Looking to the Future

Having just completed our Departmental CSREES Review (September 23 – 27, 2007), we now look ahead as we develop and expand our graduate program, and will respond to the forthcoming review recommendations. I remain very optimistic about our future, and as each of our new talented faculty establishes his respective program, I am more convinced than ever of our bright future. Working cooperatively together, we are able to provide our graduate students with the latest technological advances in the various disciplines. We continue to provide excellent instructions in the service courses for undergraduate students, and the new Entomology Minor has been officially approved beginning in the Spring Semester of 2008.

Our state funded faculty and staff positions remained stable during the past year, and we graduated 3 Ph.D. and 3 MSLFS students, while three Ph.D. students had to be dropped for a variety of reasons. We have recruited 4 new Ph.D. and 4 new M.S. students, plus a new online M.S. student for the start of the new 2007/08 academic year. Thus, we begin the 2007 Fall Semester with an enrollment of 24 Ph.D., 13 MSLFS, and one one-line MS student.

Several faculty have relocated to more adequate laboratories in Latham Hall and the Fralin Biotechnology Center and are now able to focus on their research projects. Pesticide Programs had to move out of Agnew Hall in early September due to renovations in the building. The unit is housed temporarily on the third floor of Sandy Hall. Consequently, this has caused some disruption of the pesticide program.

Our Quarantine Facility in Prices Fork has an addition of a new low-temperature cold room, made possible by matching funds from our Dean who has been very supportive of our program. The new cold room is needed to house a new predator that we discovered during foreign exploration for natural enemies of the hemlock woolly adelgid in Japan. We have imported this new species into the USA and it is now under quarantine evaluation as a potential biological control of the hemlock woolly adelgid.

We continue to engage our stakeholders and alumni in departmental activities. Several of our alumni have returned to present seminars and to participate in our CSREES Review. As always, I extend our standing invitation to all our alumni/alumnae, emeritus professors, and friends to visit us whenever they are in the area. My personal appreciation and thanks to our very loyal alumni/alumnae and friends who continue with regular and generous donations to the department.

L. T. Kok
Professor and Department Head

Fall 2007

Virginia Tech
Department of Entomology
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Looking to the Future

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http://www.ento.vt.edu

Editor
Kathy M. Shelor
**Awards and Honors**

*Grace Lim* and *James Mutunga* were both awarded 2nd place for their poster presentation at the 23rd Graduate Research Symposium and Exhibition Awards.

*Don Mullins, Jean Cobb, Pat Hipkins* and *Mike Weaver* were awarded the 2007 Pesticide Stewardship Alliance Award.

*Mike Weaver* was awarded the 2007 Alumni Award for Excellence in Extension.

*Tom Kuhar* and *Rod Youngman* have been selected to serve as 2008 panel reviewers of IPM proposals for the USDA-CSREES sponsored North Central Region IPM Grant Program.

The James McD. Grayson Scholarship for 2007 was awarded to *David Mausel (Ph.D.)* and *Lisa Burley (MSLFS)*.

The Michael J. Kosztarab Scholarship for Outstanding Achievement in Systematic Entomology for 2007 was awarded to *Grace Lim (Ph.D.)* and *Preston Brown (MSLFS)*.

*Dhana Raj Boina* received the 2007 Virginia Crop Production Association Graduate Scholarship. Raj also was awarded a travel grant to attend the 2007 National Meeting of the American Chemical Society in Boston, MA, August 19 - 23, 2007, where he placed 3rd in the Graduate Student Research Poster Symposium.

*Amanda Koppel* was selected by the National Science Foundation Office of International Science and Engineering for the 2007 East Asia and Pacific Summer Institute (EAPSI) Program for China, June 17 - August 11, 2007.

Our department was well represented at the Entomological Society of America Eastern Branch Meeting in Harrisburg, PA held March 18 - 20, 2007. Our students won all three awards for the poster session: *Amanda Koppel* (1st), *Kathy Kamminga* (2nd), and *Nancy Troyano* (3rd). Also, our team, comprised of *Amanda Koppel, Nancy Troyano, Hamilton Allen*, and *Daniel Frank*, placed second in the Linnaean Games competition. *Hamilton Allen, Nancy Adamson*, and *Tim Jordan* each received a book prize as recognition of service as volunteers at the meeting.

*Ksenia Onufrieva* was awarded the Henry and Sylvia Richardson Research Grant, which is awarded to provide research funds to postdoctoral ESA members who have at least one year of promising work experience, are undertaking research in selected areas, and have demonstrated a high level of scholarship. Candidates must be working in insect control by attractants, repellents, biological controls, thermocontrols, or chemical controls. Ksenia’s work in gypsy moth mating disruption technology has greatly expanded the utility of this technique and has helped to move tens of thousands of acres from traditional insecticides into the far more benign mating disruption approach.

*Dini Miller* received the Virginia Tech Chapter Gamma Sigma Delta Extension Award of Merit in April.
Congratulations to Scott Salom for his promotion to Professor and to Tom Kuhar for being granted promotion and tenure to Associate Professor by the University Promotion and Tenure Committee.

Milestones! In April, several of our faculty and staff were recognized for their years of service at Virginia Tech. Doug Pfeiffer 25 years, Benjy Cline 30 years, Sarah Kenley 30 years, Reese Voshell 30 years, and Loke Kok 35 years. Way to go!

**Faculty**

Igor Sharakhov participated in the 18th course on the Biology of Disease Vectors held in Manaus (Amazon), Brazil, June 3 - 16, 2007. The course was sponsored by the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Brazil), by the UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) and by other Brazilian Government agencies. Phillip George, a recipient of the Virginia Tech Post-baccalaureate Research and Education Program fellowship, joined Dr. Sharakhov’s lab this fall.

Rod Youngman is happy to report that his doctoral student, Mr. Siddharth Tiwari, successfully defended on April 26, 2007. Rod had the distinct pleasure of hooding Dr. Tiwari during commencement exercises held in Cassell Coliseum in May. Rod reports that Siddharth’s doctoral research has made substantial contributions to our understanding of the relationship of European corn borer feeding on whole-plant yield loss in corn grown for silage. Previous work of this nature has focused almost exclusively on corn grown for grain. Thus, his findings offer growers in Virginia and other Mid-Atlantic states valuable information on the impact of this pest on corn grown for silage purposes.

Another aspect of Siddharth’s research focused on the impact of European corn borer stalk tunneling on fitness parameters of root knot nematode infesting the roots. This study has generated significant findings indicating that as stalk tunneling increases, the number of root knot nematode juvenile penetrations per root system and eggs per root system decline. His reciprocal experiments on the effect of varying levels of root knot nematode infestations in corn roots on corn borer tunneling produced no significant findings. Although numerous studies have been published on the interactions between different herbivorous insects on a common host plant, few of this nature have been published on insect-nematode interactions on a common host plant.

Dr. Tiwari currently is working as a postdoctoral research associate in Chris Bergh’s program at the Alson H. Smith, Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Winchester, VA. We wish him well.

At the March 2007 annual meeting of the ESA Eastern Branch in Harrisburg, PA, Rod was recognized for his dedicated service as Secretary from 2001 - 2007. In addition, Rod was elected President-Elect by the membership for 2007 - 2008, which means he automatically becomes the next President of the Eastern Branch. He will preside over the March 2009 annual meeting that will be held in Harrisburg, PA.
As part of a USDA grant project, **Rick Fell** and **Don Mullins** took a group of four undergraduate students to Mali, West Africa in January 2007. This was their fourth trip with students to Mali. The students enroll in a 4-credit year long course which involves travel to Mali and participation in a research project. The group stopped in Paris on their return trip and had the opportunity to meet with Laura Barbani, one of Dr. Fell’s former graduate students.

**Loke Kok** presented a paper at the XII International Symposium on Biological Control of Weeds, held at La Grande Motte, France, April 22 - 27, 2007. His paper was titled “Status of Tree of Heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*, in Virginia, USA, and Quarantine Evaluation of *Eucryptorrhynchus brandti* (Harold) (Coleoptera: Curculionidae), a Potential Biological Control Agent”.

**Tom Kuhar** and his family are enjoying life on the Eastern Shore. In June 2007, he was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure and drank a beer or two to celebrate. In May of this year, he successfully graduated his third graduate student, Anna Chapman. This summer he played on a tournament softball team that finished 5th in the Virginia State Tournament (Softball Nation). The same weekend the tournament was played in Virginia Beach, Tom, along with Pete Schultz, visited a pepper grower in Pungo, VA, and found the first state record of a pepper weevil infestation. Pepper weevil is only found in the southernmost of the contiguous United States. It is closely related to the boll weevil.

**Pete Schultz** reports his daughter, Inga, former insect id lab assistant, is now teaching at Falls Church High School in Fairfax County. As a Technical Education teacher, she teaches a class in drawing, another in electronics, etc. She lives in Arlington in a house with 2 other teachers. She enjoys most of her classes though one is particularly challenging (=a royal pain).

Pete just returned from a trip to Germany, which was a family reunion on his father’s side. His knowledge of German was severely tested, but the relatives appreciated the effort and seemed to understand. A few spoke a little English. This family reunion began with everyone going to church together, but from there went on to a hearty dinner with a fair amount of liquid refreshment that went on into the early hours of the next morning.

A group of seven scientists from the Invasive Alien Species Management Group (IAS) of China, led by Dr. Zhang Guo-Liang, visited the department on January 25 - 26, 2007. The two-day session involved presentations between the **Forest Entomology Group** and the visitors, plus a tour of our on- and off-campus facilities. The group had lunch at Mountain Lake, where discussions were held of possible future collaborations on projects of mutual interest in the area of biological control.

**Tree Dellinger** and Steve Swenson celebrated the birth of their daughter, Alexandria Gail Swenson, on June 1, 2007. Ally has been a very easy-going baby, despite some “sibling rivalry” from Oscar, their 4-year-old miniature dachshund. They predict Ally and Oscar will become best friends once Ally begins throwing food all over the place.
Students

The **Alwood Society** had a successful year and welcomed many new members. Last winter the intermural water polo team finished 3rd while the bowling team finished second. The society also gave many tours in the department over the summer as an outreach to the community. This year at Steppin Out, the Alwood Society was able to raise over $400 thanks to Dr. Fell donating the honey to the students. They had a lot of volunteers at the program selling honey as well as preparing the honey and jars to be sold at the fair. In October, the Alwood Society went to Oktoberfest at Mountain Lake and had a wonderful time doing the chicken dance and singing German songs. The Alwood Society is planning to have many more opportunities for fun and fundraising in the coming months, so come on out and have fun with your fellow graduate students.

**Tim Jordan** has had a diverse summer performing personal and lab research including numerous visits to corn fields and golf courses here in Blacksburg and throughout Virginia. He plans to complete his fall field work, which entails splitting and shelling 2000+ corn stalks, by the end of October. Then he hopes to write and defend his Master’s thesis by early 2008. Tim has enjoyed his educational adventure at Virginia Tech, and is interested in returning to Price Hall to pursue a higher degree in Entomology.

Besides learning how to key out native bees and struggling to figure out how to effectively do her field research (still working on that!), **Nancy Adamson** says other highlights of her first year at VT were learning how to graft honey bees (raise queens) and eating lots of raspberries since Laura Maxey and Curt Laub are so generous with their study harvest. She also had a wonderful experience at Mountain Lake Biological Station in a wildlife field course she hopes will be helpful when she starts teaching. Out in the “real world,” the Frederick Master Gardeners (with whom she worked until August 2006) dedicated a garden to Nancy in August 2007. If you visit the Frederick Cooperative Extension in Maryland, you can now enjoy The Nancy Adamson Native Hedgerow Garden--quite a huge honor.

If you are interested in native plants, you may view the brochure about the garden at:

http://www.agnr.umd.edu/Extension/local/Frederick/files/Native%20Hedgerow%20Brochure%202008-06.pdf

Nancy planted a few natives out at the Price’s Fork Lab in spring--and they’re making the bees and wasps pretty happy, especially considering they haven’t been watered all summer.

**Meredith Cassell** is a second year MSLFS candidate and is the current Alwood Society President. She spent another wonderful summer on the Eastern Shore of Virginia working on her project with the bean leaf beetle. Meredith hopes to stick around Blacksburg and pursue a Ph.D. She is also the proud owner of two mischievous kitties named Peanut and Zipper. She would like to attribute her success so far in this program to her wonderful advisors, many close friends and very understanding boyfriend, Charles Shrader.
Amanda Koppel went to China from June - August to perform research on brown marmorated stink bugs. She met a lot of Chinese entomologists and graduate students, traveled to Beijing, Nanjing, Kunming, Xi’an, and Xiuyan, ate a goat heart, and had a kitten fall asleep on her shoe.

Nancy Troyano has had a busy year. In the spring of 2007, Nancy became the captain of our Linnaean team and competed at Eastern Branch ESA meetings. They took second place, which qualifies them to compete in the ESA nationals in San Diego this December. Also, Nancy took third place for poster presentations at Eastern Branch ESA meetings with her poster “Bionomics of Ochlerotatus canadensis in Southwest Virginia, and the Simultaneous Survey for La Crosse virus”. Nancy’s greatest “achievement” this year, however, came on May 10, 2007. Her daughter, Natalie Andrea, was born at 2:55 p.m., weighing in at 4 lbs 13 oz and 19 inches long. Natalie quickly made up for her small size, and continues to amaze Nancy and Tere every day with how fast she’s growing. Nancy spent this summer working in the lab, and managed to take some time off for a trip to New Jersey and Puerto Rico. Tere and Nancy had a civil union in New Jersey on July 28, 2007.

Preston Brown was part of the Blue Ridge Mountains Council of Boy Scouts of America Scouts team that placed sixth overall and second in the coed teams in the national qualifiers in October, 2006 in the Roanoke Valley. They qualified to compete in an international competition in Malta December 7 - 10, 2006, for the World Team Challenge. They were awarded the Most Sporting Team Award, which is given to the team showing best sportsmanship.

Preston and his team are back at it again this year. The team competed in the 2007 US Challenge located in the Poconos Mountains of Pennsylvania from October 11 - 14, 2007. After an exhausting 48 hours of running, mountain biking, and paddling, the team finished 1st in the all-male division and 2nd place overall out of 41 teams! The team now has their sights set on the World Challenge in Nice, France in December, 2007, where they will once again have the opportunity to represent the Boy Scouts of America and Virginia Tech (3 members of the team are Tech alumni) on the international stage.

Each team member will be paying their own way to the World Challenge, but the team must also raise the cost of the entry fee, $11,000. As a part of their fundraising efforts, the team will be offering Whitewater Rafting Trips on the New River Gorge in West Virginia for a minimum of a $100 gift. You can schedule your trip any time between Labor Day and the middle of August 2008. You can follow the success of the team and learn more about the Challenger Competition at:

http://www.challengerworld.com>

Checks should be made payable to the Blue Ridge Mountains Council and sent to Challengerworld BSA PO BOX 7606 Roanoke, VA 24019. If you have questions about the donation or the event contact Preston Brown (276) 759-2436 or email prbrow@vt.edu.
Congratulations to the following students who completed their degrees this past year:

**David Moore** held his MSLFS defense on November 16, 2006, entitled “Evaluation of Insecticidal Products on the Common Bed Bug (*Cimex lectularius* (L.))”. David is now employed by The Steritech Group, Inc. as IPM Project Officer for John’s Hopkins Hospital and the National Institute of Health in Silver Spring, MD.

**Xing Zhang** held his Ph.D. defense on November 28, 2006, entitled “Biogeography and Biosystematics of Plum Curculio, *Conotrachelus nenuphar* (Herbst)/Wolbachia Interactions”.

**Devin Grim** held her MS defense on December 4, 2006, entitled “La Crosse Virus and *Dirofilaria immitis*: Abundance of Potential Vectors in Southwestern Virginia and the Effects of Dual Infection on *Aedes albopictus* and *Ochlerotatus triseriatus*”. Devin is now employed as a Research Specialist at Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of Medicine, Department of Microbiology and Immunology.

**Grace Lim** held her Ph.D. defense on April 4, 2007, which was entitled “Enhancing the Weaver Ant, *Oecophylla smaragdina* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae), for Biological Control of a Shoot Borer, *Hypsipyla robusta* (Lepidoptera: Pyralidae), in Malaysian Mahogany Plantations”. Grace has returned to Malaysia to resume her position at the Forest Research Institute in Selangor, Malaysia.

**Siddharth Tiwari** held his Ph.D. defense on April 26, 2007, entitled “Studies on the Effect of European Corn Borer on Corn Grown for Silage and Belowground Herbivory by *Meloidogyne incognita* in Corn”. Siddharth is working for Chris Bergh at the Alson H. Smith AREC in Winchester as a Post-doctoral Associate.

**Anna Chapman** held her MS defense on April 30, 2007, which was entitled “Optimizing *Trichogramma ostrinia* (Hymenoptera: Trichogrammatidae) Releases to Control European Corn Borer, *Ostrinia nubilalis* (Lepidoptera: Crambidae) in Bell Pepper”. Anna and a friend have been traveling across country camping, hiking, and visiting her brother in El Paso. They are en route back east right now.

**Lisa Burley** held her MSLFS defense on August 2, 2007, entitled “The Effects of Miticides on the Reproductive Physiology of Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera* L.) Queens and Drones”. Lisa is now a BSL-3 Lab Manager in the Vector-Borne Infectious Disease Workgroup in Fralin Hall, working with Zach Adelman and Kevin Myles.

### New Students

We have three new students who joined our program in Spring 2007:

**Gina Davis** (MSLFS) received her B.S. in Forestry Resource Management from Southern Illinois University. Gina comes to us from the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources. She is working with Scott Salom and Loke Kok on biological control of hemlock woolly adelgid.

**Nicole Plaskon** (MSLFS) received her B.S. in Biological Sciences from Virginia Tech. Nicole is working in the Vector-borne Infectious Diseases Workgroup with Kevin Myles.
James Mutunga (Ph.D.) will be working with Jeff Bloomquist. James hails from the eastern part of Kenya, a tropical zone surrounded by a big escarpment, bordering the famous Tsavo and the Yatta Plateau. James received his MSc and BSc in Biochemistry at the Jomo-Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Nairobi-Kenya. Prior to joining Virginia Tech, he worked at the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), Nairobi, as a senior research technician involved in molecular taxonomy of field collected mosquito and biochemical analysis and molecular genotyping of insecticide resistance genes in mosquito populations. James is married to Mercy Kimathi and in July 2007, were blessed with a baby girl, Shanese Mutuku. Mother and baby are currently trying to obtain a VISA and hopefully be joining him in Blacksburg towards the end of the year. Far from studies, James has dedicated his life in community development, focusing on rural communities, campaign against child abuse and neglect. James is the founding director of ‘Community Welfare in Development and Campaign against Child Abuse’ (cowedecca), an NGO based in Eastern Province, Kenya, that has dedicated its efforts in improving the livelihoods of the rural poor through sustainable IGAs, child rights awareness programs and promoting the girl child education.

We have five new students joining our program for Fall 2007:

Jillian Chantos (Ph.D) received her B.S. in Biology from St. Ambrose University and her M.S. in Entomology from Texas A&M University. She will be working with Scott Salom and Loke Kok in the Forest Entomology group.

Nathan Fuller (Ph.D.) from Lewisberry, PA, received his B.S. in Ecology from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania. Nathan will be working with Sally Paulson.

Laura Maxey (MSLFS) from Newport, VA, received a BS in Biology with a concentration in Entomology from Virginia Tech. For the past two summers, Laura has assisted Dr. Pfeiffer and his students with their research. Through this experience, it became obvious that after graduation, she should continue working for him. Therefore, she became his graduate student. Now Laura spends most of her days at Kentland farm in the raspberry and blackberry fields continuing her summer research on the effects of different antifeedant and repellent pesticides against bramble pests, specifically Japanese beetles. When Laura has spare time, she spends it with her new yorkie poo, Jasper. Laura says Jasper is just like her and loves to chase after insects with his favorites being the house fly and ants! Jasper and Laura also enjoy hiking, fishing and spending time with their family.

Heather Story (MSLFS) joins us from Baton Rouge, LA, where she received her B.S. in Entomology from Louisiana State University. Heather will be working with Scott Salom and Loke Kok in biological control.

Michael Wiley (Ph.D.) from Ambler, PA, received his B.S. in Molecular/Cell Biology from Salisbury State University. Michael was part of the Vector-Borne Infectious Diseases Graduate Rotation Program and transferred from Biochemistry to Entomology. He will be working with Zach Adelman and Kevin Myles.
The News Bee

**Staff**

**Rachel Parson** joined Mike Weaver’s Pesticide Safety Education Program (Virginia Tech Pesticide Programs) in August, 2007. Rachel’s primary responsibilities include maintaining private pesticide applicator recertification records for VDACS/Office of Pesticide Services and assisting with educational programs and publications. She was born and raised in Blacksburg. As a daughter of Dick Shaver (Weed Science), she spent a lot of time at Glade Road, Turf Grass Center and Price Hall. Rachel received her B.S. in Wildlife Management from Virginia Tech (94’) and her M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction from Penn State (’99). She, her husband, Shane (BSE ‘94), and their 7 year old son, Jesse, enjoy spending time at their mountain cabin with family and friends and going to Hokie football games.

**Ryan Mays**, from Christiansburg, VA, took Warren Mays’ place in the Department in August, thus assuming his father’s responsibilities. He is stationed at the Insectary and works for Drs. Salom, Kok, and Pfeiffer. Ryan is a biology major at Radford University and plans to graduate next spring. He is interested in the behavior and systematics of Coleoptera—especially Staphylinids and Gyrinids. His other interests include ornithology, biogeography of the southern Appalachians, paleontology, archaeology, and the history of biology, world exploration, colonial America, and World War II.

The Gypsy Moth Information Systems Group has partially lost one of its most colorful characters. **Shahrooz Feizabadi**, who has been a department fixture for over 10 years, has changed his status to part-time and is working from Providence, RI. Shahrooz, who received his Ph.D. in computer science in 2006, decided to pursue academic opportunities in the Boston area. The move also enabled him to actually live in the same city as his wife, an MD who had been working in New Mexico while he completed his degree. Though plagued by inane requests from his pointy-haired boss, Shahrooz was a systems administration wizard and was the primary developer of the Trapper Gadget.

The gypsy moth group also misses **Geoff Preston** who has moved to Charlottesville for family reasons. Geoff now works in county government, which he finds far more rigid and authoritarian than the gypsy moth group. He reports that the dining out opportunities are better there, but he misses the softball teams he was involved with. One consolation is that there’s probably more cricket.

**Susan Nessler**’s big news was the graduation of her son, Reed, from University of Virginia in May. He is now a graduate student in math, still at U.Va. Daughter Laura is also at U.Va., after transferring from the University of British Columbia. Laura plans to double major in theatre and English and has already had two short original dramatic works performed. Susan’s oldest, Graham, is a third-year graduate student in history at the University of Michigan. He really prefers Virginia’s winters and will probably move south the first chance he gets. Susan attended her 35th class reunion at Carleton College last summer, which was great. She says “I almost felt like a college student again (not quite!)”.

Rachel, Jesse and Shane at VT Football Game
Erik Gronning announces his marriage to Cynthia Klein on June 16, 2007. The ceremony was held at Hildene in Manchester, Vermont, during a beautiful summer evening. Cynthia is the Director of the Prints department at Doyle New York. They are living in New York City and are looking forward to never ending adventures. If you would like to contact Erik and Cynthia, they are at 500 East 85th Street, New York, NY 10028 (212) 249-9908, erikgronning@earthlink.net.

Dan Hilburn (MS 1986) is presently working for the Oregon Department of Agriculture where he is Administrator of the Plant Division. Dan is also Chair of Oregon’s Invasive Species Council and member of the State Weed Board and working hard to keep gypsy moth, Japanese beetle, emerald ash borer, and other nasty pests out of the state.

Amy Braccia (Ph.D. 2006) left her postdoctoral research appointment with Reese Voshell in August to assume duties as Assistant Professor of Biology at Hiram College in Hiram, Ohio.

Wang Ren (Ph.D. 1985) was appointed Director and CEO of CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) by the World Bank, located in Washington, DC.

Dana Beegle has a new addition to her family, Quinlan Asa Beegle (aka “The Mighty Quinn”) was born at home (pretty cool experience) on August 13, 2007. He was 8 lbs. 2 oz. and 22 inches long. The whole family is doing great. They now call themselves “The Beegle 5.” Dana is still homeschooling the kids...Olivia is now 6 and in 1st grade and Forest will be 4 in November. Forest goes to a preschool 2 days a week as well as doing the homeschool thing. They are lucky because there are many homeschooling families in Floyd, so they always have lots going. Dana still makes it to Blacksburg occasionally, but now they will be coming more regularly for evening swimming lessons and gymnastics at Virginia Tech, which should be fun. Beegle Landscaping continues to do well. It is in its 7th year now. They now have a full-time estimator and office manager on staff, which has really helped Jon and Dana to have more of a “life” outside the business which has been WONDERFUL.

Therese Schooley announces the birth of her little girl, Catherine Anne, on June 19, 2007. Therese says luckily she’s an easy baby, just like her older brother, James.

Mary Rhoades had a very special vacation in September. She was invited to attend the international scale insect meeting in Portugal. Michael Kosztarab kindly allowed her to go as his accompanying person, so Mary got the conference rate, was able to join the participants for four days of touring Portugal, and listened to papers for a day and a half (good for her retired brain). It was really fun hanging out with scientists for a week (as you know, they are really great people). Mary already knew several of them because they had been in Blacksburg to visit Dr. Kosztarab’s lab. There were many important scale insect workers there whom she had heard about over the years but never met, and it was nice to finally see them. The people of Portugal are warm and generous, the food is good, and the climate is great.

Michael Kosztarab had a very busy year. In December, Michael and Matilda attended the Entomological Society of America National Meetings in Indianapolis, IN, where they met a number of alumni and friends. He gave a seminar talk in the Department in February on “Insect Systematics and the Related Programs at Virginia Tech (1962-92)”. They took a 10-day Seven Caribbean Islands cruise in mid-March with daughter Eva and son-in-law Ken. To his dismay, the collected scale insect samples, pickled in seven tiny vials were confiscated in San Juan, PR, by the agents of the mighty Homeland Security. But on the positive side, his-
olen valet was returned by mail after two months, but without cash and visa card ... He said “there are still some decent finders or “half-decent” robbers at the Charlotte Airport”. At the end of April, they participated in a 5-day Elderhostel Program (EP) covering 3 islands of the Georgia coast, also with EP visited San Francisco and the Sonoma Valley at end of May. After the dry summer, with no grapes to make “wine-vinegar”, Mike took off on a 3-European country tour. On invitation, he consulted at the Transylvanian Sekler National Museum - made two power-point presentations in Budapest and one at the International Symposium on Scale Insect Studies (ISSIS-XI) in Oeiras, Portugal. He used the given opportunities to promote Virginia Tech and passed out brochures for CALS and our Entomology and Horticulture Programs. Mike’s daughter and son-in-law organized a dinner party in the former Natural History Museum building, now Ceritano’s Restaurant, to celebrate his 80th Birthday. The Kosztarabs hosted his first Ph.D. student, Dr. Charles V. Covell, Professor Emeritus of the University of Louisville, who gave a seminar talk on October 4, and also upgraded parts of the Departmental Lepidoptera Collection.

Eric Day was featured on the WDBJ7 evening news on the invasion of ladybird beetles in the New River Valley on October 18, 2006.

**Media Spotlight**

In January, Dateline filmed a follow-up segment at the Dodson Urban Pest Management Laboratory to report on the progress of Dini Miller’s bed bug research program. The original program aired on March 19, 2006.

Scott Salom was featured in The Roanoker Magazine’s July/August issue on Hemlock Wooly Adelgid research. You may view the article at:

http://www.theroanoker.com/features/hemlocksvt/index.cfm

Zach Adelman’s Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences paper, “Nanos gene control DNA Mediates Developmentally-regulated Transposition in the Yellow Fever Mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*” was featured in the July 21, 2007 Medical News Today article “Breeding Disease-free Mosquitos”. You may view the article at:

http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/77182.php

Scott Salom et al. were featured in an article “Japanese Beetle May Help Virginia Tech Entomologists Fight Hemlock-killing Insect” in the Virginia Tech News on September 17, 2007. You may view this article at:


In the October 1, 2007 edition of Newsweek, Bill Gates references the research on mosquitoes of Jeff Bloomquist et al. and Virginia Tech. The article entitled “Saving the World is Within Our Grasp - The Evidence is in: We Can Stop Diseases Like Malaria and TB from Killing Millions of People Each Year” may be viewed at:

http://www.newsweek.com/id/41726
April, 2007 was a tragic month for everyone. On April 2nd, longtime member of our department, Warren T. Mays, passed away. During his 30 years in the Entomology Department, Warren worked for Loke Kok, Scott Salom and Doug Pfeiffer, to name a few. Through contributions of many people, we were able to construct the Warren T. Mays Memorial Deck for Warren’s family. Scotty Bolling and Tom McAvoy were especially instrumental in leading the construction project, with lots of help and manual labor from many others. Also, as part of a community services project, Blacksburg High school lended a helping hand financially and physically to ensure success of the project. Warren’s love of nature and his funny sense of humor is greatly missed.

I would like to dedicate the 2007 News Bee to Warren and to all those affected by the April 16 tragedy. May everyone find peace and solice in the coming together of the Hokie Nation.

Respectfully,

Kathy Shelor
Editor