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School of Forestry

Dear Alumni & Friends

*M*any good things have happened here at the School of Forestry since the last issue of Forest Seasons was mailed in February. It is therefore a pleasure to once again share some of the latest news with you.

While most of the news from Flagstaff is good, it is with sadness that I report that David Patton retired at the end of June. David's career at NAU began in 1986, included serving as the Dean of the College of Ecosystem Science and Management from 1995-1999, and culminated with his return to NAU to serve over the last three years as both as the Executive Director of the School of Forestry and the Dean of the Consortium of Professional Schools. Much of the School of Forestry's recent progress can be attributed to David's highly effective leadership. We could easily fill this entire newsletter with the many contributions David has made to the School of Forestry, to NAU as a whole, and to his profession. Fortunately, David will resume his Professor Emeritus status and continue to work on projects of interest to us, including a new wildlife ecology textbook.

Many of you have heard about the reorganization underway here at NAU that involves the dissolution of the Consortium of Professional Schools, of which the School of Forestry was a part. As a result of this, the School of Forestry will be reporting directly to the Office of the Provost until a more permanent arrangement is decided upon. While this will involve a period of uncertainty, I also look at it as a great opportunity for the School and I am confident that we will continue to thrive.

One reason for my confidence in the future of the School of Forestry is that it has fared so well for so long, despite going through several other organizational transitions. In fact, the School of Forestry is about to turn 50! The School of Forestry (then the Department of Forestry) was initiated during the Fall of 1958. We are already busy planning a number of activities to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the School. These will begin during Honors Week in April, 2008 and continue through the Fall 2008 semester. Among other things, we are looking for photos and alumni recollections of their experiences as students here, some of which may be used in a book on the School's history to be written by Professor Emeritus Ernie Kurmes. Please consider this a first request for such contributions, which we would be grateful to receive from you at any time, but the sooner the better! Suggestions for ways to celebrate our 50th anniversary are also welcome and can be sent directly to me by email (James.Allen@nau.edu) or at the address listed on the back of this newsletter. Also, if you would like to be personally involved in our celebrations, please let me know.

Jim Allen, Interim Executive Director, School of Forestry

SEPTEMBER 2007

Forest Seasons

2007 Honors Convocation a Big Success

After an enjoyable dinner in our atrium, approximately 150 people filed into the School of Forestry's auditorium on the evening of April 20th to honor a total of 37 scholarship recipients. In addition to honoring the students for their outstanding academic achievements and leadership, we were able to show our appreciation to a number of the scholarship donors, as well as to recognize faculty members, our Alumnus of the Year, Dr. Gerald Tuskan (B.S.F., 1978), and our Alumnus Volunteer of the Year, Mr. John Stephenson (B.S.F., 1963) for their accomplishments. More than \$43,000 in scholarships was awarded over the course of the evening,



The recipients of the Kay R. and Irene S. Hafen Scholarships this year were from (left) Ben De Blois, Chris Sorensen, Afton McKusick, Chris Olson, Peter Evtimov, Ben Sullivan and Karen Weber (not pictured). The awards were presented by David Patton (far right).

which is a record amount and a great indication of the support for the School of Forestry by its alumni and other benefactors.

While the recipients of most awards are selected by the faculty or the scholarship donors, the students of Xi Sigma Pi, the national Forestry Honor Society, recognized J.J. Smith as their Teacher of the Year, and prepared a special tribute to David Patton.



Alumnus of the Year Dr. Gerald Tuskan (right) receiving his award from Interim Executive Director Jim Allen.

We were all very pleased to have Dr. Tuskan back in town. He has gone on to have a very distinguished career as a research scientist at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and as a faculty member of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Among his many accomplishments, he recently led a multi-national team of scientists who sequenced the entire genome of black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*) – the first time this has ever been accomplished for a tree species. In addition to his participation in the Convocation, he presented a seminar on his research and met with a number of faculty and students.

New SOF Faculty

The SOF welcomed two new faculty members this Fall, including:

Dr. Ching-Hsun Huang: Dr. Huang joined the faculty as an Assistant Professor of Forest Management and Economics. Her educational background includes a B.S in Forestry from the Chinese Culture University, in Taipei, Taiwan, an M.S. in Environmental Management from the University of Houston - Clear Lake, and a Ph.D. in Forest Economics from Stephen F. Austin State University. Most recently, Dr. Huang was an Assistant Professor of Natural Resources Economics at Texas A&M University -Kingsville. We were able to entice her away from Kingsville with the promise of seeing trees again!

Dr Molly Hunter: Dr. Hunter is filling a new position, entitled Assistant Clinical Professor of Wildland Fire Science. This non-tenure track, Distance Learning-funded

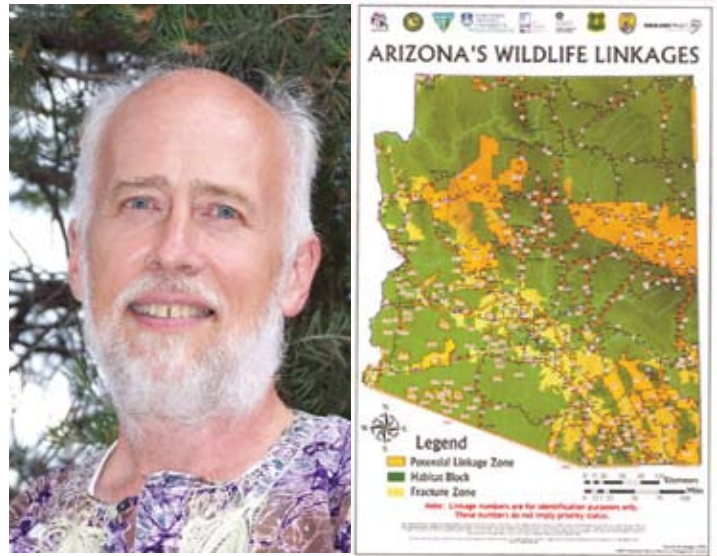
position was created primarily to fill a need for continuing education of Federal wildland fire management personnel, but Dr. Hunter will also be teaching courses in support of the new undergraduate focus area in Wildland Fire. Dr. Hunter has a B.S. in Plant Biology from University of California at Davis and a Ph.D. in Forest Science from Colorado State University. She has taught at both Colorado State University and at the University of Nevada - Las Vegas.

Faculty Transitions

Three faculty members received good news this past spring, including Drs. Carol Chambers and Robert Mathiasen, who were promoted to Full Professor and Dr. Stephen Dewhurst, who was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor. On a sadder note (for us), Dr. Peter "P.J." Daugherty left the School of Forestry last December to become the Director of the Private Forests Program with the Oregon Department of Forestry.

Professor Wins Environmental Excellence Award

Dr. Paul Beier, Professor of Conservation Biology and Wildlife Ecology, was part of a team selected for a 2007 Environmental Excellence Award by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA). Dr. Beier and the rest of the team, which included 13 individuals from 9 different organizations, were honored for their work on the Arizona Wildlife Linkages Assessment. This assessment identifies large blocks of protected habitat, the potential wildlife movement corridors between them, and the factors that could possibly disrupt these linkage zones. Among other things, this project was lauded by the FHA director for its unprecedented interagency cooperation and for its promise of improving both transportation efficiency and safety while also improving wildlife habitat protection.



Three Graduate Students Receive ARCS Scholarships



Ph.D. students Daniel Laughlin, Valerie Kurth, and Liz Kalies (shown left to right) each received \$7,000 scholarships from the ARCS (Academic Rewards for College Scientists) Foundation's Phoenix Chapter. The ARCS Foundation invests in America's future by providing scholarships to academically talented students majoring in the fields of Natural Science, Medicine, and Engineering. Daniel, Valerie and Liz each presented a poster on their research at the awards ceremony, which was held in Phoenix on April 20th.

Graduate Student Selected for Memorial Scholarship

Monica Gaylord, a Ph.D. student working with faculty members Mike Wagner and Rich Hofstetter, was selected as the 2007 Memorial Scholarship recipient at the Western Forest Insect Work Conference (WFIWC), which was held this past March in Boise, Idaho. This award is presented to the top graduate student studying forest insects in the western U.S. As part of this award, Monica will be given the opportunity to deliver a special presentation on her research at the 2008 WFIWC meeting in Colorado.



HOLY BAT DOGS! The Batty Adventures of Carol Chambers and Company



Photo by Michael Durham

Carol Chambers, Professor of Wildlife Ecology here in the School of Forestry, describes one of her current research projects as “getting paid to take dogs for walks in the woods.” Although this sounds flippant, and everyone involved (including the dogs!) seems to be enjoying themselves, this project actually has far-reaching implications for wildlife conservation.

C.J. and Bruiser are rescued chocolate labs that have been specially trained to search for signs of wildlife. Between the two of them, they know how to find the spoor of bobcats, bears, mountain lions and, for this project, bats. Says Liz Mering, Chambers’ research assistant and dog handler, “Their job is to find bat guano, and all we have to pay them is play time with a tennis ball. They enjoy their work and they really love the tennis ball.”

“Some species of bats help to control insect populations, and some are important pollinators,” says Chambers. “Many species roost in snags, so silvicultural treatments can have enormous short and long term impacts. We don’t really know that much about any bat species, because they are so hard to find or catch. We don’t know if the populations of many species are stable or threatened. We don’t even know if some species migrate to warmer areas or hibernate during the winter.” This project was designed to test the ability of detector dogs to locate bat roosting sites. If it works, this innovative technique could be of enormous benefit to wildlife researchers and managers in studying these mysterious creatures.

Chambers and her graduate students are currently conducting several research projects on bats: Shelly Johnson is looking at how bats react to silvicultural treatments in the Wildland-Urban Interface, with possible ramifications for bat-human interactions and health; Ben Solvesky is tracking down roost sites of the rare Allen’s lappet-browed bat, which is a Sensitive Species for the Forest Service and BLM; and the “bat dog” study uses roost sites from both of these studies. “I try to tie in projects as much as possible. This allows us to share information and resources so that we can get the most bang for our buck,” Chambers said.



Photo by Michael Durham

Liz Mering on the prowl for bat roosts with the aid of one of her two specially trained chocolate labs.



Photo by Michael Durham

SUCCESS!

This snag was found to have a bat roost.

Chambers has students studying other kinds of wildlife as well. Prabin Joshi is describing winter roost sites of bald eagles in northern Arizona, and Mary Zylo is looking at the effects of burn severity on foraging birds. Suzanne Hagell will determine if forest fragmentation in Nicaragua affects population genetics of spider monkeys. Many of Chambers’ previous students work on a variety of issues for federal, state and private land management agencies, or continue their studies in academia. Some have stayed here in Arizona and others have dispersed across the continent. For instance, Mike Rabe is the Migratory Game Bird Supervisor for the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Shaula Hedwall is a biologist with Fish and Wildlife Service, and Andy Miller is cataloging indigenous knowledge about wildlife in northern Canada for his PhD. Chambers commented, “Nearly all my former students have remained in the field of wildlife management.”

The School of Forestry is known mostly for its work on trees, but, as Carol Chambers and her students (and dogs) demonstrate, the study of forest wildlife is also strongly represented.

Carol Chambers (wearing sunglasses) frequently has the opportunity to bring the knowledge she gains through research directly to our undergraduate students, such as this scene from a “Semester B” field trip.



SOF Alum in Malaysia Visited by Faculty Member and Graduate Student

What do the wet, tropical, and bewilderingly complex forests of Borneo have in common with the dry, ponderosa forests of Flagstaff? Very little! But that didn't stop Dr. Robert Ong (B.S.F., 1988), who grew up in the Malaysian part of the island of Borneo, from enrolling in NAU's School of Forestry. Dr. Ong, now the Program Leader for Natural Forest Management in Malaysia's Sabah Forestry Department, oversees the management planning for vast tracts of natural forest that, among other things, serves as habitat for endangered orangutans.

After leaving NAU - and a summer position with the Flagstaff Arboretum - Ong pursued a Masters degree at Virginia Tech before returning to Malaysia. Since returning, Ong has climbed the ranks within the state Forestry Department while also earning a doctorate from the University of Aberdeen in Scotland.

Recently, Dr. Ong has been responsible for planning and developing the Rainforest Discovery Center in Sepilok, Malaysia. The Center is a major educational and interpretive facility that focuses on the ecology and management of



Alex Finkral, Liz Kalies and Robert Ong at the Rainforest Discovery Center in Sepilok, Malaysia.

the region's ecosystems. The center will be used by local school groups and, because it is located only one kilometer from a major orangutan rehabilitation center, the Center will attract tourists and scientists from all over the world. SOF faculty member Alex Finkral and graduate student Liz Kalies had the opportunity to meet Robert and visit the Rainforest Discovery Center in May. Dr. Finkral and Liz both remarked about how grateful they were to Dr. Ong, who gave them the opportunity to see and learn much more than they would have by touring the area on their own.

SOF Faculty Members Lead Trip to Panama

This year's spring semester featured a new course offering: Sustainable Forestry in Tropical Ecosystems - Panama. The three-credit course included a full semester of lectures on tropical forestry and a one week field trip to Panama during the spring break recess. This interdisciplinary course was concerned with the ecology and management of biologically diverse forested - and deforested - ecosystems in the country of Panama. Students undertook case studies in ecological, political, cultural, and economic issues related to Panamanian ecosystems and the people within them.

In the predawn darkness of March 16th, 15 undergraduate and graduate students, along with two SOF faculty members, Alex Finkral and Mike Wagner, departed from campus destined for Panama City, Panama. This country may be best known for its famous canal, but among tropical ecologists and foresters, Panama is renowned as a fantastic landscape of diverse ecosystems, rich in tropical flora and fauna. Barro Colorado Island (BCI), for example, is among the oldest and

best-known tropical forest research sites in the world.

The group traveled from Panama City through the moist lowland forests of the Panama Canal Watershed - including an overnight stay at BCI; to the mangrove-lined coast near the city of Colón; on to the semi-deciduous forests and pastureland of the Azuero Peninsula in southern Panama; and finally to the Pacific coast for some sand and sunshine before returning to chilly Flagstaff. Highlights of the trip included howler monkeys, some 'grande' trees, and a ride through rolling hills in a small cattle truck.

Peace Corps Master's International Program Approved

The School of Forestry's efforts to internationalize its program took a big step forward recently with the approval of its proposal for a new Peace Corps Master's International (PCMI) program in forestry. Prospective PCMI students apply simultaneously to both the Peace Corps and the participating graduate schools. If accepted by both, they complete up to two years of graduate course work at the university, followed by two years of Peace Corps service, which also serves as the basis for a project that will be used to write the professional paper required to complete the M.S. degree. The SOF proposal - one of only four selected nationwide this year - was developed by Mike Wagner with assistance from Pete Fulé and Jim Allen. All three of these faculty members are Returned Peace Corps Volunteers.



The faculty and students on the trip to Panama took some time to admire this 'grande' tree

News from the Centennial Forest



After helping guide the development of Centennial Forest (CF) programs and facilities for the last seven years, Mike Wagner stepped down as the CF director at the end of June. He has left a legacy that includes good progress in the development of a Field Campus, nearly 1,500 thinned and restored acres near the edge of Flagstaff, and increased use of the CF by researchers and summer campers. All of us in the SOF greatly appreciate Dr. Wagner's time and effort spent on behalf of the Centennial Forest.

One exciting development is the recent completion of the new ramada on the site of the CF Field Campus. The frame of the ramada was built using traditional log construction techniques and wood from thinning projects that took place right on the property. Additional work on the ramada was done by CF staff and volunteers, including senior Forestry student Craig Bowman's father Robert, brother Justin, and family friend Ron Buttram. The result, as can be seen in the accompanying photo, is beautiful! The ramada could not have been built without the generous financial support of the entire SOF community, including alumni, current students, faculty, staff and friends.

Other facilities-related progress includes the completion of a ½-mile nature trail, which was constructed by the SOF's

Alan Kaufmann and a group of European students enrolled in the American Conservation Experience program based here in Flagstaff. Also, an agreement was signed with the City of Flagstaff that will allow for an improved water supply system for the Field Campus.

The new facilities were put to immediate use this summer, which included a busy season of environmental education programs. CF staff conducted a total of four week-long programs, including two Junior Forester Academies, one Senior Forester Academy, and an Outdoor Leadership Program. This is the fourth year for these programs, which were developed and are still run by the CF's Cheryl Miller, with the help of other CF staff and several NAU students who are hired as counselors. A five-minute segment of Inside NAU's TV program was devoted to the first Junior Forester Academy and can be viewed by going to www.tv.nau.edu/insidenau/ and then looking up Segment 1 ("Jr. Forester Academy") in Episode 115.



Junior Forester Academy campers learn a variety of forestry skills, including how to use a compass and navigate through the woods.

ERI and the Statewide Strategy for Restoring Arizona's Forests

Comprehensive forest restoration throughout Arizona is one step closer to reality, thanks in part to faculty and staff from the Ecological Restoration Institute (ERI). On June 21st, the co-chairs of the Governor's Forest Health Oversight and Advisory Councils presented Governor Janet Napolitano with a document entitled, "The Statewide Strategy for Restoring Arizona's Forests." This visionary document identifies the recommendations and actions needed to significantly improve forest health in the state during the next 20 years.

The document is a product of a subcommittee of the two

Forest Health Councils. Dr. Wally Covington, director of the ERI and professor in the School of Forestry, is co-chair of the Advisory Council (science advisors) and Diane Vosick, associate director of the ERI, is co-chair of the Oversight Council (policy group). This year-and-a-half effort was made possible by leveraged state and federal funding provided by the ERI with additional contributions from the Grand Canyon Trust and Arizona Public Service.

The complete document and executive summary can be found at www.azforests.org.

Alumni Notes

Bob Casey, B.S.F., 1968

Over the course of his career with the USDA Forest Service, Bob served as District Ranger on four districts and in three regions. He received his first District Ranger appointment because he was the only applicant who could saddle his own horse! Bob received a Region 1 award for developing an innovative accident prevention system entitled L.F.T.A. He also managed his own ranch, where he produced cattle and hay. Twenty-six years ago, he began the Hells Canyon Mule Days, which has since become a major annual event in Enterprise, Oregon. Bob also founded the Wallowa/Union Railroad, which consists of three locomotives and several passenger cars. The railroad, which was saved from salvage by Bob and Union/Wallowa counties with the help of a Federal community development grant, is a working operation that hauls freight and passengers. Bob serves as a conductor for the railroad and his wife Jan as a hostess. Their daughter Meg is a senior at New Mexico State.

Steven J. Herzog, B.S.F., 1973

Steve completed an M.S. in Forestry at Oregon State University in 1984 and also became a licensed professional forester in California. He has spent most of his career doing real estate appraisal work on lands with natural resources such as timber. He was the appraiser that the Federal Government and the State of California governments used for the high profile case in which they acquired the Headwaters property from Pacific Lumber (old growth redwood in Northern California). After working in California and in private industry for most of the last 20 years, Steve recently accepted a review appraiser position with the Department of Interior in Portland, Oregon. Steve is married and has two children – the youngest just graduated from high school.

Cliff Liedtke, B.S.F., 1976

Cliff is the Eastern Oregon Area Director for the Oregon Department of Forestry. During the Spring 2007 semester, Cliff was able to spend several days with us here at the School of Forestry, interviewing students for intern positions with the ODF – a visit we very much appreciated! Cliff lives in Redmond, Oregon with his wife Shirley and sons Emil and Randy.

Victoria (Piña) Yazzie, B.S.F., 1982, M.S.F., 1998

In addition to her two degrees from NAU, Victoria also completed a Ph.D. in Forestry at the University of Montana in 2005. After working for the past year at the Ecological Restoration Institute until this past June, Victoria accepted a faculty position with the College of the Menominee Nation in Keshena, Wisconsin. Among other things, Victoria will be helping the CMN to develop its own accredited B.S. degree program in Forestry, which would be the first such program at a tribal college in the nation.

James Youtz, B.S.F., 1983

Jim is the Regional Silviculturalist with the USDA Forest Service Southwestern Regional Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico. His job allows him to visit and work with all eleven National Forests in Arizona and New Mexico. He is currently working on implementation standards for forest restoration projects, using uneven-aged silvicultural systems. He lives in Edgewood, New Mexico with his wife Cindy and sons Joseph (12) and Matt (9). He is a member of the Southwestern Society of American Foresters.

Aaron Wilkerson, B.S.F., 2003

Aaron is a forester for the Bureau of Land Management. He works in their Arizona Strip District and is based in St. George, Utah. We are proud to report that Aaron is the 2007 recipient of the Young Forester of the Year award, which was presented by the Southwest Section of the Society of American Foresters at their annual meeting this past April in Tusayan, AZ.

Kelly Washburn, B.S.F., 2006

Kelly is a co-owner of Wild Rivers Expeditions (www.riversandruins.com), a company that runs expeditions on the San Juan River focusing on environmental education. She is celebrating her third year of ownership and says that business is great. Kelly is also currently working on several tamarisk removal projects in the San Juan River Corridor. In addition, she is helping to write a community fire plan for the town of Bluff, UT, where she lives. She recently wrote to tell us that "I'm truly enjoying educating others on the archeology, geology and riparian ecology of the San Juan River and Colorado Plateau. However, I have to admit I miss the Ponderosa Pines!"



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Then and Now

Our recently retired Executive Director and Dean, David Patton (left), with one of his research subjects, an Abert squirrel, in May 1974. At the Honors Convocation this past April, our students showed their appreciation to David for his many contributions to the School of Forestry and for his positive impact on generations of forestry students (right).



Forest Seasons is a newsletter for Northern Arizona University School of Forestry alumni and friends. We welcome your feedback on the newsletter and encourage you to stay in touch. Feel free to call us at: 928-523-3031
School of Forestry website : www.for.nau.edu
Centennial Forest website: www.for.nau.edu/CentennialForest/
Ecological Restoration Institute website: www.eri.nau.edu/cms/

