Greetings everyone! January is always an interesting month around campus and this past one was no exception. Most of us eased into 2016 with a nice window of time before classes started on the 18th. Two faculty members, however, took this opportunity to offer classes in the recently created “wintermester”, a period where students can take a class over the semester break. Alex Niemiera taught an on-line version of Hort 2184, *Plants Places Culture Globally*, and Holly Scoggins taught a condensed version of Hort 4324, *Greenhouse Management*. Wintermester gives students a chance to catch up on their course requirements and helps them graduate on time. Several faculty and staff attended the Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show in Baltimore January 6-8 and also attended the Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association’s annual membership meeting. Business is booming and everyone needs plants! Snow finally arrived in Virginia and Blacksburg got 12-18 inches out of it. A mega snowball fight on the drill field is a long VT tradition when that first significant snow falls (see picture on the following page of this year’s action). The opening of spring semester finally did arrive and thoughts of spring flowers are already beginning to surface. Have you ordered your Valentine roses yet? Our Horticulture club can come to the rescue! They do a fabulous job and the roses are always of exceptional quality at a very reasonable price. I hope that you enjoy this edition of our monthly e-newsletter. Please pass it on! —Roger

**Alumni News**

VT Horticulture Alumni (MS 1999), **Joel Koci**, was recently awarded the 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award by the Mid Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). He received the award based on his involvement with the ISA annual chapter meeting in Annapolis, as well as for organizing the ISA Day of Safety at VSU, hosting the test for Tree Worker Certification at VSU and for his work in getting VSU the prestigious Tree Campus USA designation. Congratulations, Joel!

Horticulture Hops Program update:

- Construction of our trials and research hop yard is complete. Yard construction was funded by the Virginia Agricultural Council. Located at the Urban Horticulture Center, the performance trials portion of the 0.75 acre yard is planted with 12 varieties of hops. The remainder of the yard will be planted in the spring with a study on nitrogen rate effects on hop plant establishment (funded by a USDA Specialty Crops Block Grant in partnership with VSU).

- We have a new Facebook page - https://www.facebook.com/HopsVT/ - created and maintained by Holly and Laura Siegle, Amelia County ANR Agent.

- For more information on growing hops in Virginia, visit our VCE site - chock full of helpful fact sheets, presentations, and upcoming events - http://www.ext.vt.edu/topics/agriculture/commercial-horticulture/hops/index.html

Publications


Jayesh B. Samtani, James E. Appleby and John B. Masiunas (2015) Comparative Leaf Phenology of White Oak and Northern Red Oak Horticulturae, 1, 44-54; doi:10.3390/horticulturae1010044


This publication that represents our copy number variation project in potato. We compared the genomic sequences of a set of 12 monoploid lines to learn that nearly 30% of the genes were subject to partial or complete duplication or deletion. Similar variation in humans has been linked to numerous genetic disorders ranging from Parkinson’s disease to schizophrenia. We are just learning about the effects on plants.

Students enjoying their snowday on the drillfield
Graduate Student News

Candace DeLong in successfully passed her Master’s defense. She will be wrapping up her work at the AREC over the next couple of weeks and will soon start working as the horticultural manager at Fruit Hill Orchards in Winchester, one of the top 15 largest apple operations in the US.

Graduate student Francisco Javier de la Mota Daniel received Virginia Urban Forest Council’s 2016 graduate scholarship for his dissertation work examining water and heat fluxes in tree planting systems that integrate pervious pavement.

Awards

Dave Close received the University Alumni Award for Excellence in Extension: Specialist Award for 2015! This is among the most prestigious awards given to faculty by Virginia Tech and its Alumni Association. His contributions to Extension during his career are truly exceptional and most deserving of this recognition by the University community. Congratulations, Dave!

Jeff Burr was named December’s CALS Employee of the Month! Jeff’s nominator praised his work ethic saying, “The recent blooming of the CALS corpse plant, Phil, was a huge success in terms of visitors, social media, and exposure for the college and a large part of the reason for this was Jeff Burr.

Though his job title is greenhouse manager, during Phil’s blooming cycle, he served as social media manager, botany interpreter, crowd-controller, and all around great ambassador for the college.

When he learned that Phil was going to bloom outside of his normal M-F, 8-4 hours, Jeff kept the greenhouse open late on Friday, then opened the doors on Saturday and Sunday when more than 1,000 people visited Phil....

Greenhouse Manager, Jeff Burr (2nd from the left) with his Employee of the Month Award.

Hahn Horticulture Garden Events

Learn at Lunch Series

Wednesdays, February 10 and 25, noon to 1pm in the Hahn Pavilion. Free!

Talks

Thursday, February 4, 7pm in Fralin Auditorium
Drug Discovery from Nature: What is a Chemist Doing in the Rainforest? With Dr. David Kingston
$10 General Public Admission, free to students, Friends of the Garden and Horticulture Faculty and Staff.

Thursday, February 25, 2016, 7:00 to 8:30 pm in Hahn Pavilion
Expanding Roles and Opportunities for University Gardens with George Briggs.
$5 for general public. Free for Friends of the Garden, Horticulture Department Faculty/Staff, and VT Students with ID

Satuday, April 9, 2016 10:00 – 11:30 a.m in Hahn Pavilion
Lavender 101 with Ellen Reynolds of Beagle Ridge Herb Farm
$5 Friends of the Garden members/$10 general public.

Saturday, April 9, 2016 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.in Hahn Pavilion
Cooking with Lavender with Ellen Reynolds of Beagle Ridge Herb Farm
$10 Friends of the Garden members/$15 general public (additional $5 discount if you attend both programs on lavender)

Learn more at: http://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/events.html
THE
HORTICULTURE CLUB
PRESENTS
OUR ANNUAL
ROSE SALE

There is no better way to show your sweetie how you feel than with roses!
Buying your Valentine’s day gift through the Horticulture Club will help to support a fellow student organization.

- Red and mixed color assortment roses are available
- Roses come with greenery and baby’s breath
- *On campus delivery available upon request for $3.00*
- Pickup will be located in Saunders Hall on February 12 & 13 from 12:00pm to 6:00pm
- Order by emailing rosesale@vt.edu

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<tr>
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<tr>
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