Natural Resource News

UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences
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UAF Photo by Todd Paris

New barley variety developed

Barley field at the Fairbanks Experiment Farm. Photo by Bob Van Veldhuizen.

Fifteen years of plant breeding work resulted in the 2006 release of a new barley variety, Wooding, by the Alaska Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station (AFES) at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The new six-rowed spring barley was developed to improve upon the early maturity, feed quality, and grain and straw yields of Finaska, a variety released by AFES in 2001. Wooding barley was created by crossing a Finnish breeding barley, Jo1632, and Otal, which was developed by AFES in 1981. A breeding barley is used only for developing new varieties, not for producing crops.

The new cross was made in 1990. Progeny of the cross were grown in bulk from 1991 to 1998, at which time spikes (ears of grain) were selected on the basis of early maturity and such characteristics as spike length and kernel size. In 1999, seed from these spikes were sown and 44 selections were made on the basis of early maturity, straw strength, and uniformity. These were grown at Fairbanks in 2000 to increase seed.

In five years of testing at Fairbanks, Palmer, and Delta Junction, from 2001 to 2005, Wooding produced higher yields and had greater test weights than Finaska barley grown during the same period. Kernel size and shape are similar for the two varieties and they matured within one day of each other. Wooding plant height was 3.15 inches taller than Finaska, which represents a 12 percent increase in straw yield, but straw strength (lodging resistance) was comparable. Lodging is the breakage of the stalk below the ear, which causes plants to bend and results in grain loss during harvest.

The registration of Wooding barley was published in August 2006 in *Crop Science*, the publication of the Crop Science Society of America. Its development is attributed to research assistant Robert Van Veldhuizen, and assistant professor Mingchu Zhang at AFES.

The name Wooding was chosen to recognize the agronomic contributions of the late Frank J. Wooding, professor emeritus of agronomy of the UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences. Much of his work with grain is reported in AFES Bulletin 111, "Performance of Agronomic Varieties in Alaska, 1978—2002," which is available on the Internet at www.uaf.edu/snras/afes/pubs/bul/B111.pdf.

This research was funded by a Hatch grant (0193129), "Selection, variety testing, and evaluation of cultural practices for alternative agronomic crops in Alaska." For more information contact Robert Van Veldhuizen at the UAF experiment station: 907.474.5222 or fnrv@uaf.edu.

Forest sciences welcomes two

This month Juan Andres (Andy) Soria joins the SNRAS faculty as a postdoctoral fellow specializing in wood chemistry. "A long-term interest of our school, the experiment station, and the Forest Products Program is chemical composition of the tree species of Alaska," said Dean Carol Lewis when she announced his appointment.

Through the UAF Sitka Forest Products Program, which is headed by Val Barber, the school and experiment station function as the Wood Utilization Research (WUR) center. At 12 state universities across the United States, WUR centers conduct research on wood use that supports the competitiveness of small and medium wood product manufacturers and the needs of the public.

"Dr. Barber has worked on projects that have had an immediate effect on the economy in southeast Alaska, including yellow cedar, natural teas, dimension lumber standards, and products related to the weaving and musical instrument industries," Lewis said.

Soria's interests relate to the production of bioproducts and biofuels from woody materials. He comes to Alaska from the University of Idaho, where as a research associate he worked on a process for the supercritical methanol treatment of bark

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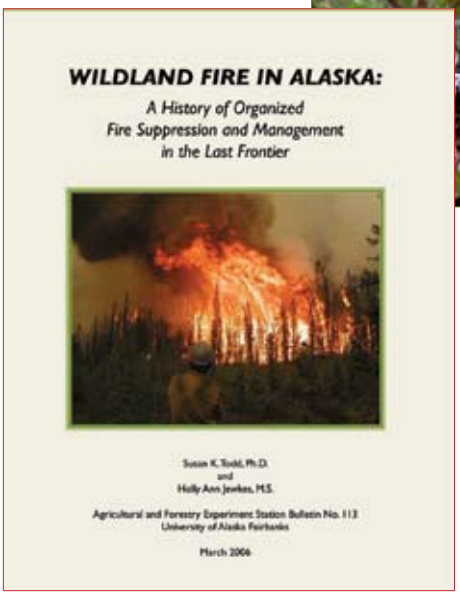
Forest regeneration after wildland fire is one aspect of the many facets of wildland fire under study by SNRAS researchers and others at UAF. Photo by Glenn Juday.



Fire suppression history available on line at SNRAS

Changing responses to wildland fire in Alaska are documented in a history prepared by former graduate student Holly Ann Jewkes and Susan Todd, associate professor of regional and land use planning. The history is available on line as Bulletin 114, "Wildland Fire in Alaska: a History of Organized Fire Suppression and Management in the Last Frontier." The work includes a chronology that compares fire suppression milestones in the contiguous United States with the timeline of firefighting responses in Alaska, which were first organized in 1907.

Bulletin 114 is available on line at: www.uaf.edu/snras/afes/pubs/bul/B114.pdf. Data are given by decade for number of fires, acres burned, lightning-caused fires, and human-caused fires. Fire data is summarized for the years 1950 through 2005.

Summer fire symposium held at UAF

Researchers, agency representatives, and others interested in wildland fire met at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in mid August for a one-day symposium, Human-Fire Interactions in the Boreal Forest of Interior Alaska. Presenters addressed the effects of climate and vegetation on fire, effects of fire on rural economies and subsistence resources, costs associated with fire suppression, changing roles of fire policy and fire management, and opportunities created by the increasing risk of wildland fires.

"The fire management community is dealing with a lot of issues, changes, and uncertainty," said Scott Rupp, associate professor of forest measurements and inventory in the forest sciences department. "We are trying to define these issues, understand the directions and rates of change, and begin to quantify the associated uncertainty."

Rupp is active in collaborative research on questions involving interactions of regional ecosystems, wildland fire, and human activities. He specializes in computer modeling of boreal forest dynamics, fuel loading, fire-climate interactions, and long-term ecological effects of wildland fire, including developing custom fuel models, and fire risk analysis.

Together, the 2004 and 2005 fire seasons, the state's largest and third largest on record, burned more than 11 million acres. As fire threatened more areas of human habitation, these extreme seasons raised many questions about current and future responses to wildland fire, which is expected to increase as one response to climate warming.

"We used the symposium to communicate some of our preliminary findings and present a framework for beginning to deal more formally with these issues at a landscape-level over short and long time frames," Rupp said.

Nancy Fresco, UAF Ph.D. candidate, presented an examination of the feasibility of converting village electrical generation systems in interior Alaska from diesel fuel to wood fuel. She examined the question in terms of costs, technology, and logistics; sustainable wood supply; fire protection around villages; and village jobs, autonomy, and lifestyles. Her study is part of the interdisciplinary effort to put questions of fire management into a context that includes human needs, environmental concerns, and the realities of politics and policy.

Future research will consider how thinning forests near communities to reduce fire risk could mesh with using the resulting wood as fuel for power generation to reduce the cost of the forest treatments. Other ongoing studies relate to how climate change affects the severity and frequency of fires, how fires can disrupt village lifestyles, and also the positive outcomes from fire, such as benefits to ecosystems and village economies. The midwinter *Agroborealis* will include more information on these topics.

George Schaller. Photo courtesy of the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Noted wildlife biologist and alumnus speaks at Fairbanks

Acclaimed field biologist and UAF alumnus George Schaller was in Fairbanks in mid July during an Alaska trek marking the 50th anniversary of a 1956 expedition to the Sheenjek River area about 125 miles north of Fort Yukon. That trip was organized by Olaus J. Murie, biologist and wildlife artist, who was accompanied by his wife, Margaret Murie (UA's first woman graduate), Schaller, UA professor Brina Kessel, and others. While in Fairbanks, Schaller gave a public lecture on "Exploration and Conservation in Alaska, Mongolia, and Tibet."

During four decades of field research, Schaller has contributed significantly to the understanding of endangered species and wildlife protection efforts worldwide. His interest in wildlife initially led him to Fairbanks, where he graduated from the University of Alaska in 1955 with bachelor's degrees in vertebrate zoology and anthropology. He later earned a doctorate at the University of Wisconsin and has spent most of the past 50 years in the wilds of Asia, Africa, and South America.

Now working primarily in Iran and Tajikistan, Schaller is vice-president of the Wildlife Conservation Society's Science and Exploration Program and holder of the Ella Millbank Foshay Chair in Wildlife Conservation. His previous work has supported the establishment of five wildlife reserves around the world.

The things that uplift the spirit—an old-growth forest, a clear river, the flight of a golden eagle, the howl of a wolf, space and quiet without motors—are intangibles. Those are the values that people do look for and that everyone needs.

—George Schaller in *National Geographic*, October, 2006 ("Voices" interview by John G. Mitchell)

It's essential that each country keep part of its natural heritage untouched, as a record for the future, a baseline to measure change, so people can see the splendor of their past, before the land was degraded. And if we ever want to rehabilitate habitat, we need to see how things used to be.

—George Schaller in *National Geographic*, October, 2006 ("Voices" interview by John G. Mitchell)

Schaller's numerous scientific and popular writings include *Serengeti Lion: a Study of Predator-Prey Relations* (National Book Award), *Stones of Silence, and The Last Panda*. Wildlife studies mainly in Mongolia, Laos, and the Tibetan Plateau of China during the past ten years resulted in two recent books: *Tibet's Hidden Wilderness* and *Wildlife of the Tibetan Steppe*. Schaller's participation in the 1959–1960 African Primate Expedition in the eastern Congo and western Uganda resulted in his 1963 book, *The Mountain Gorilla: Ecology and Behavior*, and *The Year of the Gorilla* (1964).

Professor Brad Griffith of the UAF Institute of Arctic Biology preceded Schaller's talk with remarks on "Climate Change Implications for Wildlife and their Habitats in the North." Schaller's talk was organized by the University of Alaska Geography Program as part of the UAF International Polar Year Lecture Series. The UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences and the Geophysical Institute co-sponsored the event.

National Geographic "Voices" interview by John G. Mitchell: www3.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0610/voices.html.

The Wildlife Conservation Society is on line at: www.wcs.org/sw-home.

Originating from extensive glaciers in the Romanzof Mountains, the Sheenjek River travels south 200 miles to join the Porcupine River near its junction with the Yukon River. The river flows through varied arctic habitats and scenery. Portions of the Porcupine Caribou Herd occasionally winter in the Sheenjek Valley. The River is now part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Park science symposium focused on central Alaska

Five SNRAS researchers participated in the 2006 Alaska Park Science Symposium at Denali National Park and Preserve in September. The meeting focused on research in parks in central Alaska. Scientists shared their findings from Denali, Wrangell-St. Elias, and Yukon-Charley Rivers parks and the adjacent lands and waters of central Alaska and western Yukon. Participating from SNRAS were MS graduate Stephen Taylor and professors Scott Rupp, Mike Sfraga, Tricia Wurtz, and Peter Fix.

Rupp presented "Past, Present, and Future Fire Regimes in Interior Alaska." Projected climatic warming has direct implications for future disturbance regimes, particularly fire-dominated ecosystems at high latitudes, where climate warming is expected to be most dramatic. The general conclusion of research to date indicates the severity, number, season length, and total area burned will increase throughout much of the boreal biome. The presentation highlighted past, present, and possible future trends in interior Alaska, including implications for both flora and fauna.

During the Profiles in History session, Mike Sfraga presented "Bradford Washburn: Exploration and Discovery in the Denali and Wrangell-St. Elias Regions, 1930-1965." In the summer of 1930, twenty-year-old Washburn led his first expedition to Alaska: an attempt to climb Mount Fairweather and survey the immediate vicinity. Over the next six decades, he explored, mapped, climbed, and photographed some of the most remote areas of the Wrangell-St. Elias and Denali regions. Washburn's pioneering exploration and scientific investigations in both regions included path-breaking use of the airplane to support scientific field work, camp-to-camp and ground-to-air radio communications, the application of seismic soundings to Alaska glacier studies, as well as his significant accomplishments as a mountaineer and cartographer.

Stephen Taylor (SNRAS MS graduate) and his major professor Peter Fix presented "Visitor Preferences for Interpretation at Kennecott National Historic Landmark." To accommodate future visitors, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is developing an alternative transportation plan for the Kennecott Valley. An interim plan guided stabilization and rehabilitation of the Mill Town buildings, but did not specify visitor interpretation. Principles from experience-based management were followed to gather information regarding significant visitor experiences. An onsite written survey was administered to a random sample of park visitors during summer 2004. It identified five distinct visitor types, each linked to preferences for six potential management options. Identifying different visitor types can help managers customize interpretation programs for various segments of the visitor population and help set standards for evaluating program effectiveness.

Tricia Wurtz presented "Spread of an Invasive Plant on Alaska's Roads and River Networks: a Path Analysis." One of the most widely distributed invasive plants in Alaska is *Melilotus alba*, or sweet clover, which has moved from roadsides to the floodplains of at least three glacial rivers. It has aggressively colonized the lower Stikine River floodplain, where it occurs in dense, mono-specific stands, and is at an earlier stage of colonization of floodplains on the Matanuska and Nenana rivers. A path analysis examined the vulnerability of downstream terrain to invasion, and the location downstream of lands of high conservation significance. Results point to certain bridges and river systems as critical control points for the spread of invasive plants in Alaska, and it was concluded that both monitoring and control efforts should be focused at these points. The path analysis may help prevent the spread of other invasive species from roadsides to river networks in Alaska. Wurtz is a research ecologist at the Boreal Ecology Cooperative Research Unit, and an affiliate research professor of forest sciences at SNRAS.

The symposium was the second in what is planned as a biennial series of onferences that focus on specific national parks in Alaska. Sponsors were the National Park Service Alaska Region, Denali National Park and Preserve, Murie Science and Learning Center, Alaska Natural History Association, Denali Borough School District, and the George Wright Society.

Masters International Program

Peace Corps honors Gasbarro

Tony Gasbarro

Tony Gasbarro was honored this year by the Peace Corp, receiving one of the inaugural John F. Kennedy Service Awards for continued domestic and international service in his community while assisting Peace Corps-sponsored programs. He is coordinator of the Peace Corp Masters International program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), where participants work toward either a master's of science degree in natural resources management or, through the College of Rural Alaska, a master of arts degree in rural development. The program allows students to integrate graduate study with international development practice through Peace Corps field experience.

After serving as a Peace Corp volunteer in the Dominican Republic (1962–1964) and El Salvador (1996–1998), Gasbarro looked for ways to continue helping Salvadorans and promote cross-cultural understanding. He has returned to El Salvador twice each year since 1998 as a board member of Project Salvador, a Denver-based nonprofit community development organization.

With Gasbarro's help, UAF became part of the Master's International program in 2004. More than forty schools nationwide participate in the program, which was established in 1987. For more information, Gasbarro can be reached by e-mail at ffafg@uaf.edu or by phone (907-474-5190).

Annual Report now available

The SNRAS/AFES Annual Report covering the research activities for 2005 is now availalbe on line at: www.uaf.edu/snras/afes/pubs/ar/index.html.

The printed version will be distributed to the mailing list this month. The topically arranged by five categories that coincide with the SNRAS/AFES Strategic Plan: geographic information, high-latitude agriculture, high-latitude soils, management of dcosystems, and natural resources use and allocation. The report includes research by our partners at the Alaska Agricultural Research Service www.ars.gov/and the Boreal Ecology Cooperative Research Unit www.becru.uaf.edu.

If you are not on the distribution list and would like a printed version of the report, contact the publications office by phone, e-mail, or mail.

Hardy Russian bees studied to improve American stocks

The busy bee—that tireless purveyor of plant pollen—has had a rough time of it lately. Parasitic mites are beating down this industrious insect that is crucial for producing more than $15 billion worth of U.S. crops each year. But according to scientists with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), there's hope for American bees that comes from the hills of southeast Russia.

In recent studies, Russian bees were able to deflect three of the honeybee's worst assailants: varroa mites, tracheal mites, and cold temperatures. The research was done at the ARS Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Research Unit in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Ten years ago, scientists led by Thomas Rinderer trekked through Russia's Primorsky Territory in search of bees that could naturally hold their own against varroa mites. There, bees have become battle-hardened against the blood-sucking mite, which has been harassing Russian bees for more than 150 years.

Since Russian bees were first imported by Rinderer, they have continued to impress researchers. In fact, ARS entomologist Jose Villa recently discovered just how the bees fend off tracheal mites, which kill honeybees by invading and clogging their airways. He discovered that, much like other bees resistant to tracheal mites, Russian bees are fastidious and agile groomers, capable of using their middle pair of legs to brush mites away.

Villa fellow ARS entomologist Lilia De Guzman have also confirmed that Russian bees are excellent cold-weather survivors. After studying Russian bee colonies for five winters in northeast Iowa, Villa and De Guzman found that the bees are less likely than other bees to lose hive members during harsh, cold weather. Russian bees appear more frugal with their winter food stores.

Thanks to the ARS Russian bee breeding program, promising Russian bee stock will continue to reach U.S. honeybee queen breeders. Kicking off an intensive selective breeding effort this year, Baton Rouge researchers are still striving for the ultimate Russian bee—one that has the important economic qualities, like mite resistance and good honey production, that beekeepers look for.

On Marsh Island, Louisiana, an isolated ARS research facility used for producing pure stocks of Russian bees, technician Gary Delatte prepares hives for transport. ARS photo by Scott Bauer.

Note: *This news is based on an ARS story by Erin Peabody (erin.peabody@ars.usda.gov). ARS is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific research agency. The Alaska ARS is a partner of the UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences. To receive ARS news by e-mail, subscribe at: www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/subscribe.htm. To view news on line, go to: www.ars.usda.gov/news*

Ag research online resources

A monthly U.S. Department of Agriculture science magazine from the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is available on line at: www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/.

A quarterly compilation of animal health-related research news, *Healthy Animals*, has links to stories on new research findings and to ARS research laboratories.

Through its Conservation Effects Assessment Project, the USDA is studying the effectiveness of conservation practices implemented through its programs. The ARS National Agricultural Library has prepared six bibliographies covering agricultural conservation programs and practices. They contain more than 5,200 citations with abstracts, where available, and with URLs when the documents are freely available online. You can access the bibliographies on line at: www.nal.usda.gov/wqic/ceap/index.shtml and download them in pdf format. ARS is the chief scientific agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and a SNRAS/AFES partner.

Ingstad Mountain

Norwegian explorer honored by the Nunamiut people

The late Norwegian explorer, scientist, and author Helge Ingstad lived and studied with the Nunamiut people of Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska, in 1949–50. The adaptable Ingstad was admired and respected by these inland Inupiat Eskimos, and as he prepared to leave, the local elders symbolically gave Ingstad a mountain in the area to thank him. Since then, they have called the 4,880-foot peak that overlooks the village Ingstad Mountain.

In September of this year, the Royal Norwegian Embassy and the University of Alaska Fairbanks hosted the Helge Ingstad Memorial Symposium on Arctic Change, which included one day in Fairbanks and one in Anaktuvuk Pass, where a ceremony was held to mark the mountain's official naming by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names. The name was adopted at the request of Grant Spearman of the Simon Paneak Memorial Museum and others. The museum has a collection of books, tapes, films, and photographs that Ingstad gave to the village in 1980. Outside the region, his book, movie, and lecture tours generated the first awareness of the Nunamiut people.

"Our course was set for the Brooks Mountains, which stretch like a huge wall for 500 miles across the country from west to east and are among the wildest and least-known parts of Alaska. The central region is called the Endicott Mountains, and there lay my goal: a small group of Eskimos called the Nunamiuts, who live quite alone in the heart of the range. My intention was to settle among them, live their life, and try to get a picture of their culture," Ingstad wrote in his book, *Nunamiut: Among Alaska's Inland Eskimos*.

The Anaktuvuk Pass area as photographed in the early 1950s during helicopter reconnaissance of a station site at Anaktuvuk Pass (triangulation party of Walter Helm). Photo by C&GS Season's Report Porter. Photo courtesy of the NOAA Photo Library at http://www.photolib.noaa.gov. Historic C&GS Collection

UAF Chancellor Steve Jones addresses the Ingstad symposium. UAF photo by Todd Paris

Living in Anaktuvuk Pass at the time were 65 Nunamiuts, who had recently adopted village life. Today the population of Anaktuvuk Pass is about 320.

Anaktuvuk Pass is in the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, about 250 miles northwest of Fairbanks and about the same distance southeast of Barrow, where it is surrounded by tall mountains with nearby rivers and lakes. The pass is a historic caribou migration route and the village is the last remaining settlement of the Nunamiut. The original nomadic Nunamiut left the Brooks Range and scattered in the early 1900s, mostly due to the collapse of the caribou population. By the 1940s, several Nunamiut families returned to the area and settled at the broad, treeless pass.

Symposium participants explored various areas of scientific research shared between Norway and Alaska and promoted institutional networks and collaborative projects for closer and more targeted research cooperation. The meeting emphasized the human dimension of arctic change to promote a greater understanding of the effects of change on traditional communities in the Arctic region. Symposium chair was Buck Sharpton, vice chancellor for research at UAF.

For more information on Anaktuvuk Pass, contact: City of Anaktuvuk Pass, P.O. Box 21030, Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska 99721 (907.661.3612) or the Simon Paneak Memorial Museum at www.north-slope.org/nsb/55.htm.
Also see Norway's U.S. website story on the mountain at: norway.org/News/archive/2005/NAMINGINGSTADMOUNTAIN.htm
For more on the region, see the National Park Service site at: nps.gov/gaar/

Global climate change economic study released

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) has called our attention to the findings of the United Kingdom's just-released *Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change*, which addresses the costs of inaction on climate change versus the costs of action. The review, under the aegis of the UK prime minister and chancellor, was commissioned by the chancellor in July last year. It was carried out by Sir Nicholas Stern, head of the Government Economic Service and former World Bank chief economist.

The Stern Review's principal conclusion is that tackling climate change is a pro-growth strategy. The earlier effective action is taken, the less costly it will be. The overall costs of climate change if emissions are not curbed are equivalent to losing at least 5 percent of global gross domestic product each year now and forever; worst-case scenarios increase the loss to 20 percent ($7 trillion). The costs of taking action to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions can be limited to around 1 percent of global gross domestic product per annum. In other words, $1 invested now can save $5 later. The entire review can be found at: www.sternreview.org.uk.

The EESI is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting environmentally sustainable societies through transitions to sustainable social and economic patterns. The group provides information and innovative public policy initiatives in the form of publications, briefings, workshops, and task forces. It carries out policymaker education and analysis projects in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energy, global climate change, agriculture, biofuels, smart growth, and clean bus technology. The organization was founded in 1984 by a bipartisan group of members of Congress who were concerned about energy and environmental issues. The EESI website is at: http://www.eesi.org/.

Forest sciences welcomes two

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by which sawdust and methanol are heated to 900 degrees Fahrenheit to create a bio-oil that can be separated into various grades.

Soria will be in residence at the Palmer Research and Extension Center. He is currently preparing a proposal with the U.S. Forest Service to investigate natural chemical wood preservatives and is also considering work with canola.

Dr. Jingjing Liang, a postdoctoral fellow with the U.S. Forest Service, will join the Forest Sciences Department next July as an assistant professor of forest management. "This position is extremely important to us," said Lewis. "The person in it oversees our Growth and Yield Project, is an important link to our clients in the forest industry and academia, and holds a critical position in our instructional program. We sought a person who could bring forest management at UAF into a leadership position that connects our land-based research with the world-class remote sensing and computing capabilities we have in residence." Liang is well versed in the application of land-generated databases to statistical models relying on remotely-sensed databases. He received his advanced degrees from the University of Wisconsin.

2006 Publications Available

Magazines

Agroborealis 37.2, winter 2005-2006 and 38.1, fall 2006

Circulars

Annual Flowering Plants Evaluations 2005, Circular 131

Annual and Perennial Herb Evaluations 2005, Circular 132

Bulletins

Visitor Preferences for Interpretation in the Kennecott Mill Town, Wrangell-St. National Park, Bulletin 113

Wildland Fire in Alaska, a History of Organized Fire Suppression and Management in the Last Frontier, Bulletlin 114

Miscellaneous Publications

Dragonhead mint (*Dracocephalum parviflorum* Nutt.) as a potential agronomic crop for Alaska, MP 2006-01

Restaurant Interviews to Determine Demand for Baby Greens in Alaska, MP 2006-02

Cyrosols and Arctic Tundra Ecosystem Tour 1 Guidebook, 18th Congress of Soil Science MP 2006-03 e (on line only)

Annual Report 2005, MP 2006-04

Assessing climate change: Did we get it right? MP 2006-05e (on line only). Reprint from *Agroborealis* 38.1

Research Progress Reports

Cultivar Trials on Field-Grown Tomatoes, RPR 45

2005 Potato Variety Trials in the Matanuska Valley, Alaska, RPR 46

Senior Theses

Throw All Experiments to the Winds…Practical Farming and the Fairbanks Agricultural Experiment Station, 1907–1915, ST 2006-01

Research Opportunities for Undergraduates (program summary, not a thesis) ST 2006-02

Preliminary investigation into the use of a dehumidifying kiln for drying wild herbal teas in southeast Alaska, ST 2006-03

Native Plant Materials for Economic Development in Southeast Alaska, ST 2006-04

Notes

The Fairbanks Experiment Farm Centennial celebration in June was attended by about 500 guests, according to an informal headcount. The day-long community event at the farm included interactive displays presesnted by faculty and staff and historical information. SNRAS also participated in the Tanana Valley Farm Tour, a project of the Tanana Valley Famers Market. Tour participants, faculty, and staff attended a Saturday barbecue at the farm.

Travel coordinator **Teri Langton** of the CES/SNRAS business office is now the lead accountant at UAF Grant and Contract Services. Replacing her is **Laura Snyder**, who transferred from the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences November 6 and is available 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. You can contact her at fnlb1@uaf.edu or 474-2734.

Congratulations **Cary de Witt** (geography) and **Scott Rupp** (forest sciences): both have been promoted to associate professor and granted tenure.

Research associate professor **Eva Wiklund** of the Reindeer Research Program has accepted a permanent position as senior meat scientist at AgResearch Ltd. in Hamilton, New Zealand. She will start working there in January 2007, but will retain ties to UAF as an affiliate associate professor.

Research technician **Zhifang (Margaret) Ma** retired in October. She began working for SNRAS in 1999, first for Jenifer McBeath, and most recently for forest sciences labs.

In mid July the University of Alaska Fairbanks College of Fellows hosted its annual fundraiser, **Goodies in the Garden**, at the Georgeson Botanical Garden (GBG). "Sunflowers & Sweets," featured country music, refreshments, and garden experts. About $9000 was raised to help fund a roof for the Drew Ampitheater at the gardens. In August the botanical garden hosted a juried art show, Fabulous Fabrics in Bloom.

One of two **Marsha Melton scholarship** winners this year is natural resource management junior **Katie Schollenberg** of Anchor Point. Winners are selected ed by the Alaska Farm Bureau Board of Directors and representatives of the Melton family. Katie is the daughter of Richard and Shirley Schollenberg. Melton, one of the founding members our school's board of advisors, died in December 2001. She became a board member in 1993, helping to establish bylaws and hone the responsibilities of the board.

When SNRAS graduate Carrie Brown stopped by this summer with her children, she took time to talk with research assistant Tom Malone and look over the job board. She is now working in a temporary posistion with the Forest Sciences gowth and yield program. Photos by Barb Pierson

Last summer the Cooperative Extension Service's **Food Product Development** Program conducted a consumer taste test to help AFES researchers assess barley varieties. Barley flour from several varieties was used to make **barley crackers** for consumer evaluation Cracker samples were prepared in the product development kitchen, which is being used for projects related to commercial development of Alaska-grown food, such as: reindeer meat evaluations (see *Agroborealis* 38.1); evaluating potato varieties for quality as French fries or baked potatoes; evaluating products made from Alaska wild berries.

Coming up February 19-20: The Seventh International Conference on Global Change: Connection to the Arctic (GCCA-7) at Fairbanks, Alaska. Abstract Submission Deadline: Friday, **12/01/06**. More information, including registration forms and abstract submission instructions are at: www.iarc.uaf.edu/workshops/GCCA-7/index.php.

A new *Practical Dictionary of Siberia and the North* includes entries on history, nature, geography, people, economies of the arctic regions, and ethnographic data of indigenous groups throughout the North. It is well illustrated, and the attached CD-ROM contains an additional 2,000 illustrations, photos, and maps, as well as sound tracks with samples of northern ethnic music. A seventeen-member scientific board, and the experts involved in writing the entries represented virtually all of the leading scientific and educational establishments in Russia that focus on the far north. Published by European Publications, Moscow, 2005. Available at: http://www.ruslania.com/.

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