Partnership program receives ADEM grants to assist local recycling efforts

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management on Aug. 13 awarded grants totaling $120,139 to help local recycling efforts at Auburn University, Lee County and the cities of Auburn and Opelika.

The university and local governments are members of the Lee County Recycling Partnership, which is seeking to increase recycling rates in their individual programs and ultimately establish a centralized facility for countywide recycling collection, processing and marketing. The university program will receive $40,829 from the grant to support campus recycling activities. The remaining local funds will be divided among city and county programs.

Gregg E. Newschwander, professor of nursing and chair of the Department of Nursing at the University of Virginia’s College at Wise, has been named dean of the schools of nursing at Auburn University and Auburn Montgomery.

“Dr. Newschwander brings to Auburn significant experience in strategic planning, program expansion and new program development,” Provost Mary Ellen Mazey said in announcing the appointment. “His administrative and academic leadership combined with his vast clinical experience make him a perfect fit to lead the Auburn and Auburn Montgomery programs.”

With more than 20 years of undergraduate and graduate teaching experience, Newschwander previously held administrative positions at the University of Vermont, The Catholic University of America and the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. He has remained active in clinical practice throughout his career, with expertise in pediatric emergency and trauma nursing.

Newschwander was selected for the Auburn job from a list of four finalists following a national search and will begin work Dec. 1. At Auburn and AUM, he will work collaboratively with the academic colleges and schools to provide leadership to enhance and promote existing programs, to develop innovative new programs and to recruit high-quality students. He will also be instrumental in shaping and executing the strategic plans for both campuses.

“I’m looking forward to working with the talented faculty, staff and students at Auburn and AUM,” Newschwander said. “There is a lot going on in health care right now, in delivery systems as well as finance. Preparing students for successful practice in the 21st century will require a different approach: one that is more diverse, more collaborative, more multidisciplinary in nature. I believe Auburn and AUM understand this and are well positioned to provide students with the best possible start for what will be a challenging and rewarding career.”

Prior to his appointment at the University of Virginia’s College at Wise, Newschwander was the chair of the department of nursing at the University of Vermont in Burlington for four years. During that time, he was responsible for the administration of both the undergraduate and graduate nursing programs which included 400 students and 40 full- and part-time faculty.

Newschwander served for 10 years as the assistant dean for student affairs in the School of Nursing at the University of Virginia. In that position, he started the UVA International Studies Program in Comparative Health Care at Oxford University in England.

“Innovations in instructional design and delivery are changing the face of nursing education,” Newschwander said. “From what I can see, the Schools of Nursing at Auburn offer a unique opportunity to assume a leadership role in the preparation of nursing professionals at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.”

Newschwander holds a bachelor’s degree from Rutgers University’s College of Nursing and a master’s from the University of Colorado’s School of Nursing, where his major was pediatrics and his clinical focus was the primary health care of adolescents. He received his doctorate from Marquette University’s School of Education.

He has received research funding through the Department of Health and Human Services and the Health Resources and Services Administration, published in nursing and education journals and presented his research findings in the United States and Canada.

Newschwander is a member of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, and the Virginia Association of Colleges of Nursing, which he serves as president. He has been elected to Sigma Theta Tau, the International Honor Society of Nursing, the Raven Society at the University of Virginia and other honor societies.

Newschwander succeeds Barbara Witt, who is retiring. Witt became dean of the Auburn Montgomery School of Nursing in 1998. Shortly thereafter, she was given the responsibility of consolidating the administration of the schools of nursing at AUM and Auburn University. She has led both nursing schools for 10 years.

— Katie Wilder
At Loachapoka school

Education study seeks to motivate children through phys ed

A $73,166 National Institutes of Health grant will enable three Department of Kinesiology faculty members to examine the influence that two differing instructional approaches for physical education have on the activity levels of African-American children from rural backgrounds.

Mary Rudisill, Leah Robinson and Danielle Wadsworth are working with children at Loachapoka Elementary School in an effort to learn which approaches to physical education best promote high activity levels and healthy lifestyle habits for children who might otherwise be at risk of becoming obese and developing related medical complications. Their study is titled, “Exploring physical activity response to different motivational climates in rural African-American children: A school-based approach to increasing physical activity through physical education.”

Rudisill, a Wayne T. Smith distinguished professor and department head, and Robinson, an assistant professor, specialize in motor behavior. Wadsworth, an assistant professor, specializes in health promotion. Their project coincides with the recent release of data by the State of Alabama showing that 18 percent of state’s young children are classified as obese. The percentage has risen each year over a prolonged period and includes a high number of African-American children in Alabama’s rural counties. Because sedentary behavior is linked to obesity in children, Rudisill, Robinson and Wadsworth will investigate the role physical education programming plays in the physical activity of children ages 5-8.

The researchers will look at results achieved through “mastery motivational climate” physical education programming versus results from the more traditional “low autonomy” physical education programming. The former method emphasizes the autonomy of the child, while the latter approach is the teacher-centered form most commonly used in physical education classroom settings.

The researchers will test the hypothesis that the “mastery motivational climate,” which focuses on students’ motivational levels and learning processes, will promote higher levels of physical activity in children. Heart rate monitors, pedometers and observation of fitness instruction periods will enable the researchers to measure the results of both approaches to physical education programming.

Aside from encouraging young students to lead active lifestyles, the study will enable Loachapoka Elementary School to add $5,000 in physical education equipment as a result of its participation.

— Troy Johnson

Mullen produces second edition of groundbreaking entomology book

Auburn Entomology Professor Gary Mullen has published an extensively revised and updated second edition of his earlier, groundbreaking book on disease-transmitting insects.

Mullen was widely recognized in biology fields in 2002, when he published a college textbook that gave graduate and upper-level undergraduate students studying disease-transmitting insects at universities across the country the first all-new comprehensive course book in decades.

Like the original, now-widely used “Medical and Veterinary Entomology,” Mullen and Lance Durden of Georgia Southern University compiled and edited the second edition, which covers 22 groups of insects and arachnids, such as spiders, that can transmit life-threatening diseases, including malaria and West Nile virus, to people and animals.

The first edition of “Medical and Veterinary Entomology” appeared in a fall 2005 episode of CSI Miami in which a forensic entomologist determined the victim’s time of death based on insects in the remains.

The latest edition also includes three new chapters, an appendix of insect- and arachnid-related viruses, a 1,700-word glossary that Mullen produced and new images, illustrations and maps. In addition to editing submissions from 32 nationally and internationally recognized experts who contributed to the book, Mullen authored nine of the chapters.
With help from Horticulture Department, Ariccia chefs go poolside for fresh herbs to serve at Italian restaurant

Guests at The Hotel at Auburn University are sure to notice the beautifully landscaped pool area. What they might not notice is that the area includes a bountiful herb garden providing the hotel’s restaurant with the freshest herbs during the South’s long growing season.

Prepared and cultivated by Auburn’s College of Agriculture, the garden is one of the latest partnerships between the hotel and the university.

Parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, basil, mint, oregano, chives and a bit of lavender are among the aromatic herbs that flourish against a backdrop of muscadine and scuppernong vines in the garden, which also contains a flowing fountain.

Almost every morning from late spring through fall, John Hamme, executive chef of the Ariccia Italian Trattoria inside the hotel, visits the herb garden. With scissors in hand, he starts snipping, not stopping until his large wicker gathering basket is filled with a medley of fragrant herbs.

In Italy, it’s a culinary custom to use the freshest ingredients, and at Ariccia — named after the ancient town of Aricia, Italy — Hamme honors that tradition by growing some of his own ingredients and by purchasing as many farm-fresh fruits, vegetables, meats and other ingredients as possible from producers across the state through community-supported agriculture partnerships.

About four years ago, Hans van der Reijden, managing director of operations at the university-owned hotel and conference center, decided that, given the restaurant’s focus on freshness, Ariccia should have an on-site container herb garden in the pool area, where chefs could gather herbs one minute and have them in the kitchen the next.

There was just one problem.

“Of course, the garden must be extremely attractive and healthy and well maintained at all times,” van der Reijden says, “but we have no gardeners on staff.”

This is where, in late 2006, the College of Agriculture entered the scene.

The obvious prospective collaborator on the herb garden project was the College of Agriculture’s Horticulture Department. Van der Reijden enlisted the help of Cynthia Channell-Butcher, an academic program administrator in the Horticulture Department who’s also an avid gardener and grows herbs.

Channell-Butcher, in turn, recruited Jane Hoehaver, director of the college’s Plant Science Research Center. Hamme, Hoehaver and Channell-Butcher work together to make the garden a success. Hamme specifies the herbs to be grown, Hoehaver gets the plants started in a greenhouse at the research center and Channell-Butcher takes things from there.

In spring 2007, Channell-Butcher planted the first crop of herbs. That fall, van der Reijden brought in a landscape architect who designed a beautiful garden space, running the length of the brick wall parallel to the pool, filled with raised beds and enclosed by a knee-high wooden fence.

Channell-Butcher and her brothers completed the space by donating a fountain to the garden in memory of their father, 1963 Auburn alumnus Dewey Bowes Channell of Huntsville who died in 2005. A plaque at the fountain’s base identifies it as a memorial to Channell, given by his three children.

Another plaque, displayed by the wrought-iron gate to the pool area, notes that the herb garden is a collaborative project of the hotel and conference center, the College of Agriculture, the Horticulture Department and the Plant Research Center.

All participants say the garden has been a success. In mid-April, Channell-Butcher and Hoehaver planted this year’s garden, and Hamme is once again harvesting fresh, fragrant herbs.

— Jamie Creamer and Katie Wilder

New SEC Academic Network takes off-field look at Auburn

Auburn is joining the 11 other Southeastern Conference institutions in launching the SEC Academic Network, a Web site designed to promote academic endeavors of SEC universities using ESPN360.com technology.

The network, which was undergoing a test run this week, will be online at www.seacademicnetwork.com.

“We welcome the chance to showcase academic success stories with our peers in the SEC,” said Auburn President Jay Gogue. “By using a platform that normally features athletics, we’re able to reach a dedicated fan audience that can take pride in what’s happening both off and on the field.”

“The SEC Academic Network will enable us to better tell the Auburn University story to a worldwide audience,” said Auburn Director of Athletics Jay Jacobs.

“We are committed to supporting the academic mission of Auburn University, and this visionary platform made possible by the Southeastern Conference and ESPN360.com technology is a giant step forward in helping us better promote Auburn’s academic endeavors.”

The network, established in partnership with ESPN and the SEC member universities, will feature content from each institution ranging from research, innovation and economic development to community partnerships, civic engagement and service.
had an average pre-MBA salary of $33,000. That aver-
as tuition, required fees and foregone compensation.
their first five years out of business school to costs such
five-year MBA gain, Forbes compared their earnings in
ment” for MBA graduates of the class of 2004.
ranking measures the best five-year “return on invest-
program in Auburn’s College of Business 29th among
enrolled at Auburn.
cuss opportunities for students to study abroad while
studies will be available to answer questions and dis-
center lobby.
will be from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Sept. 16 in the Haley
A recent Forbes.com special report ranks the MBA
program in Auburn’s College of Business 29th among
the nation’s public institutions and 64th overall. The
ranking measures the best five-year “return on invest-
For this year’s survey, Forbes sent out 17,000 ques-
tionnaires to graduates of master of business administra-
tion programs around the world. To determine the
five-year MBA gain, Forbes compared their earnings in
their first five years out of business school to costs such
as tuition, required fees and foregone compensation.
According to the survey results, Auburn MBA grads
had an average pre-MBA salary of $33,000. That aver-
agement rose to $87,000 five years after graduating with their
MBA. According to Forbes’ calculations, it took them
4.6 years to recover the cost of their graduate education.
The top eight schools in the ranking were private
universities, with Stanford University ranked num-
ber one. The top public MBA program on Forbes’ list
was the University of Virginia, which was ranked
ninth. Auburn was ranked just behind the University
of Illinois, and two spots ahead of the University of
Alabama and the University of South Carolina, which
came in at 66th and 67th, respectively.
Search begins to fill Miller seat on board
The Auburn University Trustee Selection Com-
mittee is scheduled to begin interviewing candidates on
Sept. 18 to fill the position on the Board of Trustees left
vacant by the recent death of Jack Miller of Mobile.
The new trustee will complete the remainder of
Miller’s term, which expires in May 2012. Miller rep-
resented District 1, which consists of Choctaw, Clarke,
Marengo, Mobile, Monroe, Washington and Wilcox
counties in southwest Alabama.
The nominee must be a resident of that district and
less than 70 years old when appointed to the Auburn
Board. Gov. Bob Riley, ex-officio chairman of the Board
of Trustees, is encouraging interested individuals who
meet the residency requirements to apply by the Sept.
8 deadline. Submit applications to: Auburn University
Trustee Selection Committee, Attn: Grant Davis, 105
Samford Hall, Auburn, AL 36849.
The panel is also seeking someone to fill the District
6 seat held by Paul Spina, whose term expires Sept. 2.
The Trustee Selection Committee is comprised of
the governor or his representative, two members of
the Auburn Alumni Association’s Board of Directors
and two current Auburn trustees. Nominations by the
selection committee are subject to confirmation by the
Alabama Senate.
Museum now offers free admission to all
Auburn’s Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art
now offers free admission for all visitors. Effective
immediately, the free admission is sponsored by the
JCSM Business Partners.
“Because of the generosity of the Jule Collins Smith
Museum Business Partners’ sponsorship, we are able
to welcome all visitors,” said Museum Director Mar-
ilyn Laufer. “Their admission to the museum is made
possible by these kind community business people
who recognize JCSM as one of the quality of life fac-
tors in our region.”