quentin D. King	Michelle A. Sadler
Allyson D. Chase	Erin E. Klingensmith	Andrew G. Sahol
Chelsie F. Church	Katherine D. Knight	Melissa A. Sampson
Garrett L. Compton	Adrienne L. Koegel	Courtney V. Scarborough
Ariel N. Cookson	Kaylee S. Kohlhaas	Taylor L. Scott
Elizabeth G. Cory	Kathryn A. Lacy	James R. Shatt
Elena C. Cox	Andria E. Laib	Lauren M. Sheehan
Sara E. Criner	Emily H. Lamotte	Kathryn A. Shepard
Carrie V. Davis	Caitlin M. Leith	Justine H. Sherer
Christopher W. Davis	Virginia S. Lyman	Emma P. Shirey
Megan M. Dayton	Kerryn L. Manden	Brittany L. Sholes
Lindsay J. Deacon	Annalee S. Marshall	Alysha E. Simmons
Anna C. DeBerardinis	Brendan J. Martin	Lauryn Singer
Erin N. Deliere	Jessica L. McCarty	Farah-Dale S. Siodmok
Rachel R. Dialectos	Colleen R. McIntyre	Michele P. Sizemore
Elle K. Donnini	Stacy A. McPaters	David K. Sours
Andrew C. Echols	Victoria E. Mellin	Ashley J. Stover
Kayla B. Eckard	Melodie J. Messer	Sarah M. Swisher
Melanie M. Eldred	Ellen Messerly	Lelia M. Tench
Christine A. Evans	Harper K. Metcalf	Emily L. Thomas
Kimberly L. Evans	Megan E. Mitchell	Michelle K. Thompson
Laura L. Faris	Brittany N. Moore	Brittany L. Trexler
Alison M. Fechino	Brittany L. Neal	Kristen M. Ulmer
Jillian A. Fellows	Isaac R. Nelson	Lindsay R. Vega
Shawnee L. Felts	Kristin L. Nelson	Maarit N. Vonkutzleben
Kathryn E. Foster	Anna B. Norwood	Cassandra M. Washington
Javier S. Garcia	Kathleen O'Laughlin	Mary E. Weatherman
Danielle L. Garman	Chaelee A. Park	Megan E. Whipp
Ashley E. Gaston	Karen M. Park	Trevor C. Whiteside
Emily B. Grabarek	Zachary S. Parks	Sarah E. Williams
Rachel K. Grant	Akash P. Patel	Meaghan K. Wilson
Mackenzie B. Grasso	Kaitlyn S. Peden	Sarah L. Wray
Jacquelyn E. Greiner	Callie S. Pierce	Abigail L. Zezeski
Connor W. Grimes	Victoria F. Pittman	
Rachel I. Grosse		

CONGRATULATIONS!

Undergraduate Activities, continued

2011-2012 APSC Scholarship Recipients

Litton Sheep Industry Student Leader Scholarship
Kayleigh Mize

Ralph Hunt Beef Industry Student Leader Scholarship
Ben Cockerille

Lou Dixey Beef Industry Student Leader Scholarship
Kaitlyn Meadows

Fred Campbell Horse Industry Student Leader Scholarship
Anna Norwood

Denver D. Bragg Poultry Science Student Leader Scholarship
Callie Pierce

Rocco Lamb Farms Student Leader Scholarship
Isaac Nelson

Animal and Poultry Sciences Scholarship
Akash Patel

A.L. "Ike" Eller Scholarship
Sarah Burczynski
Katie Knight
Stacy McPaters
Andrew Sahol

E.A. & H.H. Livesay Scholarship
Rosella Harris

Ashe-Lockhart Scholarship
Amber Rosser
Sarah Schneider

Owen Thomas, Jr. Memorial Scholarship
Margaret-Katherine Jeter
Andria Laib
Lelia Tench
Michelle Thompson

Tom and Christine Marlowe Freshman Scholarship
Kelsey Kirschnick

Richard S. Ellis, IV and Roy A. Meek, Jr. Scholarship
Jimmy Shatt

George G. Green Scholarship
Erica Davis

Harry Wyatt Scholarship
Camilla Hughes
Rosalie Petrone

Lou Dixey Scholarship
Chris Duffey

William Earl Browning Scholarship
Mollie Blythe
Kathryn Lacy

Ralph Hunt Scholarship
Marti Helbert
Scott Neil

Virginia Pork Industry Scholarship
Erin Deliere
Karen Park
Mindy Thorpe

Mary Howe diZerega Memorial Scholarship
Ashley Ulmer

Arden N. Huff Scholarship
Kaitlin Gastrock
Sarah Williams

Delano Scholarship
Ju Me Park
Melissa Sampson
Katy Shepard
Casey Tignor

Jack S. Copenhaver Scholarship
Brian Cromer
Skyler Dowell
Kate Holsinger
Morgan Paulette
Kristen Ulmer

Charles W. Thomas Memorial Scholarship
Brittany Neal
Maria Rittenhouse
Brittany Sholes

C. Gordon Thornhill Scholarship
Lauren O'Neil
Emily Vincent
Sarah Wysor

Emily Jane Hilscher Memorial Scholarship
Kathryn Slaughter

General J.E.B. Stuart-Real Daughters (of the Confederacy) Award
Julie Carrington

Undergraduate Activities, continued

2011-2012 CALS Scholarship Recipients

Charles R. and Violet S. Drake Scholarship

Katherine Amos (\$1,000)
Olivia Brooks (\$1,000)
Elizabeth Cory (\$1,000)
Melissa Sampson (\$1,000)
Wesley Spangler (\$1,000)
Clarice White (\$1,000)

Charles W. Wampler, Sr. Scholarship

Brittany Sholes (\$1,000)
Lelia Tench (\$1,000)
Ashley Ulmer (\$1,000)

Dean James Nichols Scholarship

Casey Braginton (\$1,000)
Andrea Varidakis (\$1,500)

Dean L. B. Dietrick Scholarship

Kyle Civalier (\$1,000)

Garnet H. Harvey Scholarship

Martha Helbert (\$1,350)

Gladys S. Decker Scholarship

Lindsey Caudle (\$1,000)

Watt and Jennifer Foster Scholarship

Lauren Burnett (\$1,400)
Amber Rosser (\$1,400)

James L. McDonald Scholarship

Adrian Sheets (\$1,000)

John R. Dawkins Scholarship

Jacob Dowell (\$1,500)
Erin Holland (\$1,000)
Stacy McPaters (\$1,000)
Grace Parker (\$1,000)
Sarah Schneider (\$1,500)
Katherine Tedrow (\$1,000)

Dean James R. Nichols Scholarship

Morgan Paulette (\$1,000)

John Lee Pratt Merit Scholarship

Eleanor Cayford (\$3,000)
Stephanie Folkerts(\$3,000)
Aaron Gringer (\$3,000)
Sarah Helweg (\$3,000)
Elizabeth Knick (\$3,000)
Ashley Lohr (\$3,000)
Virginia Lyman (\$3,000)
Sarah Malinowski (\$3,000)
Margeaux Malone(\$3,000)
Erin McDougall (\$3,000)
Christine Evans (\$3,000)
Lauren Ruben (\$3,000)
Katherine Rubilotta (\$3,000)
Victoria Stewart (\$3,000)
Hope Wentzel (\$3,000)
Janie Young (\$3,000)

John Lee Pratt Sr. Research Scholarship

Rachel Grant (\$3,000)
Melodie Messer (\$3,000)
Karen Park (\$3,000)
Miranda Ritzi (\$3,000)
Laura Thomas (\$3,000)

John Alton "Tip" Spivey Scholarship

Amy Brandon (\$1,000)
Erin Deliere (\$1,000)
Erin Koperna (\$1,000)

Marion and Annie Williams Scholarship

Suzanne Galbraith (\$1,000)
Betty McConn (\$1,000)
Farah-Dale Siodmok (\$1,000)
Sarah Swisher (\$1,000)

Pulley-Louden Scholarship

Rebecca Breen (\$1,000)

Reese McCormick, Jr. Scholarship

Amy Brandon (\$1,000)
Sarah McKay (\$1,725)

Reese McCormick, Sr. Scholarship

Keagan Clevenger (\$1,000)
Victoria Cox (\$1,000)
Amber Noel (\$1,000)

Roanoke Valley Horsemen's Association Scholarship

Kaitlyn Budge (\$500)
Danielle Nixon (\$500)

Senator Robert J. Noell and Randolph A. Noell Scholarship

Kristen Ulmer (\$1,000)
Christina Vaughan (\$1,000)

Spillman Family Scholarship

Michelle Berry (\$9,459)
Kimberly Evans (\$9,459)

State Fair of Virginia Scholarship

Brian Cromer (\$1,000)
Bradley Dalton (\$1,000)
Melanie Eldred (\$1,000)

Thornhill Family Alpha Gamma Rho Scholarship

Isaac Nelson (\$2,240)

Tommy Barron Scholarship

Shannon Swank (\$500)

Virginia Tech Agriculture Alumni Organization Scholarship

Andria Laib (\$1,000)

New Faces in APSC

Visiting Professor from China



Dr. Wendy Zhao

Dr. Xiaoling (Wendy) Zhao, an Associate Professor in Animal Genetics from the Sichuan Agriculture University in China, was awarded a prestigious government fellowship to complete a one-year sabbatical at Virginia Tech in collaboration with Dr. Paul Siegel. Her research in China focuses on meat quality in chickens. Her research project at Virginia Tech focuses on the response to sheep red blood cells in White Leghorn chickens. She is thrilled to be near the Appalachian Mountains and is enjoying the culture and scenic beauty in southwestern Virginia. She encourages faculty, staff and students to stop by her office in Litton Reaves 3210 for a cup of Chinese green tea and affable conversation.

advising the Block & Bridle and Collegiate Horsemen's Clubs on campus. He also served as an academic advisor for students majoring in the three equine associate degrees offered by the college. Will holds a B.S. in Animal Science from Texas A&M University, and an M.S. in Animal Science from Texas Tech University. Will is a member of the Equine Science Society, the National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics, and is currently serving as the Vice President of the National Horse Judging Team Coaches Association.

Outside of his academic career, Will is a fifteen-year veteran of the horse and livestock industries. He brings a wide range of experience to Virginia Tech, including time spent as the assistant manager and foaling attendant at an equine breeding and research farm, an equine and food animal veterinary technician, and the manager of a feed, farm, and garden store.

In his spare time Will enjoys traveling, judging horse shows, riding horses, hunting, fishing, and any activity that allows him to spend time outdoors. Originally a native of Tallahassee, Florida, he is excited to be back in the south and is looking forward to exploring Virginia.

New Manager at Smithfield Horse Center



Will Golden

Will Golden comes to Virginia Tech from Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne, Wyoming where he served as an Equine Science Instructor. His responsibilities at LCCC included teaching approximately 15 credits each semester, coaching the horse judging team, and

Undergraduate Activities, continued

2011-2012 CALS Scholarship Recipients, continued

Virginia Beef Corporation Scholarship

Brittany Neal (\$2,320)
Emma Shirey (\$2,320)

Virginia County Extension Agents Scholarship

Camilla Hughes (\$830)

William Powers Sadler Scholarship

Margaret-Katherine Jeter (\$1,000)
Kristina Ruffner (\$1,000)

W.R. Winslow Scholarship

Christina Hall (\$1,000)
Patricia Helsel (\$1,000)
Colleen McIntyre (\$1,500)
Jessica Repep (\$1,000)
Hannah Robbins (\$1,000)
Andrew Sahol (\$1,000)
James Shatt (\$1,000)
Kathryn Slaughter (\$1,000)

Walter S. Newman Scholarship

Casey Tignor (\$1,000)
Renea L. Wingate (\$1,140)

Summer Internship Offers Unique Opportunities for Equine Science Students

By Rebecca Splan

Since its initial offering in 2005, the Virginia Tech Summer Sporthorse Breeding Internship has become extremely popular for Hokies interested in a career with horses. Based at the Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension (MARE) Center in Northern Virginia, the program builds on fundamental skills and knowledge gained on the Blacksburg campus and provides unique, hands-on experiences that further prepare students for future jobs in the horse industry, veterinary medicine or equine science.

Students live, work and learn at the facility from May through August, developing their skills and knowledge in horse care, reproductive management of mares and stallions and training of young horses at the 420-acre facility. Students are also heavily engaged in research activities at the MARE Center and are challenged to develop their critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork and leadership skills. As part of the summer experience, students interact with many prominent members of the horse industry, and participate in field trips to leading equine facilities throughout the Mid-Atlantic. The program also welcomes students from other universities and colleges, allowing Virginia Tech

students to make lasting friendships with other students who share their passion for the horse.

Although primarily focused on the warm-blood and Thoroughbred breeding industries, the internship provides a great opportunity for students interested in all facets of the horse industry to gain valuable skills, knowledge and insight that will help them in their future careers. For more information about the summer internship program, or the educational opportunities for equine science students at the MARE Center, please visit our website at <http://www.equine.vt.edu>.

Top, interns learn how to evaluate Thoroughbred yearlings from Mr. Frank Shipp, general manager of Lazy Lane Farm (photo credit: Shea Porr).
Bottom, hard work pays off! A successful day of showing for the 2011 summer interns (photo credit: picsforyou.com).



Graduate Students Graduating

Student	Degree Earned	Graduation Date	Major Professor	Thesis/Dissertation Title
Marissa Smith	PhD	January 2011	Denbow	Differential regulation of appetite in lines of chickens selected for high and low juvenile body weight: the role of beta-msh
Pingwen Xu	PhD	January 2011	Denbow	Involvement of amp-activated protein kinase in differential regulation of appetite between lines of chickens selected for low or high juvenile body weight
Laura Wittish	MS	June 2011	Estienne	Effects of spray-dried porcine plasma (SDPP) administered as an oral gavage on indicators of health, welfare, and performance in pigs transported after weaning
Lindsay Stuard	MS	June 2011	Dalloul	Genetically divergent lines of chickens respond differently to Clostridium perfringens
Erinn Higgins	MS	July 2011	Wood	The effect of exercise on lactating sow performance
Jackie Speier	MS	July 2011	Wong	Gene expression of nutrient transporters and digestive enzymes in the yolk sac membrane and small intestine of the developing embryonic chick
Heather Albrecht	MS	July 2011	Lewis	Reproductive soundness and egg quality in chickens selected for low and high antibody response
Allison Echols	MS	September 2011	Greiner	Relationships among lifetime measures of growth and frame size for commercial beef females in a pasture-based production system in the Appalachian region of the United States
Sungwon Kim	PhD	September 2011	Dalloul	Functional Characterization of the Avian Inflammatory Mediators ChNod1, ChMIF, and ChIL-22
Kristin Robertson	MS	September 2011	Escobar	[completed nonthesis masters]
Kathryn Price	PhD	September 2011	Escobar	Plasma amino acid and metabolite changes in pigs during endotoxemia
Kimberly Fisher	MS	September 2011	Gerrard	Dietary manipulation causes childhood obesity-like characteristics in pigs
Elizabeth Ramirez	MS	September 2011	Escobar	Variations of amino acid standardized ileal digestibility in soybean meal
Regina Lehman	PhD	September 2011	McElroy	The effect of dietary phytic acid and phytase on performance, bone ash, and small intestinal health of broilers vaccinated with a live coccidia oocyst vaccine

Livestock Judging

Virginia 4-H Livestock Judging Team to Represent United States in Europe

Twenty-eight 4-H livestock judging teams from across the nation competed for the opportunity to represent the United States at the Royal Highland Show in Scotland. The North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Kentucky serves as host to the national contest every fall; only one team is allowed to represent their state in the competition. The four 4-H youth from Virginia had a remarkable day finishing 3rd overall as a team. With the top three teams given the opportunity to represent the United States in Europe, the finish earned them more than simply ribbons and trophies. The team worked hard this fall competing in several contests leading up to the national event and practicing on numerous weekends when contests were not available. The team consisted of: **Elizabeth Nixon**, Orange County, **Colby Redifer**, Montgomery County, **Coffman Liggett**, Augusta County and **Jordan McCammon**, Rockingham County (**Jack Redifer**, Montgomery County was an alternate for this contest).

The contest consisted of four classes of beef, three classes of sheep, three classes of swine and one class of meat goats. In addition to evaluation, the youth were asked to answer 10 questions on a class of sheep and a class of swine and they gave four sets of oral reasons. **Dr. Paige Pratt**, Youth Livestock Extension Specialist at Virginia Tech, served as the coach for the team. She explained, "When analyzing a class of four animals the youth must have keen critical thinking and problem solving skills. As well, they must make solid decisions that they can later defend when presenting the reasons regarding the placing to an official. The skills they gain from these events will provide them with the tools to be more successful when making decisions later in life."

The youth not only finished 3rd overall, but they also placed as a team in the individual species categories. They were 2nd in beef cattle, 5th in swine, 6th in sheep and 9th overall in oral reasons. As individuals, Elizabeth Nixon was 10th overall in beef cattle and 9th overall individual and Colby Redifer was 7th overall in beef cattle, 5th overall in performance cattle, and 11th overall individual. Both Nixon and Redifer were named as All-American's. The team will now begin fundraising for their trip to Europe to represent the United States. They will compete at the Royal Highland Show, and will also have the opportunity to tour across Europe, learning about a variety of agriculture systems. Fundraising will take place to send the team abroad and will continue until the trip in June. The travels taken by the team this fall were supported by the Virginia 4-H Foundation 4-H Livestock Youth Development Endowment. If you have questions about supporting the team or any youth livestock event throughout Virginia please contact Dr. Paige Pratt at 540-231-4732.

Top, 3rd Place Overall:
(l-r) Dr. Paige Pratt, Youth Livestock Extension Specialist, Elizabeth Nixon, Orange Co., Colby Redifer, Montgomery Co., Coffman Liggett, Augusta Co., Jordan McCammon, Rockingham Co. and representative from the sponsor company Westway Feed Products

Bottom, Beef 2nd Place:
(l-r) Elizabeth Nixon, Orange Co., Colby Redifer, Montgomery Co., Coffman Liggett, Augusta Co., Jordan McCammon, Rockingham Co. and Dr. Paige Pratt, Youth Livestock Extension Specialist



Livestock Judging, continued

First Youth Livestock Leadership Forum Hosted on Tech Campus

On the first weekend of December the Alphin-Stuart Livestock Arena and Litton-Reaves Hall filled with 70 high school-aged youth eager to learn more about being leaders in the livestock industry. While at the forum the youth learned about meat cookery, animal well-being, quality assurance, antibiotic use, meat science, media relations, and leadership through advocacy. In addition to hands-on workshops throughout the day, the youth attended a business etiquette lunch at The Inn. "It was exciting to watch the youth

interact with faculty from the department and learn more about advocating for our livestock industry," said **Dr. Paige Pratt**, Youth Livestock Extension Specialist and organizer of the event. "It is especially rewarding when youth tell you the event helped confirm that they want to be Hokies in the future," said Pratt. The event also offered a Livestock Judging and Stockmen's Coaches Workshop for adults featuring focusing on the basics of coaching youth to compete in both contests. The next state youth livestock event will be the Youth Swine Day on February 25, 2012.



Anne Jones, Virginia Beef Industry Council, Director of Promotion teaches youth about safe beef cookery methods (photo credit: Katie Lukens, Virginia State FFA Reporter).



Megan Seibel, VALOR Director and Kerry Priest, Interim RLC Director teach youth about leadership through advocacy (photo credit: Katie Lukens, Virginia State FFA Reporter).



Wendy Zhao, Lacey Zhang and Elizabeth Gilbert, basking in the sunshine of a beautiful October afternoon at McAfee's Knob

American Youth Horse Council Brings Symposium to Virginia

By Celeste Crisman (Virginia Tech)
and Jill Montgomery (Executive Director for AYHC)

For the first time, the Virginia 4-H Horse Program and Virginia Cooperative Extension are pleased to host the 2012 American Youth Horse Council Symposium, March 23-25, 2012 at the Hilton Washington Dulles in Herndon, Va. The event, now in its 35th year, brings together leaders in the Youth Horse Industry—adults as well as students—for a weekend of learning, networking, tourism, participation and fun. Attending will be representatives from a diversity of horse interests, ranging from breed associations, university faculty, and equine sport organizations to 4-H, U.S. Pony Club and more. The focus of the Symposium is to offer leaders a venue to connect with the resources and referrals that will help them better fulfill the AYHC mission to “connect kids through horses.”

The Symposium opens Friday with two optional tours spotlighting why “Virginia is for Horse Lovers”. Tour #1 includes the Virginia Tech Marion duPont Scott Equine Medical Center, Morven Park’s “Columns & Carriages Tour” and cross-country and hunt demonstrations. The second option features the Virginia Tech MARE Center, National Sporting Library & Museum, and time in Middleburg, Virginia, the “Equestrians’ Shopping Paradise.”

Saturday and Sunday programs will include seminars by industry experts geared toward three tracks: professionals, adult leaders, and student leaders. There will also be horsemanship skills demonstrations. The curriculum is not breed-specific, and materials are intended for immediate practical application “from the book to the barn.”

Saturday evening will bring the AYHC annual meeting and the highly anticipated AYHC Awards Banquet, during which AYHC honors adult and student leaders

as well as recognizing one exceptional organization for outstanding service to the youth horse industry.

The Symposium could not present such a rich array of offerings without the generous help of sponsors. The 2012 event is being sponsored by Equus, Virginia Horse Industry Board, Farm Credit, AAEP Foundation, Animal Welfare Council, University of Louisville Equine Industry Program, American Quarter Horse Youth Association, Horse Coupon Book, Junior Master Horsemen, Virginia Horse Council, Penn State Horse Development Committee and American Junior Paint Horse Association.

Everyone interested in the youth horse industry is welcome to attend the Symposium; AYHC members are eligible for discounts and there is an early bird discount. For more information about the Symposium, and to download a registration form, visit www.ayhc.com or call (719) 547-7677.



Horse Judging

VT Horse Judging Teams Experience the All American Quarter Horse Congress

By Julia McCann

The Hokies fielded not one, but TWO teams this fall to compete at the Congress horse judging contest in Columbus, OH in October. To prepare for the contest, eight students traveled to the Culpeper Quarter Horse Show as well as the Futurity Quarter Horse Show in Raleigh, NC. With coach **Dr. Julia McCann** and the support of several industry leaders like **Steve Meadows, Kyle Hughes, and Ron Stratton**, the team learned the judging standards for a wide variety of classes as they prepared for this very competitive contest with teams from across the country. The contest included four halter classes and eight performance classes including hunter hack, western pleasure, hunt seat equitation, horsemanship, hunter under saddle, western riding, trail, and reining. In the end, the Hokies placed 9th and 10th in halter and 10th and 12th overall.

Every team takes on its own “personality” to some degree and from the coach’s perspective, it seems this group embodies the TEAM mentality to the fullest. They became the best of friends and have shared in so many experiences since last spring (including van decorating...and the removal of van decorations!), there is no doubt the experience will be a treasured memory of their college years.

Participating this fall included: **Ali Chisholm** of Frederick, MD, **Liz Feuerstein** of Richmond, VA, **Maggie Gregg** of Virginia Beach, VA, **Dakota Jones** of Powhatan, VA, **Brooke Lampert** of Chesapeake, VA, **Kate O’Laughlin** of Forest Hill,

MD, **Kat Slaughter** of Lexington, NC, and **Courtney Walski** of Chesapeake, VA.

Also interesting to note are the three members that attended the NC Open Horse Show Judge’s Clinic in November and earned the recognition and approval for judging several divisions of open shows next year! Kudos to Brooke, Kat and Courtney for this distinct honor as they begin working towards a breed judging card one day!

In cooperation with the Block and Bridle Club, the Horse Judging Team members helped educate the nearly 200 participants in the youth horse judging clinic held on November 5. With 4-H and FFA members divided among experience levels, the students taught several sections on conformation, equitation and pleasure prior to helping present some practice classes after lunch. Insight into the skill and art of giving reasons was also a major focal point for the students in hopes more youth have a positive approach to this requirement in competition!



(l-r) Ali Chisholm, Maggie Gregg, Courtney Walski, Brooke Lampert, Kat Slaughter, Liz Feuerstein, Kate O’Laughlin, and Dakota Jones

Horse Judging, continued

Virginia 4-H Horse Program Excels in 2011

By Celeste Crisman

The 2011 Virginia State 4-H Horse Judging team proved that hard work and determination pay off! This year's team members were **Julia Wenger** of Albemarle County, **Hannah McDonald** of Frederick County, **Rachel Dominguez** of Warren County, **Michaela Yowaiski** of Warren County, **Emily Reasor** of Wythe County, **Delaney O'Donnell** of Orange County, **Megan Wilson-Bost** of Gloucester County and **Alisha Hudson** of Giles County.

The Team began their competition year at the American Quarter Horse Youth Association World Show in Oklahoma City, OK. We had a fun and exciting trip that included much work and practice but also some time for fun, shopping and playing!!! Results of the contest are as follows: Hannah McDonald was 10th individual in Performance and 8th High Individual Overall. Virginia Team A was 2nd in Performance, 4th in Reasons and 7th Overall. Virginia Team B was 16th Overall. With 35 teams competing (136 individuals) this is a very tough contest where generally, the western state teams dominate.

Our next two contests were Quarter Horse Congress and Arabian Nationals! At QH Congress, we had only two team members compete due to school obligations – Hannah McDonald and Delaney O'Donnell. Hannah received a 10th place ribbon in reasons with Delaney not too far behind and Overall they ended up placing 18th (Delaney) and 20th (Hannah). This is a great accomplishment in a very difficult and long contest – 12 classes and 49 competitors in their division!

A week later, **Yvonne Miller** and I took seven team members to Arab Nationals in Tulsa, OK. Those competing were Hannah McDonald, Delaney O'Donnell, Julia Wenger, Michaela Yowaiski on Team A and Rachel Dominguez, Emily Rea-

sor and Alisha Hudson on Team B. We had a great week of hard work with some fun spaced in between. At the Awards Banquet – once again – Virginia dominated the 4-H/FFA Division. Team A was 1st in Halter, Performance, Reasons and Overall!!!! Team B was 3rd in Halter, 8th in Performance, 7th in Reasons and 6th Overall (with just a three-person team!!).

Individually for Halter – Delaney was 1st, Rachel was 3rd, Julia was 6th and Alisha was 10th; for Performance – Delaney was 1st, Hannah was 4th and Michaela was 10th; for Reasons – Delaney was 1st, Julia was 3rd, Rachel was 5th, Hannah was 7th. By now you have probably figured out Overall – Delaney O'Donnell swept the division winning 1st Place High Individual Overall by 15 points, Hannah McDonald was 6th Place Overall, Julia Wenger was 8th Place Overall, Michaela Yowaiski was just out of the ribbons by one point at 11th; Rachel Dominguez was 13th; Emily Reasor was 19th and Alisha Hudson was 26th! Out of 46 contestants!!

Everyone came home with ribbons galore, scholarship monies, various prizes and a big and beautiful Arabian Horse Trophy that garnered many comments in the airports between Tulsa and Roanoke.

To top off the Arabian contest – not only did Delaney win High Individual for the 4-H/FFA Division but she beat the Arabian Horse Division and the Collegiate Division individuals!!! Delaney won a custom saddle, headstall, \$1,000 in scholarships and new for this year – the High Individual of the entire contest received the honor of judging on Saturday night down on the floor with the official judges for one class – what an honor.

The best part of the week for me was the example set by Delaney's teammates! Saturday night is formal night and of course we packed no formal attire, so Delaney was going to wear her judging outfit – but no – her teammates had other plans!! They would not let Yvonne and I

Horse Judging, continued

see their masterpiece (which worried us a little – you know teenage girls – but not these guys)..... Hannah did hair curling and makeup – Julia lent the black dress, Michaela and Rachel styled the hair, Alisha and Emily helped with final preps and encouragement and out came the Belle of the Ball – all she lacked were slippers appropriate for sawdust floor and a sweater jacket – which by the way – Yvonne and I captured in a 10-minute Wal-Mart mad dash!!

All team members were introduced on the floor, Delaney was presented her saddle and stayed on the floor to judge Arabian Native Costume class and yes – she looked just as professional and knowledgeable as anyone out there! And her teammates were in the stands cheering her on the entire time – it was magical!

One of the greatest compliments the team received was from an email sent from a lady on one of the airplanes with us on our return trip from Tulsa. She sent this email to a Virginia County agent and it eventually found its way back to me: *“Sunday 10-30-11 I had the pleasure of flying from Tulsa to Atlanta with the Virginia 4-H Horse Judging team and their trophy! As a ‘horse person’ I was not only very proud for them, but as a 69-year-old lady I was most impressed with their polite and respectful demeanor. We need more young women of this caliber. The 4-H horse program and the FFA programs need our support, thank you for providing the right kind of guidance*

and role models for these young people. Our livestock industry and rural America needs all the support we can provide.”

Our last competition for the year was Eastern Nationals 4-H Horse Round-Up in Louisville, KY. Three senior team members competed as this competition ends their 4-H Horse Judging eligibility. Individually - Julia Wenger was 7th in Halter, 5th in Performance, 2nd in Reasons and 5th High Individual Overall; Hannah McDonald was 12th in Halter, 1st in Performance, 1st in Reasons and 2nd High Individual Overall (missing first by only 1 POINT); Megan Wilson-Bost was 13th in Halter, 14th in Performance, 12th in Reasons and 11th Overall.

The Team was 3rd in Halter, 1st in Performance, 1st in Reasons and 2nd High Team Overall. They accomplished all of this with only a three-person team – which means no dropped score so all three team members had to be at the top of their game!! AMAZING!

I am extremely proud of this group of girls – not only were they focused and willing to work – they were fun, polite, considerate of each other and are great 4-H ambassadors for the State of Virginia.

Coaches for the 2011 State Horse Judging team were **Celeste Crisman**, **Richard Toms** (QH) and **Yvonne Miller** (Arabians).



Delaney O'Donnell judging Native Costume Class on center floor (photo credit: Katie Hite).



Team members (l-r) coach Celeste Crisman, Emily Reasor, Alisha Hudson, Hannah McDonald, Delaney O'Donnell, Julia Wenger, Rachel Dominguez, Michaela Yowaiski and co-coach Yvonne Miller.

Dates to Remember in 2011

January 17.....	Spring 2012 classes begin
March 3-11.....	Spring Break
March 20-27.....	Course request for Fall 2012 courses
May 2.....	Classes end for Spring 2012
May 4-9.....	Final Exams for Spring 2012
May 12.....	Spring Commencement
May 21.....	First Summer Session classes begin
May 28.....	Memorial Day – no classes
June 28.....	Classes end for First Summer 2012
June 29-30.....	Final Exams for First Summer 2012

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