

Natural Resource News

UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences
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Scholarship honors the late Mike Hoyt

The summer of 2004 was marred by the unexpected death of Michael John Hoyt, former student, friend of many, and constant supporter. Hoyt, 45, died July 26 of a cerebral aneurysm. He was a graduate of UAF and vice chairman of the SNRAS advisory board.

In recognition of Hoyt's many contributions to natural resources in Alaska, an existing Cook Inlet Chapter of the Society of American Foresters scholarship at UAF was renamed the Mike Hoyt SAF Scholarship. It incorporates existing funds and ongoing memorial donations from Hoyt's family, friends, and colleagues. The scholarship is awarded to students in natural resources management who have chosen the forestry option. Students with junior, senior, or graduate student status are eligible. Scholarship details are available from UAF Financial Aid.

At the time of his death, Hoyt was a land and resource specialist for Chugach Alaska Corporation and widely respected in the forestry community. He graduated from UAF in 1985 with a degree in natural resource management. In 1992 he obtained his MS in forest sciences, also at UAF. After graduation, Mike worked for Tanana Chiefs Conference in forestry for several years, left Alaska briefly, then returned in 1997 to work for Chugach. More on Mike and his contributions to Alaska will appear in the winter issue of *Agroborealis*.

Donations to the scholarship fund may be made through the UAF Advancement Services office (formerly the Development Office, P.O. Box 757530, Fairbanks, AK 99775 (907.474.6402 or 1.800.UAF.GIVE, on line at www.uaf.edu/giving/).



Although resources management department head Josh Greenberg wasn't the only Yankee fan to take a ribbing, the transformation of his door probably occurred at the earliest hour after the Red Sox won the World Series.

School welcomes new faculty

Julie Lurman has joined the resources management department in Fairbanks as assistant professor of natural resources law and policy. She holds a JD degree from Georgetown University Law Center (2003) and an MES



Julie Lurman

from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies (1999). Lurman will teach public lands law and policy and environmental law. Her experience includes a legal internship with the U.S. Department of Justice, a research associate for the Environmental Law and Policy Institute, environmental consultant, and work as an interpretive ranger at the Tetlin national Wildlife Refuge in Tok, Alaska.

Matthew Cronin, based in Palmer, is the new research associate professor of animal genetics in the plant, animal, and



Matt Cronin

soil sciences department. Cronin holds a PhD in biology from Yale University (1989) and an MS in biology from Montana State University. Before coming to UAF he was a

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Forest Sports 2004

Scott Rupp, left, and Jamie Hollingsworth, right, look on as two unidentified competitors test their footwork during the log birling event. Note the ice forming on Ballaine Lake.

Photo by Kimberley Maher

Both the hardy and foolhardy gathered October 2 to test their mettle at the 7th Annual Farthest North Forest Sports Festival. The event, held shortly before pond freeze-up features contests of the Paul Bunyan variety and is open to anyone who wants to go for it. The festival included the following: pulp toss, axe throw, two-person log roll (on land); men and women's one-person bow saw, two-person crosscut saw (male, female, and "Jack & Jill" categories; two-person fire building, and log birling (on Ballaine Lake). Event sponsors are the forestry department, the student Natural Resources Society, and SNRAS.



From left, advisors Paul Costello, Ray Jakubczik, Stan Stevens, Nancy Welch, Cyndie Warbelow-Tack, Mike Woods, Mara Kimmel, and Sara Leonard.

Meeting in Fairbanks October 27–28, the SNRAS citizen’s advisory board welcomed five new members. Dean Carol Lewis and the board expressed their thanks to board veterans Nancy Welch and Stan Stephens, both of whom are retiring after six years of board service. The advisory board provides guidance to the school and agricultural station from the members’ various community and professional perspectives.

The recent death of vice chair Mike Hoyt left another vacancy on the board, and last January the board changed their bylaws to include a faculty representative. David (Dave) Verbyla was appointed to the faculty seat by the SNRAS department heads and Lewis. Ruby Hollembaek of Delta Junction will complete Mike Hoyt’s term through December 2005.

Filling new and existing vacancies are Sarah Leonard, Mara Kimmel, and Paul Costello, all of whom will serve terms through 2007. Leonard, who works in Anchorage, is the state-wide Watchable Wildlife coordinator for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and a former executive director of the Alaska Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Association. She holds an MS in recreation and tourism management from Arizona State University. Her main interests are recruitment, marketing, fundraising, and natural resource management issues.

Kimmel, also of Anchorage, holds a JD from the University of Minnesota Law School and an MS in natural resource

management from UAF. She is the supervising attorney for the Catholic Social Services Immigration and Refugee Services Program. Formerly she worked as an attorney for a private firm, and for three years was executive director of the Alaska Sea Otter Commission. Her main interests are natural resource management, recruitment, and program development issues.

Hollembaek is primarily interested in agricultural issues. She holds a master’s of education from UAF and is a teacher and administrator for the Delta Greely School District. She is also a private farmer and rancher, co-operating Alamasu, Inc. of Delta Junction, a family business of 2,000 acres that produces grass and grain seed, hay, straw, and various livestock, including reindeer, bison, elk, and musk-oxen.

New member Paul Costello of Fairbanks is primarily interested in land management, forestry, and rural issues. Since 1993 he has been the director of the Department of Land Management, Fairbanks North Star Borough. He holds a BS in world forestry from the College of Environmental Sciences and Forestry, Syracuse University, and is certified by the International Right of Way Association. From 1977 to 1985 he was vice-president, then president, of the Interior Village Association, and he was land consultant and airport leasing officer for the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

Professor Verbyla, who is in the forest sciences department, teaches the SNRAS courses in geographic information systems (GIS). He will represent the faculty perspective on the board through December 2007.



Dave Verbyla



Sarah Leonard



Mara Kimmel



Paul Costello



Ruby Hollembaek

Reindeer curriculum ready for use in Alaska classrooms

Reindeer Roundup! A K-12 Educator’s Guide to Reindeer in Alaska has been published by the Reindeer Research Program (RRP) and is ready for classroom use. “It is our response to the countless requests we’ve had to take Elsa to classrooms and give presentations on reindeer,” said Greg Finstad, RRP project manager.

The curriculum promotes understanding of northern ecosystems and exposes students to applied science. Curriculum materials include a 190-page book, visual aid CD-ROMs, and a kit of props related to reindeer anatomy and physiology.

Although the number of kits is limited, extra computer disks are available, and anyone can download the book from the web at www.uaf.edu/snras/afes/pubs/index.html.

The project was supported by the National Science Foundation, the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, the UAF College of Rural Alaska, and SNRAS. For more information contact Finstad at P.O. Box 757200, University of Alaska Fairbanks (907-474-6055, e-mail: fglf@uaf.edu), or visit the RRP on the web at: reindeer.salrm.uaf.edu/.

Contact us for information on subscriptions to our science magazine, *Agroborealis*, or to receive our other publications.



Dean Carol Lewis and Chancellor Steve Jones team up during the two-person crosscut saw contest at the Forest Sports Festival.

Photo by Kimberley Maher



Steve Jones

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senior project scientist for Entrix, Inc., where he conducted environmental research and management for a nationwide environmental consulting firm. His projects included ecological and toxicological impact assessments, basic research, and development of management plans related to oil and gas development, endangered species management, and fish and wildlife ecology. He has also conducted research activities in the genetics of fish, wildlife, and livestock. From 1992-2003 he was senior scientist and managing director of LGL Alaska research associates. He has also worked as a research geneticist at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Alaska Research Center.

Former research associate **Valerie (Val) Barber** is now research assistant professor in the forest sciences department. Barber, who earned an interdisciplinary PhD at UAF, is currently stationed in Sitka, where she is helping to oversee projects and doing applied research for the Sitka Forest Products Program. The program is engaged in projects related to primary and secondary wood manufacturing and processing technologies, including the finishing, preservation, and engineering of wood products. In a recent note, Val said she expects to tackle more varied projects in the near future and is continuing some of her previous work on the effects of climate change on the boreal forest. She will also be teaching occasionally at the UA Southeast Sitka campus. Of all the new faculty, she probably has the most interesting commute. She reports that she's living on Ring Island with her three dogs and gets to work via boat.



Val Barber

Steve Jones, who became the new UAF chancellor in August, is also serving on the forest sciences department faculty. Although his faculty duties will be limited, he brings to the department an extensive background that includes a bachelor's degree in forestry and a PhD in resources management from the State University of New York Syracuse. Jones

SNRAS students defend theses

Chris McKee, MS candidate in natural resource management (NRM), defended his thesis, "Distribution and Ecology of Exotic Plants in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Alaska," on November 29. McKee has conducted surveys on Alaska Park Service lands throughout the state, where he has identified about fifty non-native species. His thesis advisor is Dr. Patricia Holloway.

Master of Science candidate **Scott Harris**, also defended his NRM thesis in November. Harris' thesis topic is "A market survey of ecotourists in the Valdivian Temperate Forest Ecoregion of Chile: How to make a living from and conserve native forest biodiversity." His major professor is Glenn Juday.

Brian Riordan, NRM master's degree candidate, presented "Using Remote Sensing to Examine Changes in Surface Water Area in Interior Alaska from 1950-2002." Riordan analyzed images made over time at the same locations to show that the acreage of closed basin water bodies has declined in all but the northernmost region examined. Riordan's major professor is Dave Verbyla.

Mingyuan Cheng, PhD candidate in NRM, will present his thesis defense on December 2, 2004. His topic is "The mechanisms involved in the cold tolerant *Trichoderma atroviride* biocontrol." *Trichoderma atroviride* is a cold-tolerant organism discovered in Alaska that can be used as a biological fungicide (hyperparasite). It has proved useful for controlling plant pathogens that actively grow at cold temperatures, such as snow mold (*Caprinus* spp., *Microdochium* spp., *Typhula* spp.) and Sclerotinia (*Myriosclerotina* spp.). Cheng's major professor is Dr. Jenifer McBeath.

A Guy Named Joe—

Although Tundra Joe is no longer with us, his legacy lives on in the dozens of animals he sired while serving as the main man with the Reindeer Research Herd, 1999-2004. Among research program staff he was known as a gentleman, as well as a fine stud. He was exceptionally easy to handle, even during rut, which is unusual for male reindeer. Many schoolchildren had the experience of hand-feeding this elegant animal. Joe also had interesting antlers, more elk-like than usual for reindeer. Male reindeer live about four years in the wild, six years in captivity. Joe, who died of an age-related illness, lived to the age of seven.



Tundra Joe. Photo by Sandy Garbowski, RRP

Notes

THE SNRAS ANNUAL REPORT is now available on line at AFES Publications: www.uaf.edu/snras/afes/pubs/index.html.

24 YEARS OF AGRONOMIC DATA is reported in the new AFES Bulletin 111, "Performance of Agronomic Crop Varieties in Alaska 1978-2002." Robert Van Veldhuizen and Charles Knight authored the report, which is dedicated to the late Frank Wooding, the UAF researcher who conducted many of the grain and oilseed crop trials.

RRP SCHOLARSHIPS were awarded for the fall semester to two natural resource management students from Palmer: Lorene Lynn and Andrew Weaver. Scholarship funds were acquired through meat sales related to reindeer herd research. As funds are available, RRP scholarships will be awarded. Eligible students must be formally admitted to the natural resource management degree program at UAF.

GOODIES IN THE GARDEN—funding for the Drew Amphitheater at Georgeson Botanical Garden was boosted once again by proceeds from the UAF College of Fellows event, Goodies in the Garden.



*Spotted in September outside the UAF O'Neill building: a caterpillar of the bedstraw hawkmoth (*Hyles gallii*) fattening up for winter on a fireweed stalk.*

This year's the theme for the July dessert party was Desserts Olé. Among the door prizes were two round-trip tickets to Mexico that were donated by Alaska Airlines. The garden was in full bloom and garden experts were on hand to answer questions from guests.

ALASKA WARMING—Two areas of SNRAS research were featured this summer on the public television show "Scientific American Frontiers" with Alan Alda. Selected for the segment on climate change, "Hot Times in Alaska," were professor Glenn Juday and graduate student Brian Riordan, whose research was directed by Dave Verbyla, professor of geographic information systems. Riordan used various image databases to analyze the fate of Alaska wetlands over time, from the 1950s to the present, in terms of temperature records and the acreage of closed ponds. Juday, associate professor of forest ecology, is looking at the effects of warming on the boreal forest, including drought stress and insect infestation. Scientists and staff from the Geophysical Institute and the International Arctic Research Center were also featured on the program.

SUNSET MAGAZINE in June cited Georgeson Botanical Garden as a source of information on color for colder climates: "Even after an early freeze hit Georgeson Botanical Garden in Fairbanks, Alaska, observers there reported that the following plants kept right on blooming.... Visit <http://www.uaf.edu/snras/gbg> for names of specific varieties of the plants above."

PUBLIC COMMENT on wildfire management is the subject of meetings now underway throughout the state. Students in Susan Todd's NRM 430 and 630 classes recently served as recorders at three Fairbanks area meetings. Their participation was arranged by Advisory Board member **Chris Maisch**, who is the regional forester for the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

THE WELCOME BACK fall barbecue at the Fairbanks Experiment Farm was again a great eating experience. The event gives faculty and staff the opportunity to welcome new and returning students, who also have a chance to get together informally with each other. Dean Lewis extends her appreciation to those brought food and otherwise contributed to the picnic.

Natural Resource News is written and edited by public information officer Doreen Fitzgerald and managing editor Deirdre Helfferich.

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