

# Department of Horticulture

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



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

## September 2010

The end of September finds us with those cool Blacksburg mornings and the first hints of fall color. The first exams are over and everyone is settling into the fall semester. Our Fall Career Focus is the first week of October, and students will be meeting prospective employees and arranging for summer internships. Despite the down economy, our students are finding good jobs. This is a testament to the excellent reputation that previous students have built with our horticulture industry. This month's e-mail update features our Hardscape class. As always, we would love to hear updates on our alumni and other friends. Alumni - stay connected with VT on [YouTube](http://www.youtube.com) and visit the [Horticulture](http://www.hort.vt.edu) Department web site often for special department features. Enjoy! With kind regards, *Roger*

**Joyce Latimer** presented a paper at the International Society of Horticulture's Second International Symposium on the *Genus Lilium* in Pescia Italy. The meeting included tours of the flower market, potted citrus production, a gerbera cut flower operation and the Tuscany countryside.

**Greg Welbaum** attended the International Society of Horticulture conference in Lisbon where he organized and led a workshop on the *Molecular Profiling of Microbial Communities Associated with Seeds*.

**Joyce Latimer** presented two talks at the Ohio Floriculture Association's Disease, Insect and Plant Growth Management Conference in St. Louis. She covered both chemical and non-chemical height control methods for greenhouse and nursery crops.

**Bin Xu** and his wife Yan are the proud parents of a new baby girl, Rebecca. Bin Xu is a Ph.D. student working with Bingyu Zhao. Congratulations Bin and Yan!

### Hahn Horticulture Garden - upcoming events

**Bulbs as Companion Plants with Brent Heath of Brent & Becky's Bulbs**

**Friday, October 29, 2010 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.** After seeing and experiencing this seminar, you'll leave with information and inspiration to produce a garden that you, your neighbors and friends will enjoy all year. \$20 general public/\$15 Friends of the Garden. Location TBD

**Living Flower Arrangements with Layers of Bulbs** - Workshop with Brent Heath of Brent & Becky's Bulbs Saturday, October 30, 2010 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

This lecture should expand our gardening palette and give us more hours of garden pleasure, an additional season and flowers in additional areas, and you'll leave with a planted container, ready to provide a living flower arrangement in the spring! Fee includes bulbs, planting media, and pot. \$40 general public/\$30 Friends of the Garden members  
**Space is limited to 25 participants** Meet at the Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion

### Recent grants and publications

**Eric Beers** received a \$75,000 grant from the Center for Lignocellulose Structure and Formation (CLSF). CLSF is a DOE Energy Frontiers Research Center focused on developing a detailed understanding of lignocellulose.

**Jerzy Nowak, Chuangsheng Mei, Barry Flinn** and John Seiler recently were awarded a DOE/USDA grant for *A Low Input Switchgrass Production System Utilizing Beneficial Bacterial Endophytes* for \$735, 000.

**Alex Niemiera** was recently awarded a \$30,000 grant from the USDA for the proposal *Beautiful Gardens Plant Breeder Workshop - Development and Application*.

**Susan Day, Eric Wiseman, Sarah Dickinson, and Roger Harris.** 2010. Tree root ecology in the urban environment and implications for a sustainable rhizosphere. *Arboriculture and Urban Forestry* 36(5): 193-205.

The Hardscape Materials and Installation course (HORT 3364) is in full swing this semester. For the last four years the course has been taught by Nathaniel Haile (VT - LAR) and Nathan Zigler of Haile Landscape Design; **Alex Niemiera** coordinates the course. For the last two years the course has been conducted at Blacksburg residences. Students learn all phases of hardscape materials and installation and get hands-on experience in creating a professional grade hardscape project. This year's project includes a patio, seating wall, fire pit, water garden, arbor, and porch swing. The project is funded by the home owner (at about half of the market price) and Mr. Haile donates his and Nathan Zigler's time to Horticulture Department.



Nathaniel instructs on the use of a transit



Students installing posts for the arbor