

Environmental Horticulture NEWS

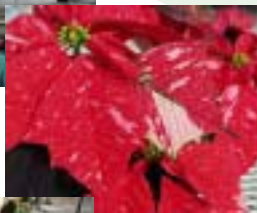
The Bulletin of the Environmental Horticulture Department at the University of Florida
 Winter 2000/Spring 2001 Vol. 7 No. 1

POINSETTIAS HAVE THEIR DAY AT UF

106 varieties of poinsettia, 27 of them new, were exhibited at the 2000 Poinsettia Variety Trial on December 5th and 6th. The University of Florida, Purdue and North Carolina State were the three sites for the National Poinsettia Variety Evaluation, sponsored by five of the major international poinsettia breeders: Ecke, Fischer, Dummen, Oglevee and Selecta. Professor of Floriculture Jim Barrett conducts research into the physiology of flower crops including poinsettias, and has been coordinating this event for several years. Industry visitors came on the 5th, and the trials were open to the public on the 6th. The trials highlighted the new and unusual, as well as the more traditional shapes, sizes and colors of a plant that most celebrators of Christmas nowadays cannot do without. Whereas most of us visualize poinsettias as bright fire engine red, pink or bright white-bracted forms, breeders are going out of their way to tempt the con-



Dr. Jim Barrett coordinates the trials at UF.



sumer and prevent boredom. Streaked, mottled, plum-colored, twisted, and many other forms look completely unrelated to the treelike plant discovered growing on the hillsides of Taxco, Mexico by Joel Robert Poinsett, who sent the plant back to the United States in 1825. The Aztecs cultivated this plant long before it became a Christmas tradition, but the Franciscans are credited with creating a religious connection for poinsettias when they used the plant near Taxco in the Fiesta of Santa Pesebre, a nativity procession. Little did they know that these colorful plants would become a multimillion dollar business, and a cornerstone of the U.S. floriculture industry.

Environmental Horticulture Makes Its Presence Known at FNATS

Although nursery trade shows are usually typified by throngs of eager buyers, sellers and the otherwise horticulturally curious, the ENH Department at UF contributed its own educational spin to the most recent Florida Nursery and Allied Trade Show (FNATS) sponsored by the Florida Nurserymen and Growers Association (FNGA). Held from Wednesday September 20th through Saturday the 23rd, short courses were available for growers, retailers, landscapers, and landscape designers, with **Dr. Tom Yeager** moderating the growers' session. **Dr. Ed Gilman** taught a short course en-

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Bart Schutzman and Judy Wilson in front of the new ENH tradeshow booth

Jackie Host Accepts Fishing Position on Lake Brooklyn

After thirty years with the State of Florida, our Farm Manager, previously Greenhouse Manager, Jackie Host, has retired from Environmental Horticulture. Of those thirty years, more than twenty were with our department. It is safe to say that many generations of undergraduate and graduate students, staff and many faculty have benefited from the expertise and horticultural savvy Jackie brought to her job. Most

of the time, the people who relied upon our facilities here at Environmental Horticulture were not aware that Jackie kept things running smoothly behind the scenes, a fact that bespeaks her proficiency in the position of Farm Manager. Added to horticultural competence were her people skills and friendliness. When help was needed from the workmen at IFAS Facilities, they didn't hesitate because Jackie had a close working relationship with them. When Christmastime came around each year,

she never forgot those who helped the department by distributing our expertly grown poinsettias. For that matter, she also sent other foliage and flowering crops throughout the year, a living reminder that they had a friend in Environmental Horticulture.

Added proof that Jackie cultivated



Jackie (3rd from left) with some of her pals from EH.

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FNATS (continued from pg. 1)

titled "Pruning Established Trees." Additionally, the department chatted with many potential students as well as alumni at its newly designed trade show booth and distributed brochures for its educational programs.

A reception for UF ENH alumni was held Friday evening with a tasty repertoire of food and drink, door prizes and Tom Yeager's horticulture trivia program. A prize was awarded to each person who first and successfully answered each trivia question, designed by the best minds Environmental Horticulture has to offer. This contest wasn't exactly "Who Wants to be a Millionaire," and Tom Yeager wasn't exactly Regis Philbin, but the quiz did re-



Informal gathering outside the ENH reception

mind those present of the long history of our department and the surprising amount of minutiae that can be generated in more than fifty years of history at the University of Florida.



Marie Nelson and Mary Ann Andrews at the reception registration table

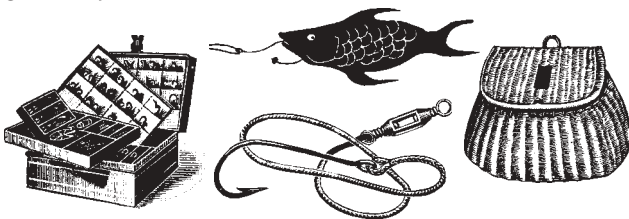


Tom Yeager addressing guests at the reception

Jackie Host (continued from pg. 1)

friends as adroitly as she did plants was the large turnout at the goodbye party held by the Department for Jackie this past September 17th. Her friends from IFAS Facilities Operations put together an old-fashioned fish fry, complete with cole slaw, hush puppies and baked beans, to mention a few. The gifts presented and words spoken at the end of the luncheon were enough to draw tears from a stone. Among the gifts were a framed collage of photographs from Jackie's years in Ornamental / Environmental Horticulture, a beautiful scrapbook with each page designed, created and contributed by a member of the Department, and a nice gift certificate, among others.

Besides leisure time activities at home, Jackie looks forward to visiting her daughter and grandchildren. We all wish Jackie the best. Remember, some people say that "a bad day fishin' is better than a good day at work!"



Jackie showing her enthusiasm for one of her gifts.



Jackie with her successor, Jason Haugh.

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ON NEW FACULTY

Jason Grabosky
Laurie Trenholm
Tom Wichman

Jason Grabosky - Assistant Professor of Landscape Horticulture



One of the newest addition to our Gainesville campus' Environmental Horticulture team is **Jason Grabosky**, a native of Cazenovia, New York, not far from Syracuse.

Jason's guidance counselor in high school told him he was a "heck of a nice kid but would never amount to more than a farm hand on a dirt farm," so he decided agriculture was going to be his chosen trade. Starting at the tender age of fifteen, Jason began working part time at a local landscape firm and "stuck with it." The pursuit of higher education took him from one end of the nation to the other and back, with an AAS degree from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Cobleskill, a BS degree at California Polytechnic Institute (Cal Poly) at San Luis Obispo, and both his MS and PhD degrees from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

Jason's research is in tune with today's growing emphasis on developing and maintaining successful urban

landscapes, especially with our desire to have healthy trees that don't fall over or drop large limbs on people or automobiles and cause needless damage, destruction and liability issues. Jason is also excited about his teaching program, which will utilize our expanding facilities at the ENH tree unit, now formally known as the UF Environmental Landscape Education Laboratory. He will also be conducting research at the newly forming Pine Acres facilities near Citra, where several other departments such as Horticultural Sciences and Agronomy have also obtained research space.

Grabosky comes to Gainesville with his wife Colleen and his two children, Ryan, 6, and Erin, 4. He says he and his wife, who were high school sweethearts and have been together for about 20 years "were dating when the hills were cooling."

Laurie Trenholm - Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Science



A native of Rochester, New York, Laurie Trenholm migrated to Florida's warm climate in 1984. After purchasing a home in Vero Beach, she became interested in all aspects of lawn and garden care, and decided to further her knowledge of horticulture by taking several courses at Indian River Community College. She earned an A.A., and in 1991, began a 130-mile commute to the Ft. Lauderdale Research and Education Center four days per week for her B.S. degree. After four semesters of this grueling 260-mile round trip, which she lovingly refers to as her "64,000 mile degree," Laurie graduated Summa Cum Laude in the Spring of 1994.

Having decided to specialize in Turf Science, Trenholm worked for her M.S. degree at UF in Gainesville with Dr. Al Dudeck from Fall 1994 to Spring 1996, receiving numerous scholarships. In Fall 1996, she began her doctoral studies at the University of Georgia's Department of Crop and Soil Science, researching turfgrass stress physiology and wear tolerance of seashore paspalum and bermuda-grass.

Laurie accepted a research and extension position as Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Science in our department in the Fall of 1999. Her position is based on developing a home lawn program for the State of Florida, which will give her an opportunity to help homeowners manage their portion of the environment. Her research focus will remain on turf stress physiology as it relates to home lawns. She belongs to the Agronomy Society of America, the Crop Science Society of America, the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America, the Georgia Turfgrass Association, the International Turfgrass Research Society, and the National Association of Colleges and Teachers.

Even before the pursuit of horticulture, Laurie was a lover of animals. She was first an equestrian, training and showing hunters and jumpers as well as equitation. Since 1996, while she was in Georgia, Laurie developed a commitment to animal rescue. Now she still enthusiastically pursues this avocation locally and is involved in the formation of "Puppy Hill Farm," a local pet rescue group.

Tom Wichman, Florida Master Gardener Coordinator

Originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Tom Wichman moved to Florida when he was eight, making him a near-native of the state. He has been involved in gardening and horticulture since the age of twelve, when he started working in a retail garden center. Tom's formal horticultural training began at Seminole Community College in Sanford, where he earned an Associate of Arts degree.

He came to UF (then Ornamental Horticulture) as a junior, and graduated in 1986. Following graduation, he co-managed a tree and shrub farm for two years. Changing direction, he became landscape director of a large private estate for the next five and one half years. And most recently, Tom served in Orange County as the Master Gardener Coordinator for six years. When he returned to UF in December, 1999, he succeeded Joan Bradshaw as the new state Master Gardener Coordinator.

Tom is excited about his work here, and hopes to make some progressive changes to the Master Gardener program. He has in mind the



recruitment of younger members through the school system and increasing the exposure of schools to IFAS' Cooperative Extension Service, the parent organization of Master Gardeners. Tom is planning to model his call for young Master Gardeners after the Texas "Junior Master Gardener" program. Tom believes these youthful recruits will be more flexible in adopting and subsequently teaching newer concepts in landscaping maintenance and environmental stewardship to their own parents and others. Tom is also excited about the notion of expanding the coverage of the MG program to all 67 Florida counties, since now only 52 counties are represented with some 3400 master gardeners. Now, however, he has his hands full with the elaborate and time-consuming preparations for the 2001 International Master Gardener Conference (see the article on page 8). If Tom Wichman has his way, horticulture in Florida will definitely move up a notch.

Alumni News

'72 Jon Rackley (BS) and his nursery, Jon's Nursery, Inc., in Eustis, FL, were featured in *Ornamental Outlook* November 2000. He launched a major project in 1990 to dramatically improve water conservation and limit agricultural runoff on a sizeable section of his Lake County nursery, which specializes in woody ornamentals and landscape plants. His progressive idea ushered in a new water conservation concept and at the same time earned him praise from water management regulators, industry peers, and the Florida Department of Agriculture.

'76 Nora Chente Ugalde (BS) has been teaching high school chemistry since 1982, and presently works at Jupiter High School in Jupiter, FL. Her daughter Laelia is at UF majoring in public relations.

David Wadsworth (BS) was named "Grower of the Year" by *Greenhouse Grower* magazine December 1996. (See *Environmental Horticulture News* Summer 1997) *Ornamental Outlook* April 1999 featured the automation he has incorporated in the operation of Suncoast Greenhouses in Seffner, FL, a six acre greenhouse operation producing plugs and rooted cuttings.

Oliver Washington III (MS) has built his Shore Acres Plant Farm, Inc., in Theodore, AL from a small backyard nursery into a 12-acre bedding plant operation serving mass merchandisers and independent retailers along the Gulf Coast regions of Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama.

His nursery was featured in *Southeastern Floriculture*, January/February 1999 and in *Greenhouse Grower* November 1999.

'77 Ned Bradford (BS '77) and wife Kim own Bradford Botanicals in Zellwood, FL where they specialize in foliage plants - mostly *Spathiphyllum* and *Dieffenbachia*. **Bradford** is active in the FNGA and is working on the steering committee for the foliage division. He is on the Board of Directors for the National Foliage Foundation and volunteers with the St. John's River Water Management District, where he is on the Agriculture Advisory Board

and their 20/20 water project. Son Jim is a student at UF.

Kathleen Carleton Ruppert (BS) is assistant extension scientist with the Florida Energy Extension Service in cooperation with the Fannie Mae Corporation, has completed a new publication entitled *Home performance Power: Fannie Mae's Guide to Buying and Maintaining a Green Home*.

'79 Jeff Brower (BS) is Marketing Manager for Ferntrust in Seville, FL. His first position out of UF was in plant propagation.

'81 Susan Cerulean (MS) edited *The Wild Heart of Florida* with Jeff Ripple. In this book, eighteen of Florida's best-loved writers, including Carl Hiaasen, Randy Wayne White, Al Burt, Patrick Smith, and the late Archie Carr, share their affection for Florida's wild and natural areas. **Cerulean** is also co-author of *Florida Wildlife Viewing Guide*. In 1997 the Governor's Council for a Sustainable Florida honored her with an Individual Environmental Educator Award.

'82 Shirley Anderson (BS) participated in the Florida State Horticultural Society Meetings Fall 1999 and Fall 2000. Fall 1999 her talk *Over-seed trial on fairway and putting green bermudagrass* was co-authored with **Dr. A.E. Dudeck**.

'83 Scott Travis (BS) is employed by D & D Tree Farms in Lake Buena Vista, FL. He works in all aspects of the tree farm and consults with other companies.

'88 Joe Durando (MS) with his wife Tracey Giornelli own the 30-acre organic Possum Hollow Farm in Alachua, FL. Possum Hollow was featured on the Parade of Farms tour April 2000. **Durando** sells his produce regularly at the Union Street Farmers Market in Downtown Gainesville.

Paul Gehrke (BS) is head grower and horticulturist at Lovell Farms, Miami, FL.

'89 Trey Rosacker (BS) owns Floral Acres in Palm Beach, Florida. Associated with this is a trellis and supply company for horticultural supplies. He and his wife Lori were married August 1999, and have a daughter Sophia Lee Rosacker born August 4, 2000.

'90 Heidi C. Wernett (PhD) a floriculturist from the U.S., was honored with the

1999 Friendship Award, the high-est award given to foreign experts by the government of China. **Wernett** was appointed an advisor to the Yunnan (province) flower industry in 1996.

'91 Tammera Lee Race (BS), Curator of Endangered Plants at Bok Tower Gardens in Lake Wales, FL, went to Oxford Botanic Gardens, Oxford, England during May and June 1999 as part of Bok Tower's staff exchange program. **Race** worked in five different areas of the Gardens and had opportunities to visit other gardens in England.

'92 Bill Abetz (BS) is a grower at Topiary Creations in Naples, FL.

Dena Rae Garvue (MS) is the Curator of Endangered Species at the Fairchild Tropical Garden, Miami, FL. She is responsible for the selection, acquisition, curation, and interpretation of an *ex situ* germplasm collection of rare and endangered plants of South Florida, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.

'93 Claudia Craven Holly (BS) was employed by Weeks Development Company, a large South Eastern Development Group in Atlanta, GA, where she was chief landscape estimator for the Southeastern area, but now is a full time Mom to Austin Holly born May 27, 1999.

Jane Whittaker Johnson (MS) and Lee R. Johnson proudly announce the birth of Ian Alexander Whittaker Johnson April 30, 2000.

John Pellerito (BS) works for Dr. Randy Caton and Dr. Glenn Taylor both oral and maxillofacial surgeons in Gainesville, FL.

Jose A. (Zé) Monteiro (PhD) and his wife Isabel are pleased to announce the birth of Maria Emilia on December 31, 1999. **Monteiro** is a Professor at Universidade Do Algarve in Portugal.

'95 Brian Broome (BS) Works at Disney World where he is a foreman in the Magic Kingdom.

Murdock Ray Gillis (MS) and his wife Emily proudly announce the birth of Anna Catherine born June 1, 1999. **Gillis** is still teaching science and agriculture at Ponce de Leon High School, Ponce de Leon, FL.

Randy McQueen (BS) performs research for Chem Lawn in Atlanta, GA, where he does product screening of insecticides,

fertilizer and herbicides. **McQueen** married Elizabeth Ahmuty in October 1998.

'96 Sherri Chandler Angels (BS) has relocated to Texas and is employed by Monterey Mushrooms as a research scientist developing new strains of exotic mushrooms.

Eric Escobar (BS) is the general manager of several family enterprises including a construction company, restaurant franchises in Central America, and overseeing his family's 290 acres of coffee, 20 acres of Bird of Paradise and 12 acres of *Agapanthus*.

Barry Greenwalt (BS) is superintendent of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Golf Course at Ironwood Golf Course in Gainesville, FL, one of eight national recipients of Golf Course Superintendent Association of America - Environmental Stewardship Merit Award. **Greenwalt** was recognized for his efforts in wildlife and habitat enhancement and integrated pest management.

David Ressler (BS) was recognized along with his employer Cherry Lake Tree Farm, Groveland, FL, in the December 2000 issue of *Ornamental Outlook*. Cherry Lake was designated Operation of the Year 2000. **Ressler**, who is Director of Production, says he doesn't hesitate to show growers the nuts and bolts of his operation, from the semiautomated potting shed to the acres of trees planted in new "airpots." The airpots, he says, permit tree roots to self-prune, while allowing Cherry Lake to ship trees without worrying about excessive containers, which would otherwise clutter their distribution lines and landfills.

Rick Schoellhorn (PhD) conducts studies at the West Florida Research and Education Center (WFREC), Environmental Horticulture Department, UF, Milton FL on tropical perennial research gardens where he focuses on plants with a hardiness of USDA zone 7 or higher. The perennial test gardens are used to evaluate heat tolerance, flowering, growth, and performance of 78 perennial species.

Marcello Siqueira (BS) February 1999 was sponsored on a trip around the world by his employer, Kerry's Bromeliads of Homestead, FL. He visited Brazil, Holland, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, and San Francisco to Miami visiting producers, suppliers, and tissue culture labs.

Jan Weinbrecht (MS) traveled to New Orleans February 2000 to attend the Golf Course Superintendents' Association of America (GCSAA) Conference in New Orleans.

'97 Tim Spann (BS) is now a graduate student in the Horticultural Sciences department at UF with advisor Rebecca Darnell. He worked at American Farms in Naples, Florida for eight months and then was Propagation Manager at Hatchett Creek Farms in Gainesville before to returning to UF.

'98 Karen Childs (MS) is employed by the Mid-Florida Research and Education Center in Apopka, FL. She is a Biological Scientist working for **Richard Beeson** on woody ornamentals. Formerly she was an editor for *Ornamental Outlook*. An article *Alternative Irrigation*, published in *American Nurseryman*, October 2000, was written by **Childs, Beeson, and John Haydu**.

Larbi Gallagher (BS) is a graduate student in Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology at UF.

Lisa Hackmann (BS) is Nursery Manager for Big Tree Nursery, Ft Myers, FL.

Tom Kenny (BS) accepted the position of Assistant Superintendent at Ibis Golf and Country Club in West Palm Beach, FL. He started in January, 2000 and is the director of golf maintenance.

Betsy Spillers (MS-NT, BS '96) purchased the Plant Shoppe in Gainesville Florida on June 28, 1999. Previously to that she was the plant buyer and manager of the garden center at Lowe's in Altamonte Springs, FL.

Travis Teuton (BS) is a graduate student in Agronomy at UF. He was a turf representative for ProSource One in Plymouth, FL where he sold chemicals and fertilizers to golf courses before returning to UF.

'99 Chris Dervinis (MS) is working in the Forestry Department at UF for Dr. John Davis. He is the project manager for a study in defensive genes in forest trees.

John Feidt (BS) is senior floriculturist at Innisbrook Golf Course west of Tampa, FL.

Basma El Yacoubi (MS) is working towards her PhD in Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology at UF.

Mark Highland (BS) is a landscape contractor with Living Landscapes in Portland OR. This is an environmentally responsible landscaping company.

Lena Landherr (MS) has taken a position as lab technician at Pennsylvania State University in plant molecular systematics and evolution.

Elan Miavitz (MS-NT) is the Master Gardener Coordinator for Collier County with the title of Urban Horticultural Agent. She is developing a horticultural learning center and writes a column for the *Naples Daily News*. **Miavitz** was featured in the Gardening Section of the *Gainesville Sun* May 1, 1999 for her work on bereavement gardening. **Miavitz** and **Jared Brown** were married March 6, 1999 in the Chapel of the Incarnation in Gainesville, FL.

Carmine Oliverio (BS) is pursuing an MS in Environmental Engineering at UF.

Svoboda Vladimirova Pennisi (PhD) is Assistant Professor of Horticulture at the University of Georgia, Tifton, GA. Her article *Selecting the Best Shade Levels for Variegated Plant Production* was featured in *Southeastern Floriculture*, July/August, 2000.

Rodney Rubright (BS) and Angela Dawn Austin were married September 9, 2000 at Leu Gardens, Orlando, FL. **Rubright** manages the family-owned Spring Hill Nursery in Apopka, FL.

Jenifer Hitchcock Rulka (BS) has the title Environmental Horticulture Agent I coordinating the Orange County Master Gardener Program. She and Edward T. Rulka were married on May 27, 2000.

Carl Wallack (BS), a teacher at South Plantation High School, has been named Environmental Educator of the Year. **Wallack** was honored for establishing programs in hydroponics, aqua culture, floriculture and small animal care at his school. In addition, his students worked with elementary school students on environmental projects. **Wallack** also formed partnerships with Nova Southeastern University, John Lloyd Beach State Recreation Area, the South Florida Water Management District the city of Plantation and various civic groups.

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Graduate Student Vignettes

Nathan Eisner was born and raised in Manitowoc, Wisconsin on the shores of Lake Michigan, a part of the United States with some of the most majestic trees imaginable: sugar maple, American elm, white oak, ginkgo, and balsam fir. As a child he planted trees with his father on the family property, in area parks and on Arbor Day celebra-



tions. Trees were always a part of his life. His academic interests were always in the science arena and he attended several science camps as a youth. During his high school years he participated in football, and track and field, but making good grades was always important. The State of Wisconsin has many excellent four-year Universities, so **Nathan** chose the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, where he pursued a degree in Urban Forestry. While there, he was involved with a student group called the Student Society of Arboriculture, a student affiliate of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).

A pivotal point in **Nathan's** student life came when he heard **Dr. Ed Gilman** of the Environmental Horticulture Department speak at a conference about his arboriculture research. He knew he wanted to continue his education beyond his B.S., so he got in touch with **Gilman**; before the year was up, he was accepted into the Environmental Horticulture Graduate Program with **Ed Gilman** as his major professor.

Nathan's research includes pruning studies on shade trees and its effect on decay-resistance in branches, with a focus on mature tree care. The main interests are decay in shade trees, tree structure and increasing tree longevity through proper pruning. His research looks at branch defense zones in red maple and live oak and the effect of branch to trunk size relationships on this zone. He is also investigating how to control these ratios to stimulate or induce these branch defense zones in branches normally susceptible to decay. This research is focused towards maintaining the health of trees in the urban environment. Recently, **Nathan** was awarded the Windermere Garden Club Scholarship and the ENH Graduate Student Association Scholarship.

Tammy Kohleppel was born and raised on a farm about 20 miles from San Antonio, Texas. There was always a big garden at the family home and as a small child, **Tammy** and her two younger sisters picked vegetables from it. At first she didn't care for gardening, but as the years went by she grew to enjoy it especially since her mother claimed it was up to the girls to produce a bountiful harvest



because she herself had a black thumb. Because of the rural environment, her education was in very small schools but **Tammy** felt the teachers and curriculum were good, though the selection was not so broad.

After high school, she attended San Antonio Community College and later transferred to Texas A & M in College Station, TX. Her interest was in landscape architecture and horticulture. The professor who taught the horticulture class made the subject matter fascinating enough to focus **Tammy** on horticulture. In fact, at this point she declared horticulture her major. She made the acquaintance of her major professor in the Environmental Horticulture Department at UF, **Dr. Jennifer Bradley**, while she was a teaching assistant for landscape horticulture at Texas A & M. It was because of **Dr. Bradley** that **Tammy** came to UF in Summer 1997.

With her master's research, **Tammy** hopes to discover whether visits to a botanic garden impact the stress level of visitors. **Tammy** will continue this research for her Ph.D.

Gisele Martins was born in São Paulo, Brazil. One of her earliest pleasant memories is the gardening she did with her father on the family property. It was a garden filled with vegetables, flowers, and fruits, and the mango, a delectable tropical fruit, was her favorite. **Gisele** gardened throughout her childhood and formative years.



High school or *colegio*, is very different in Brazil from the United States as students do not participate in clubs or outside activities. Academics are top-priority and coursework is very rigorous and time-consuming. At the end of *Colegio* is a very demanding final examination, a requirement for admission to any University. **Gisele** passed the examination on her first try and then went on to study at the University of São Paulo in Piracicaba, Brazil. She studied agronomy, a five year program which included horticulture, plant pathology, soil and water science, entomology, economics, sociology, animal science, anatomy and physiology. At first she had no choice in classes but later on was able to concentrate more on horticulture and diseases of vegetables, fruits and ornamental plants. During her last year at the University, she participated in a student trip to Europe to visit other universities, companies and farms relating to agronomy.

She graduated December, 1989 and went to work for a Japanese company in their tissue culture lab in the west-central region of Brazil. **Gisele** was in charge of micro-propagation of orchids and during this time she went to Japan to study biotechnology. In 1992 she left this position to open a small business specializing in garden management and garden design. But in 1997 she returned

to academic life, and was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study plant propagation at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. She received her M.S. in the Summer of 1999.

In Fall 1999, **Gisele** entered the University of Florida, EH Dep't to study with **Dr. Tom Yeager**. Her goal is a Ph.D. in plant nutrition. Upon completing her degree, she would like to return to Brazil to become a university professor.

Hector Perez is the child of Cuban immigrants. His parents came to the U.S. in the late 50's and settled in Hollywood, FL. Shortly thereafter, the family moved to West Palm Beach, where **Hector** was born in 1971. **Hector** always enjoyed the outdoors, and remembers planting and growing tomatoes with his Dad at the age of 7 or 8. For a science fair project they put together an experiment with avocado seeds to show how the seeds germinated. Toothpicks were placed in the sides of the seeds as they balanced on jars filled with water. He was always enthusiastic about yardwork on the family's property, mowing the grass, clipping the bushes and trees, and mulching the plants.



Hector became interested in the beach and water activities such as scuba diving and surfing during high school. This led to his interest in beach preservation. He could see how urban growth was changing the beach, eroding it and diminishing the development of native plants. After finishing high school in 1989 he entered Palm Beach Community College, followed by Florida Atlantic University, where he earned his B.S. degree in 1993 in small business management. During this time he started a lawn and landscaping business with a friend and continued this business throughout his undergraduate years. Leaving the lawn business, **Hector** went to work as a sales representative for Foods USA in Jupiter, FL but found he preferred working outdoors instead of in an office.

His interest in the outdoors resurfaced when **Hector** discovered that the University of Florida had a horticulture program and he was accepted in 1995 as a post baccalaureate student in the Department of Environmental Horticulture. His internship at Fairchild Tropical Garden in 1996 reaffirmed his interest in horticulture, native plants, and endangered species. After graduating with his second degree in Environmental Horticulture in 1997, he went back to south Florida to work for Boynton Botanicals in Boynton Beach, FL. Fall 1998 found **Hector** back at UF and the Environmental Horticulture Department, where he is working with **Dr. Bijan Dehgan** testing the effects of seed treatments such as acid scarification, gibberelic acid and heat on the germinate rates, of native and endangered plants from Florida. After he receives his Master's degree, he would like to continue his work on Florida's native and endangered plant communities.

Hector has received the Alpha Zeta Graduate Student of the Year award 2000-2001, the Jack L. Fry Graduate Student Teaching Award 2000-2001, and the ENH Graduate Student Association Scholarship.

ALUMNI NEWS continued from pg. 5

Claire Brooks Williams (BS) is the Urban Gardening Extension Educator Agent for Marion County, Indianapolis, Indiana.

'00 **Jennifer Norris Bray** (BS) is working for Rent-o-Kill in the Oaks Mall, Gainesville, FL.

Morgan Brown (BS) is employed by the Polo Club of Boca Raton as Assistant Superintendent. He will be in charge of his own course, with about 25 employees.

Donna Clevenger (MS) has taken a position with the USDA in Ft Pierce as a technician.

Federico Fiallos (BS) is Deciduous Product Administrator with Del Monte in Miami, FL.

Wesley Higgins (PhD) is Director of Systematics and Plant Identification at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota, FL.

Hsieh-I Ho (MS-NT) is a graduate student in Computer Science at UF.

Leanne Pyle (BS) recently returned from an eight-month internship in the Netherlands, where she worked with a variety of bulbs. She will marry Richard Valentine (MAB '00) March 25, 2001 in Des Moines, IA in a two story greenhouse that is part of a Botanical Center, surrounded by tulips, daffodils and hyacinths.

Daya Ranamukhaarachchi (PhD) is employed by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta GA, where he works on chronic fatigue syndrome.

Sonja Skelly (PhD) is an Assistant Extension Professor at Mississippi State University's Department of Plant and Soil Sciences.

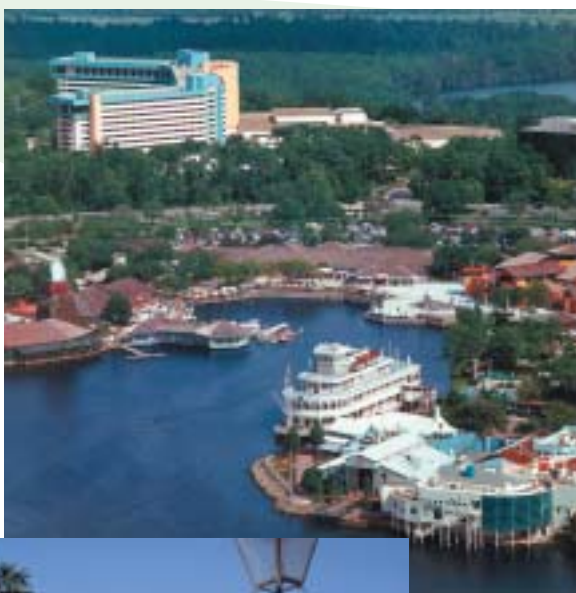
John "Whit" Williams (BS) began a grower position at Agri-Starts January 15, 2001 in Apopka, FL. **Williams** also has a BS in Finance ('86) and a Masters of Business Administration from the University of North Florida ('93).

We need you! Please contact us by phone, letter, or fax with any milestones in your professional or personal lives, and especially any change of address! Thank You!



Preparations Underway for 2001 International Master Gardener Conference

The University of Florida and the Florida's Master Gardener Program are co-hosting "The Magic of Gardening", the 2001 International Master Gardener Conference and Trade Show from May 28-June 1, 2001 at the Hilton in the Walt Disney World® Resort. There will be nationally recognized speakers such as Rebecca Kolls, René van Rems, Ric Mikula, and many others. Numerous educational sessions and hands-on workshops will cover a wide range of subjects, certain to spark one's interest. A trade show highlighting horticultural products will display some of the new gadgets for gardeners. The conference is being held during the Epcot International Flower and Garden Festival, an annual event highlighted by millions of flowers,



fanciful topiaries and educational presentations delivered by University of Florida faculty, Disney horticulturists, and experts from around the country. The conference agenda includes a "special" day at Epcot. The nominal fee will provide attendees with a two hour early entrance into the World showcase portion of Epcot and a self guided walking tour of the International Flower and Garden Festival. From 11:30am-12:15pm a Great American Gardener Educational Presentation will feature Ric Mikula, author of "The Family Butterfly Book." The rest of the day is on one's own at Epcot. That evening, attendees will end the night with a bang: a private dessert reception at Epcot's French Island with front row viewing of the evening finale, the All New IlluminNations: Reflections of Earth. We believe everyone will be talking about this conference for years to come. Tom Wichman, the Master Gardener coordinator for Florida, is confident the 2001 "The Magic of Gardening" International Master Gardener Conference and Trade Show will be a treat for all who attend.

Scholarships, Fellowships and Grants - Second half of 2000.

In the year 2000, our students garnered over \$111,000 in scholarships, fellowships and grants. Below are the awards they received during the last half of the year.

STUDENT

Kristin Barry
Jennifer Norris Bray

Henry Bryant
Sherie Burch
Michael Darcangelo – Ft. L.
Greg Chevalier

Kevin Davis – Ft. L.
Erin Eckhardt
Nathan Eisner
Federico Fiallos
Theresa Friday - Milton
Gary Gorecki – Ft. L.
Chris Gramling
Jenny Hayes

Thaddeus Hunt

Tammy Kohlleppel
Cerina Lamar
Shelly Langshaw – Milton
Cary Levins – Milton
Loida Montalvo Ft. L.
Challen Mullen
Trisha Muratore – Ft. L.
Christina Perez

Hector Perez

William Pescara
Wayne Phillips - Milton

SCHOLARSHIP / AWARD

Alumni Fellowship
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp.
Batson Sch.
Phelps Sch.
Sweetwater Oaks Garden Club
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
General Sch. (FTGA)
Aventis Sch.

Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
Farm Credit Banks
Windermere Garden Club Sch.
Batson Sch.
Batson Sch.
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
Batson Sch.
Phelps Sch.

E.T. York Award of Merit –
Outstanding Junior
Brannan Sch.
Phelps Sch.

Alumni Fellowship
Phelps Sch.
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
Batson Sch.
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
Phelps Sch.
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
Phelps Sch.
Batson Sch.

Alpha Zeta Graduate
Student of the Year
Jack L. Fry Graduate Student
Teaching Award
Phelps Sch.
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
Max J. McQuade Sch.
(FTGA)

STUDENT

Douglas Porter

Jarod A. Prentice – Milton
Meghan Pressley
Leanne Pyle
Josiah Raymer - Milton
Elizabeth Ritchey
Jennifer Roll

Joseph Shook

Sonja Skelly
Robert Steinlein
Beverly Struzick - Milton
Dong Yul Sung
Andrew Sutherland – Ft. L.

Adam Thomas
Stephen Toomoth

Susan Wagner – Ft. L.
John Williams

Justin Winn

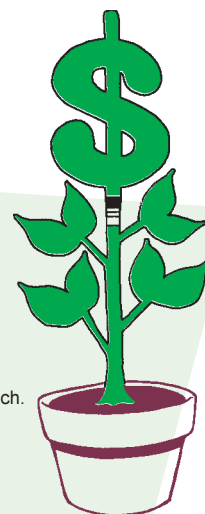
SCHOLARSHIP / AWARD

Frank Ward Sch. (FTGA)
Aventis Sch.
Batson Sch.
Phelps Sch.
FNGA – Big Bend Chapter
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
Phelps Sch.
Phelps Sch.
Batson Sch.

Alpha Zeta Undergrad. Student of the Year
Lakes & Hills Garden Club Sch.
SHARE

Phelps Sch.
FNGA – Big Bend
IFAS Travel Grant
Batson Sch.
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
IFAS Travel Grant
Florida Rural Rehab. Corp. Sch.
Phelps Sch.

FNGA – Dade Co. - Stan Weyrick Memorial Sch.
GC Horn Sch. (FTGA)
Phelps Sch.
Windermere Garden Club Sch.
FNGA – Big Bend Sch.
Farm Credit Banks Sch.
Men's Garden Club of Jacksonville Sch.
Batson Sch.
Phelps Sch.



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