

Floriculture Focus . . .

News from the Ellison Chair in
International Floriculture
Department of Horticultural Sciences

Volume 1 Issue 4



October/November, 2005

Chair Website - <http://EllisonChair.tamu.edu>

Introductory Comments

On August 15, we (Pat and I) departed for Ireland and other overseas destinations following a short month in College Station. We returned to College Station on October 10. Our Advisory Committee met on October 14. In this newsletter, I will report on our productive and valuable two-month stay overseas and significant progress made at our Advisory Committee meeting. We will also provide highlights on two additional floriculture faculty, Steve George and Dan Lineberger.

The chair website indicated above can be accessed directly or through the Aggie Horticulture website.

Chair Activities and Progress

While overseas (August 15 – October 10), I was based in Ireland and made trips to England and The Netherlands. I visited growers, garden centers, research stations, floral gardens, and arboreta in these three countries. Additionally, in England, I participated in the Four Oaks Trade Show in Manchester making several valuable international contacts, and in The Netherlands, I visited the Aalsmeer Flower Market and some growers who market their products in the U.S. and worldwide. I found that many of the growers' challenges in Europe are similar to those faced here in the U.S. This trip gave me a greatly

improved understanding of the floriculture industry in Europe.

At our Advisory Committee meeting on October 14 in College Station, several key actions occurred. First, Texas Nursery and Landscape Association (TNLA) and Texas State Florists' Association (TSFA) were granted ex-officio membership on the Advisory Committee. Ex-officio membership is non-voting but ex-officio members are invited to all meetings/activities, receive all correspondence, and participate in all discussions. TNLA and TSFA will decide who represents their organizations. An important topic of the meeting was the discussion of the principal focus of the Chair. I indicated that based on my state, national and international interactions that People Development and Water and the Environment emerge as the most important priorities for this Chair; Marketing and Productivity/Profitability are also important to the industry. Considerable discussion occurred among Advisory Committee members, the result being that the group felt **Environmental Sustainability with emphasis on Water and People Development** were the areas of highest priority. The People Development priority was delineated in our June 2005 Newsletter (Volume I Issue 2). Further refinement of these two priority areas will occur in the coming weeks and months.

During the next two months, I will make a trip to Washington, D.C. to explore enhanced federal funding for floriculture research as a part of the overall national effort in this area. Efforts will continue on developing our floriculture/green industry program into a Center of Excellence at Texas A&M University.

Floriculture Faculty Highlights

In this issue, we are highlighting Drs. Steve George of our TAMU-Dallas Research and Extension Center, and Dan Lineberger, College Station.



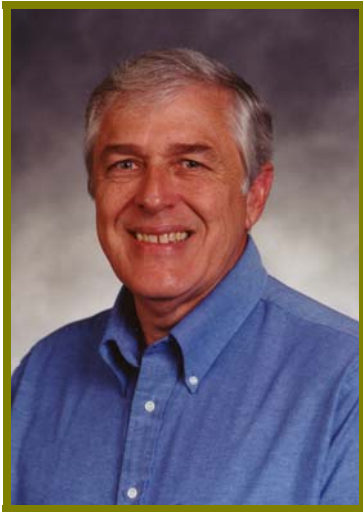
Steve George

Steve devotes a great deal of his time to doing research and education on EarthKind* Roses and EarthKind* Soil Management. EarthKind* is a cutting-edge, integrated program of environmental landscape management that was created by Extension Specialists with The Texas A&M University System. The goal of this program is for Americans to enjoy beautiful, productive landscapes which require only minimal maintenance and that provide maximum protection for the environment.



The EarthKind* Team is composed of Debbie Benge-Frost, Steve Chaney, Landry Lockett and Michelle Shook (Texas Cooperative Extension), Drs. Wayne Mackay and Brent Pemberton (Texas Agricultural Experiment Station), Gaye Hammond (Houston Rose Society), Steve Huddleston (Ft. Worth Botanic Garden), Mark Chamblee (Chamblee's Rose Nursery), Mike Shoup (Antique Rose Emporium), and Steve as leader. Together with these wonderful colleagues, Steve has embarked on a nationwide search for the first-ever National Collection of EarthKind* Roses.





Dan Lineberger

Remember what it was like before the World Wide Web? If you think about the growing dependency of the international floriculture community on this powerful tool, imagining a business or educational environment without it is difficult. Prompted by a casual visit in February, 1994 to one of the first Web-based floral retailers, Dr. Dan Lineberger, TAMU Professor and Webmaster, recognized the potential of the Web and began building the **Aggie Horticulture** Web site. Serving without interruption since October, 1994, **Aggie Horticulture** has grown to be the most frequently visited Web site in the world dedicated to horticultural information. The component servers that make up the **Aggie Horticulture** Network log in excess of 20 million “hits” in the average month, accounting for more than 1 million “user sessions.” **Aggie Horticulture** serves Web pages, digital image archives, searchable databases of information, PowerPoint slides, and streaming video. It contains Extension publications, horticulture course Web sites, newsletters, photo libraries of ornamental plants, and answers to thousands of commonly asked horticultural questions. The entire Web site is searchable by key word or can be browsed by section depending on user preference.

While Lineberger oversees the hardware and software system that comprises **Aggie Horticulture**, the information it houses is

contributed by more than 50 individuals, including teaching, research and Extension faculty, departmental staff, graduate students, county Extension horticulturists, and Master Gardener coordinators. The system allows the information providers to create and update their content from any Internet-connected computer, and in fact some contributors are located in other states. “This is the most powerful aspect of **Aggie Horticulture**,” says Lineberger. “Our Web site has become an incredible tool for making vast quantities of outstanding horticultural content available to the entire international horticultural community on a continuous basis—free of charge!”

Sections of **Aggie Horticulture** of special interest to the floriculture community include the **Floriculture Programs**, **Ornamentals Web**, **hortiPM**, **Classes**, **Aggies for Hire**, and **PlantPicture Pages** links from the main menu, and of course, the link to the **Ellison Chair** Web site. Visit Aggie Horticulture often at: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu>



Concluding Comments

One of the great assets of the Ellison Chair in International Floriculture is our engaged and committed external Advisory Committee. This group has opened many doors for me during 2005

and helped to ensure a strong connection of the Chair with the floriculture/green industry on state, national and international levels. This is most important for our university programs to be the best they can be and assume their rightful priority in universities and the industry. A close university/industry linkage is crucial and essential

for all of us to serve the consumer in the best possible way. Members of our Ellison Chair Advisory Committee are listed below. Thanks to all of them for their outstanding commitment and service.

Advisory Committee Members

Ellen Ellison	Chair
Jack Davis	Horticultural Marketing and Printing
PJ Ellison-Kalil	Ellison's Greenhouses, Inc.
Rob Ferguson	Hines Horticulture, Inc.
Tony Griffin	Sun Gro Horticulture
Lela Kelly	Dosatron International, Inc.
Jimmy Klepac	Klepac Greenhouses, Inc.
Kosuke Ogawa	Japan Floral Marketing Association
Stan Pohmer	Pohmer Consulting Group
Cliff Powell/Tom Dickerson	Powell Plant Farms, Inc.
Jim Prewitt	Landmark Nurseries, Inc.
Ernesto Velez	Flores Suasuque
Jack Weatherford	Weatherford Farms and Greenhouses, Inc.
Mike Williams	Ball Horticultural Company

Ex-Officio Members

Sam Cotner	Professor, Department of Horticultural Sciences (TAMU)
Tim Davis	Head, Department of Horticultural Sciences (TAMU)
Jim Ellison	
Texas Nursery and Landscape Association Representative	
Texas State Florists' Association Representative	

Upcoming Events

International HortiFair
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
November 2-5, 2005

Annual Southern Region ASHS Meeting
Orlando, Florida
February 4-8, 2006

Mission of the Ellison Chair

The mission of this Chair is to advance the health and vitality of the floriculture industry, on a national and international scope, through exemplary academic leadership, cutting-edge applied research, innovative extension outreach programs, and by mentoring well-educated, impassioned leaders to support the future of floriculture.

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