

June 2004

Special points of interest:

- Student Awards and Activities
- Scholarships
- Graduate Student News
- Faculty News
- Silver Taps

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Biological and Agricultural Engineering News

Student Awards Banquet a Great Success

As a part of the Parent's Weekend festivities, the annual Department Student Awards Banquet was held at Pebble Creek Country Club on Saturday, April 17. After a short reception, dinner was served.

We were honored to have Dr. Rick Rigsby start the night as our keynote speaker. In giving an inspirational address, Dr. Rigsby encouraged everyone to strive for excellence while standing firmly on the virtue of character

ASAE and AGSM Presidents, Marcy Melton and Ryan Batla presented the events of the ASAE and Ag Systems Management Club with a slide show before introducing the new officers. The slide show is on-line at

<http://rap.tamu.edu/2004BAENBanquet.htm>

New officers for ASAE for the 2004-'05 school year are John Lyons, President; Marisa Speer, Vice President; Aarin Teague, Secretary; Garrett Anderson, Treasurer; Ryan Hill, Philanthropy Chair; Andy

Wakeman and Mark Macek, Ag Council Reps; Craig Birkenfeld, SEC Rep; Josh Meuth and Kendra Johnson, National Reporter. Dr. Ron Lacey is the Senior Faculty advisor and Dr. Russell Persyn is the Junior Faculty advisor..

New officers for AGSM for the 2004-'05 school year are Ryan Batla, President; Shane Kuhlman, Vice-President; Matt Todd, Secretary; Ryan Holloway, Treasurer; Damon Miller, Historian; and Nathan Robertson and Charles Swanson Ag. Council Reps. Dr. Ann Kenimer is the Faculty advisor.



Dr. Rick Rigsby

Three BAEN Students Recognized at Student Research Week

Student Research Week is an annual event sponsored by the Graduate Student Council that showcases research occurring on the Texas A&M campus. In the 2004 competition over 300 students participated; three from our department were recognized.

Lindsay Birt-AGEN senior-1st place winner - \$200 - for her poster presentation of her research topic "Application of the ECLIPSE FloGrid Fault Property Calculator to a Simple Injector-Producer Pair."

Robert Hardin-MS student-1st place winner - \$200 - for his oral presentation of his research topic "Viscoelastic Properties of Seed Cotton and their Effect on Module Shape and Density."

Bakki Palanisamy-MS student-2nd place winner - \$100 - for her oral presentation of her research topic "Mapping Potential Recharge Zones Using NOAA-AVHRR Derived Vegetation Index and Spatially Distributed NEXRAD Rainfall for Texas."



**Gerald L. Riskowski,
Professor and Head**

"I want to thank you for interest in and support of the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at Texas A&M University and extend an open invitation for you to visit the department whenever you have the opportunity."



Have you seen these students? If so, you've seen the new BAEN web site. Visit us on-line at <http://baen.tamu.edu>

Howdy from the Department Head

It is my pleasure to offer greetings to former students and friends of the Biological & Agricultural Engineering Department at Texas A&M. We have many new and exciting happenings and welcome the opportunity to share them with you. The quality of our faculty and programs have again been recognized by the U.S. News and World Report. Our undergraduate engineering teaching program was ranked 2nd (tie) in the nation and the graduate programs was ranked 1st in the nation.

Student numbers have been holding fairly steady at around 370 (approximately 145 engineering undergraduates, 170 agricultural systems management undergraduates, 55 graduate students). Our students continue to be recognized for excellence and leadership.

Scholarships are a critical factor in

our ability to recruit and reward outstanding students. This year, scholarships and awards totaling \$32,000 were given. We are very grateful to our alumni and friends who have contributed to various scholarships funds in the department. If you are willing to establish a new scholarship endowment, or contribute to an existing one, we would love to hear from you.

We currently have 24 faculty and are in the process of hiring three more—one in cotton engineering, one in water engineering and one in biosecurity engineering. Two of these positions are part of the University-wide faculty reinvestment program. We are anticipating approval to hire one more faculty member in water engineering and one in food engineering in the next few years. We recently had Russell Persyn join us as assistant professor and extension spe-

cialist. Our faculty also continue to be recognized for excellence and leadership.

We are looking forward to the ASAE meeting in Ottawa, Canada this summer. Please be sure to stop by the Texas A&M reception on Monday, August 2nd from 8:00-10:00 p.m.

Please take a few minutes to update us about the changes in your career and life. With your permission, we would like to share this information with our former students in future newsletters.

In closing, I want to thank you for interest in and support of the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at Texas A&M University and extend an open invitation for you to visit the department whenever you have the opportunity.

2004 Scholarship Recipients

William E. Beach Memorial Scholarship

Kyle Kieschnick - AGSM

Edward A. Hiler Scholarship

Marcelo Guijarro - AGEN

Brian Fuselier - AGSM

Price & Merle Hobgood Scholarship

Lisa Porta - BSEN

Erin Trampe - BSEN

Mr. & Mrs. Fred R. Jones Scholarship

Brandon Hartley - AGEN

Jacquelyn Michalka - BSEN

Lambert H. Wilkes Scholarship

Daniel Mulvahill - AGEN

Nathan Roberson - AGSM

George H. Follet Scholarship

Matthew Todd - AGSM

Daniel Michalewicz - AGEN

William H. Aldred Scholarship

Craig Birkenfeld - AGEN

Aarin Teague - BSEN

P.T. Montfort Scholarship

Walt Riske - AGSM

Garrett Anderson - AGEN

John Lyons - AGEN

Kendra Johnson - BSEN

Garrett Scanlan - AGSM

Mark Geistweidt - AGSM

Justin Mechell - AGEN

National Cotton Ginners Peary Wileman Scholarship

Lingjuan Wang

John Wanjura

Lee Hamm

Plains Ginners Scholarship

Mark Hamann - AGEN

John Deere Dealership Scholarship

Ben Rutland - AGSM

John Ebert - AGSM

DOW Aggie COALS

Seth Drennan - AGSM

Dustin Dean - AGSM

Jonathan Tran - AGEN

2004 Departmental Awards

The **Price Hobgood Scholarship Award** was established to recognize scholastic achievement and outstanding accomplishments by full time undergraduate students in the department. This year's recipients are **Mindy Schronk** and **Lisa Grimm**.

The **W.E. McCune Student Award** was established to recognize scholastic achievement and leadership activities as well as participation in the AGSM Club. This year's recipient is **Ryan Batla**.

The **J.W. Sorenson Student Award** was established to recognize scho-

lastic achievement, participation in student activities at TAMU, and active participation in the ASAE Preprofessional Club. We have three recipients this year: **Marcy Melton**, **Andrea Froboese**, and **Lisa Porta**.

The **Robert E. Stewart Graduate Student Award** is intended to recognize outstanding achievement by a graduate student in BAEN or AGSM, including active participation in ASAE activities. This year's recipient is **Josh Peschel**.

The **Bill & Rita Stout Interna-**

tional Graduate Award was established to recognize outstanding achievement by international graduate students in Biological and Agricultural Engineering or AGSM. This year we have two recipients; **Claudia Granda** and **George Stewart**.

The "**Bo**" **Higgs Superior Service Award** was presented to **Ryan Garris**, an AGSM major. This award is given in memory of Bo Higgs, an AGSM student who was tragically killed in a water skiing accident. His father, Lt. Col. Stephan Higgs, (USAF ret.) presented the award.



Marcy Melton, president of ASAE Preprofessional branch, presents Dr. Hiler with an award in recognition of his retirement.

*BAEN Graduate
Students receive
NSF, Board of
Regents, and
Diversity
Fellowships*

Graduate Students Receive Honors

Linguan Wang received the Association of Overseas Chinese Agricultural, Biological and Food Engineers (AOCABFE) Graduate Scholarly Achievement Award at the July 2003 ASAE meeting.

Linguan Wang, John Wanjura, Calvin Parnell, Ron Lacey, and Bryan Shaw received 3rd place in the AOCABFE Student Paper Competition for "Performance Characteristics of Low-Volume PM10 Inlet and the TEOM Continuous PM Sampler" at the July 2003 ASAE meeting.

Jason Afinowicz received a 2004 Association of Former Students Distinguished Graduate Student Research Award-\$300 and a framed certificate. Jason completed his MS with Clyde Munster.

Brock Faulkner, AGEN senior, was awarded a Regents Fellowship by the TAMU Office of Graduate Studies to begin graduate studies in our department under Bryan Shaw in Fall 2004. Additionally Brock received a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. This prestigious award will fund Brock's graduate studies with a \$30,000 per year stipend for three years.

Josh Peschel, a Master of Science Candidate working with Dr. Ron Lacey, has received the Montgomery Endowed Fellowship from the Office of Graduate Studies. The Montgomery Prize is given annually to a graduate student who exhibits outstanding leadership qualities within the University community. For the 2003-2004 school year, Peschel served as the president for the Graduate Stu-

dent Council. Peschel's previous awards include the Texas Water Resources Institute Mills Fellowship and an Office of Naval Research funding award. His research is part of a NASA land cover and land use change study of the semi-arid Edwards Aquifer region.

Lindsay Birt, a May 2004 graduate, has been recently named the recipient of the prestigious Texas A&M University Diversity Fellowship Award to aid in continuing her studies in the pursuit of a Master of Science degree under Dr. Russell Persyn. Lindsay is involved in numerous organizations including the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE) and Voices of Praise Gospel Choir.



Josh Peschel received the Montgomery Prize.



Students in BSEN 265 prepare for the distance and accuracy competition with the trebuchets they designed.

"We had excellent projects and strong teams for senior design this year. I'm very proud of the work the students did." - Dr. Lacey



Students and faculty visit Pandora, Texas for Senior Design Project.

Student Organizations - ASAE and AGSM Clubs

The student clubs of ASAE and AGSM have had another successful and busy semester. Things started off well in January with an entire department fajita social complete with a performance by the faculty band. We feel that fellowship at events like this is truly what gives our department its family feel. In February, ASAE sponsored its annual fundraiser, Lawnmower Tune-Up Day. This year ASAE members serviced over 40 mowers and other lawn equipment at the Lowe's in Bryan.

The organization also strives to participate in community service activities. In March, members turned out to be a part of Big

Event. They completed tasks such as painting, cleaning and yard work at two different homes. The AGSM Club participated in intramurals for the semester putting together a softball team. ASAE was also invited to take part in the 2004 Wild West Olympics hosted by the Ag Leadership Society at the end of March. ASAE competed in events such as Freeze Your Marbles, Pass the Tongue, Dress a Goat, Egg Toss and the Team Wheelbarrow Relay and finished second. ASAE came out full force with eleven members participating and fought a good fight. Along with the Parent's Weekend events, AGSM Club hosted the first annual Skeet

Shoot. The final social event of the year was the annual student vs. faculty softball game bringing together ASAE and Ag Systems Management Club on May 5.

We are also very proud to announce that Steven Real, a senior in Agricultural Engineering, has served this past year as the National Second Vice President of the Student Branch of ASAE. Some of his responsibilities include planning events for the International Meeting held in August in Ottawa, Canada. He has also authored several articles found in the monthly publication of ASAE, *Resource* magazine.

Texas Phi Chapter of Alpha Epsilon Inducts 16 New Members

Alpha Epsilon is the honorary society for Biological and Agricultural Engineering. The Texas Phi Chapter was founded in 1976. Seniors are eligible for induction if they are in the upper third of their class, juniors are eligible if they are in the upper quarter of their class, and graduate students

are eligible if they have at least a 3.25 GPR with 12 or more credit hours completed.

Seniors inducted were **Matthew Piazza** and **Kristie Sparks**. Junior inducted were **Daniel Mulvahill**, **Daniel Michalewicz**, **Steward Skloss**, **Matthew Mueller**, **Jona-**

than Tran, **Erin Trampe**, and **Marisa Speer**. Graduate students inducted were **April Lovelady**, **Julie Villeneuve**, **Shane Porter**, **Jacqueline Price**, **John Wanjura**, **Milton Henry**, and **John Waswa**. The Faculty advisor is Dr. Patti Haan. Congratulations to all the new inductees.

Engineering Students Complete Senior Design Projects

The end of the spring semester saw the completion of several excellent senior design projects in AGEN/BSEN 480. This year's projects included the design of a water and wastewater system for Pandora,

Texas; a saltwater intrusion barrier in Bessie Heights Marsh; a small tractor and implement system for use in developing countries; a new irrigation system for the San Antonio Botanical Gardens; a system to survey sedimentation

ponds at feedlots for remaining volume; and a pilot scale processing system for a new oil seed product. For details or to suggest a problem for this fall contact Dr. Ron Lacey at 979-845-3967 or ron-lacey@tamu.edu.

Congratulations To Our 2004 Spring Graduates

Congratulations to our graduates in May 2004. We wish you the best of luck in all of your endeavors after leaving us here in Aggie-land:

Kevin Allyn, AGSM

Michael Ausley, AGSM -

Ben Balasko, AGEN

Hilary Bennett, AGSM—Carrier, South Texas in San Antonio

Lindsay Birt, AGEN - Graduate school at Texas A&M with Dr. Russell Persyn

Nathan Blackwelder, AGSM -

Cody Blount, AGSM—Pursuing education in emergency services in Dallas-Fort Worth area

Chris Borgfeld, AGSM—Northfield Enterprises in Bryan

Charles Brown, AGSM

Kevin Cambridge, AGSM

Alexis Cherry, AGSM -

Donna Chudej, AGEN—Systems Painters and Drywall in New Ulm

Dedra Ecklund, AGEN -Jones & Carter, The Woodlands

Luis Elizondo , AGEN—Swift & Company in Cactus, Texas

Carlos Estrada, AGSM—EMESA in Liberia, Costa Rica

Brock Faulkner , AGEN - Graduate school at Texas A&M with Dr. Bryan Shaw

Ron Flippin, AGSM—UAP Southwest in College Station

Andrea Froboese, AGEN - URS Corporation in Austin

Brandon Gauthé, AGSM—Ferguson Enterprises in Dallas

Matthew Goodson, AGSM -

Lisa Grimm , AGEN—Pape Dawson in San Antonio

Kimberly Guard, AGSM -

Maricela Gusman, AGSM -

Jessica Guzman, BSEN -

Megan McLeroy, AGSM -

Marcy Melton, AGEN - Law School at Texas Tech University

Brett Niccum, AGSM—Graduate school at Texas A&M in Crop Physiology

Justin O'Neal, AGSM -

Samantha Ogura, AGSM -

Matt Piazza, AGEN - Lockwood, Andrews & Newman Inc. in Houston

Steven Real, AGEN - Turner, Collie & Braden, Inc. in Dallas

William Reneau, AGSM—Jeld-Wen in Corsicana

Joshua Schernik, AGSM -

Mindy Schronk, AGSM—United Agri Products, Southwest

Jacob Shaffer, AGSM—Graduate school at Texas A&M in Agronomy

Timothy Shaw, AGSM—Graduate school at Texas A&M in Construction Science

Sarah Shelden, AGEN—Graduate school at the University of Colorado in Boulder

Benjamin Smethurst, AGSM—Battery Concepts International, Inc. in San Antonio

Todd Stiggins, AGSM—Samuel Jackson, Inc. in Lubbock

Jeremy Taft, AGSM -

Matthew Vinson, AGSM-

Charles Wagner, AGSM -

Chris Walker, AGEN - Buckler, Willis & Ratliff in Dallas

Dustin Windham, AGSM -

Daniel Wishard, AGEN - NRCS in Amarillo

Keith Wittig, AGSM—Central Turf Farms, Inc. in Wharton

Adam Ysasi, AGSM -

Jason Afinowicz, M.S.—Turner, Collie, & Braden, Houston

David Geiger, M.S.—John Deere, Ottumwa, IA

Barry Goodrich, M.S.—Univ. California

Vance Weynand, M.S.—Pape Dawson, San Antonio

Lingjuan Wang, Ph.D.— Texas A&M, College Station



Faculty and students watch the 2004 mini-robot sumo final in AGEN 370

“Mini-robot sumo is a chance for the students to combine their mechanical and electrical skills and have some fun” -

Dr. Lacey



Paul Dossett, Chris Zeisloft, and Chris Walker with their mini-robot sumo champion, Konichiwa

If you have an update on your employment, please contact Jeana Goodson at

j-goodson@tamu.edu



Dr. Bruce Lesikar named 2004 NAWT Person of the Year.

“Our faculty also continue to be recognized for excellence and leadership.” – Dr. Riskowski, Professor and Head



Dr. Russell Persyn joins BAEN department as assistant professor and extension specialist.

Faculty News

Dr. Wayne LePori was named a Fish Camp namesake for 2004. Fish Camp is divided into six sessions and within each session there are six camps. Each camp is named after an individual that has contributed to Texas A&M in a positive way. Fish Camp receives over 100 nominations for potential Namesakes every year. Being selected as a Fish Camp Namesake is considered an honor because the selection process is student run. Namesakes have the opportunity to interact with the counselors throughout the year and the freshmen at camp.



Dr. Ann Kenimer was recently selected as an exemplary teacher to be showcased in the National Case Study of Learner-Centered Approaches in Colleges of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources. Dr. Kenimer was one of 12 teachers selected from a national pool of candidates nominated from agriculture programs at state universities and 1862 and 1890 land-grant colleges.

Russell and Kelly Persyn Return to Aggieland

Dr. Russell Persyn ('98) joined the BAEN faculty in June of 2003 as an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist. After his B.S. (1998) and M.S. (2000) in agricultural engineering at Texas A&M; Russell completed his Ph.D. in agricultural and civil engineering (separate majors) from Iowa State University under Dr. Thomas Glanville and the late Dr. T. Al Austin.

Russell has been a welcome addition to the faculty, taking over pitching duties in the annual Senior-Faculty softball game. He also advised a senior design team this year working on the Pandora, Texas

Dr. Bruce Lesikar received the 2004 "Person of the Year Award" from National Association of Wastewater Transporters. Dr. Lesikar has been very active in onsite sewage treatment research and education throughout his career. He has won several blue ribbon awards through ASAE for education materials developed to educate contractors and homeowners about onsite systems. He served on the NOWRA Board of Directors from 1999-2001. He has served on the Texas On-Site Wastewater Association Board of Directors from 1993-2000. He has been a leader in the development of education modules for the industry through the Consortium for Decentralized Wastewater Treatment. He is currently president of the Consortium and is heading up a major effort to develop educational materials for an Operations and Maintenance Course that can be used to train practitioners in the field about operation and maintenance of on-site systems.

Dr. Charlie Coble was named a Fellow of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers at the 2003 Annual Meeting.

Dr. Bill Stout received the Cyrus Hall McCormick/Jerome Increase Case Gold Medal Award at the 2003 ASAE Meeting.

Dr. Jacek Koziel received the Texas Section of the ASAE Agricultural Engineer of the Year Award at the group's annual meeting in Corpus Christi.

water and wastewater systems.

Russell's work is focused on the development of education and research programs in water resource management, storm water control and watershed protection. Join us in welcoming Russell and Kelly back to Aggieland. You can reach Russell at (979) 458-8054 or by email at rap@tamu.edu.

Russell's wife, Kelly (nee Hall, '00), is also an agricultural engineering graduate who completed her Master of Science degree at Iowa State University under Dr. Hongwei Xin.

BAEN Student Enrichment Fund

The Texas A&M University Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department Student Enrichment Fund was created in 1998 to provide students the opportunity to develop professionally by working on projects, performing leadership roles, and understanding the global society in which we live. Continued financial support and student leadership help secure the professional development of future students. All Platinum and Gold contributors will be listed on a plaque in the department. Our thanks go out to our current donors.

Named Fund (\$25,000 or more)

Cargill Student Enrichment Fund

Platinum (\$1,000 to \$24,999)

ATS Irrigation, Incorporated

Dr. and Mrs. Charlie G. Coble

Dr. and Mrs. Dwayne A. Suter

Dr. and Mrs. James Gilley

John Deere Foundation

Mr. Truett W. Flache '39

Gold (\$500 to \$999)

Dr. and Mrs. Ronald E. Lacey

Dr. John M Sweeten

Dr. and Mrs. Russell Persyn ('98 & '00)

Dr. and Mrs. Cady R. Engler

Mr. Kevin P. Hunt '97

Dr. Ann Kenimer

Silver (\$100 to \$499)

Altria Group, Incorporated (Matching Gift)

COL Dave Termin '38

Dr. Alan D. Whittaker '83

Dr. and Mrs Eduardo A Latimer '87

Dr. and Mrs Wayne A. LePori '60

Dr. and Mrs. Clyde Munster

Dr. and Mrs. Saqib Mukhtar

Dr. Bill A. Stout

Dr. Bryan W. Shaw '88

Dr. Patricia Haan

Farmers Cooperative of El Campo

Horn Sr. Trust, Jeffie J.

LTC and Mrs. Henry G. Williford, Jr. '52

Mr and Mrs. Paul J. Bradbury (in honor of Dr. Reddell's Retirement)

Mr. and Mrs Robert L. Kenimer

Dr. and Mrs. Bruce J. Lesikar '87

Mr. and Mrs. Carman G Rhode '36

Mr. and Mrs. Joe P. Hollingsworth '43

Mr. and Mrs. Roger D. Schulze '78

Mr. and Mrs. Scott Shillings '80

Mr. Brian W. Roeder '91

Mr. Charles E. Ball '45

Mr. David B Jones '90

Mr. Kevin L Raabe '80

Mr. Lambert H Wilkes '53

Mr. Larry A. Goertz '70

Mr. Mitchell W. Bullock '95

Mr. Randy O. Roarke '84

Mr. Thomas M. Daniel '49

Mr. Walt Rakowitz '00

Mrs. Jacinta Hammersley '90

Ms. Lindsay (nee Martin) Griffith '98

Dr. Maria Elena Castell Perez

Ms. Stephanie Carroll '95

Parnell Engineering

Perryton Aviation, Incorporated

Professor Harold T. Wiedemann '56

Bronze (Up to \$99)

Mr. and Mrs Richard Gentry

Mr. and Mrs. Frank N. Letzkus '58

Mr. and Mrs. Royce H. Gerngross '95

Mr. Anthony C. Frerich

Mr. Brian D. Ross '90

Mr. Harrell R. Hunneycutt '90

Mr. Herbert R. Wittliff '72

Mr. J. Kelley Green '86

Mr. Jason C. Schickedanz '98

Mr. Mark D. Cornett '95

Mr. Michael E. Wolff '83

Mr. Mrs. Arnold A. Hayes '52

Mr. William J. McMahon '91

Mrs. Lisa K DeWeese '82

Dr. and Mrs. Bruce J. Lesikar '87 (in memory of Edwin Wilde)

The current balance for donations is \$23,791.

Donations can be made through the Texas A&M Foundation.



Can you identify this former student? If so, you may be eligible to win a free subscription to our news letter.

If you are interested in donating to our department or have questions about any specific issues regarding our development efforts, please contact Dr. Gary Riskowski (979-845-3931, riskowski@tamu.edu) or Dr. Elena Castell (979-862-7645, ecastell@tamu.edu).



Students attend the Texas Section ASAE Meeting in Corpus Christi.



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Silver Taps

Merle Hobgood, 1912-2003. Mrs. Hobgood was the wife of Price Hobgood who served as department head from 1958 to 1974. She was born in Bonham and lived in Bryan since 1940. Memorials may be made to the Merle and Price Hobgood Agricultural Engineering Scholarship Fund, C/O The A&M Development Foundation.

Mary L. (Jo) McCune, 1920-2003. Mrs. McCune was married to William E. (Bill) McCune, professor emeritus.

Roger Castenson, class of 1972, 1943-2003. Mr. Castenson passed away on March 31, 2003 after a courageous battle with cancer. For more than 10 years, Roger served as executive vice president of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE).

Mark Your Calendar

International ASAE Meeting, Ottawa Canada

August 1–4

Texas A&M Reception, 8-10 pm

August 2

Texas Section ASAE Meeting

**October
(dates to be
determined)**

Please pass this newsletter along to your friends. If you received this from someone else, you can sign up at <http://baen.tamu.edu/newsletter> to receive your own copy