

FIESTA LATINA 2001... fun and informative

by Nelida Rodriguez

The Southern Research Station recently participated in the 4th annual Fiesta Latina, a celebration of Latin American cultures in western North Carolina. The event was sponsored by the City of Asheville and was held downtown at Pack Square, on Saturday September 15. This was the first time the Forest Service participated with an informational booth amid the festival as a way to tell Hispanics about the jobs our agency offers. The booth was complete with job and career information, Web sites, and information to help Hispanics enter the Federal workforce.

Many festival participants visited the booth hosted by Station employees Linda Cortes, Wanda Carambot, and Nelida Rodriguez, who are committed in reaching out to the community and making the Hispanic community aware of the services the Forest Service offers to the public.

The atmosphere was festive, energizing, informative and educational. Kudos to all the employees who participated for a job well done! A special "Thank You" goes to Mike Ward, SRS - Engineering, for helping with the booth setup.



(above) Nelida Rodriguez talks to Fiesta Latina attendees about Forest Service careers and community involvement in Asheville.

(left) Attendance was good at this years' Fiesta Latina in downtown Asheville as demonstrated by the crowds that gathered in Pack Square.

(More photos on page 9.)

photos by Linda Cortes

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From the Director's Desk...

At this writing, a month has passed since the world was shocked by terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, DC. We have each felt a range of emotions, both within ourselves and among our friends and colleagues, in response to these horrific events. I am proud of the care, support, and understanding employees of the Southern Station have shown one another and those we serve as we all struggle to return to our work and our lives. We extend our thoughts, prayers, and deepest sympathy to the victims, their families and friends, and all who were touched by this tragedy.

I also feel a great sense of pride as I witness a renewed spirit of generosity and patriotism among our workforce and among Americans at large. It is clearly a time of taking stock in what we cherish most—what we stand for—as a people, and as individuals. It is my hope that we all will continue to guide our behaviors in the weeks and months ahead by those values that have defined our greatness.

As I reflect on Tom Brokaw's bestseller, *The Greatest Generation*, and its praise of my parents' generation for its courage and sacrifice during World War II, I can't help wondering if it is now our time to be tested in like fashion. Whatever it turns out to be, as it was for them, the test will be a complex one, with roles for each of us. Forest Service people will be called upon both in official capacities and as private citizens. I am confident that we will ably rise to the challenges ahead.

To do so effectively, though, it is important that we all take good care of ourselves—physically, emotionally, and spiritually—as well as those around us. To paraphrase the

advice of our new Chief, Dale Bosworth: "Keep your heads up and your eyes open." Pay careful attention to what's going on around you at all times. Vigilance is the most effective safety tool we have. Use it! As last Tuesday brought painfully home to us, we need one another. Whether an employee of the Station, a retiree, a client or colleague, or a casual reader, we value you. Be safe!

May God bless America.



Civil Rights Award Announced

by Laura Lipe

The Station's Civil Rights Committee recently voted to recognize Mary Williams, SRS-4505, as the recipient of the 2001 Civil Rights Award for her work with the "Outside!" Program.

"Outside!" is a program presented to low-income, minority youth from urban areas in six, one-hour sessions. Mary developed, coordinated and presented the program. The program's purpose is to share information with youth and hopefully, inspire them to learn more about Natural Resources. It is also an opportunity to share career information and to become more active in the local community.

Over 200 children, ages 6-12 participated in this science education program this summer. Youth were provided supplies and learning material developed specifically for the program by Mary. Participants viewed insects under the microscope, learned about red-cockaded woodpeckers, grew plants, and learned about native and exotic plants, tree diseases, bacteria, and nematodes.

Mary received a cash award from the Civil Rights Committee in recognition of her work on this project.

Congratulations, Mary!

"Do you have backup files of your important data and records stored at another location?"

Gene Namkoong visits the Southern Institute of Forest Genetics

By Ron Schmidting

Dr. Gene Namkoong, recipient of the Wallenberg prize and retired SRS scientist visited the Southern Institute of Forest Genetics (SRS-4153 Saucier, MS) on January 23rd and 24th, 2001. The main purpose of the visit was to review the project's research, make recommendations for future work, and give a seminar on his current work. This was somewhat of a homecoming for Gene and his wife, Carol, because Gene started his Forest Service career here in 1958. Gene remained attached to the Institute for more than 10 years, although he moved to Raleigh, NC in 1960. He completed a PhD degree at NC State, and in 1970 established a pioneering Forest Service research work unit in Raleigh in theoretical genetics.

Gene retired from the Forest Service in 1994. In 1993, while serving on an IPA assignment, he became Head of the

Department of Forest Science at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, a post from which he recently retired.

Gene is an internationally known forest geneticist and has won many awards, including the 1994 Wallenberg prize, for his work on multiple population breeding theory. This is the most prestigious award presented for research in forest science.

Also involved in the reunion were Drs. E. Bayne Snyder and Glenn Snow. Bayne was an early mentor of Gene's at Gulfport. He is well-known for his extensive research on the genetics of southern pines, especially longleaf pine, retiring from the Southern Institute of Forest Genetics in 1979. Glenn is a forest pathologist who was a colleague of Gene's when he first began work at the Forest Genetics Institute. He retired after more than thirty years at the Gulfport lab.



(left) At the Harrison Experimental Forest shown left to right, Drs. E. Bayne Snyder, Gene Namkoong and Ron Schmidting.

(below) Harrison Experimental Forest field trip to the "Longleaf Diallel", a genetics experiment planted by Bayne Snyder in 1960. (l. to r.) Floyd Bridgwater (SRS, PL 4153), Mike Stine (LSU), Brian Strom (SRS), Jim Roberds (SRS), Jennifer Myzewski (TX A&M), Bayne Snyder (SRS Ret.), Gene Namkoong (SRS Ret.), and Bill Cibula (NASA Ret.).



photos contributed by Ron Schmidting

Southern Aspect

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To submit newsworthy stories for future issues, please send complete articles hard copy or on diskette (MS Word or RTF) to Ron Coates at the above address, call (828) 259-0509, or email to rcoates@fs.fed.us. Photographs are encouraged, preferably black and white.



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Allan Tiarks Named Emeritus Scientist

by Melissa Carlson

Dr. Allan Tiarks, research soil scientist, has been recognized with the Emeritus Scientist Award in recognition of his significant research contributions during his 30-year career with the USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station. Allan retired from Research Work Unit 4111, Ecology and Management of Southern Pines, in Pineville, LA on August 3, 2001. He represented the Southern Research Station as an Adjunct Professor at Texas A&M and Louisiana State Universities. He has a B.S. degree in Agronomy from Iowa State. His M.S. and Ph.D. degrees were in soil science from the University of Nebraska and Ohio State University, respectively. In addition to his career with the Forest Service, he was a Soil Surveyor Volunteer in Tanzania for the U.S. Peace Corps for two years and served in the U.S. Army for 18 months.

He was a leader in the national Long-Term Soil Productivity (LTSP) Study. The main objectives of his work have been to evaluate and quantify the effects of management on productivity, validate soil quality standards, and to develop methods to maintain or improve soil productivity. He represents the Forest Service in an effort conducted by the Center of International Forestry Research (CIFOR) to establish studies in a number of tropical countries to sustain forest production and values by plantation forestry. As Emeritus Scientist, Allan will continue to be involved with the LTSP and CIFOR programs.



VETERANS' ISSUES

By Ron Coates

"Treaties are signed and the battles of nations end, but the personal battles of those disabled in war only begin when the guns fall silent."¹

As a disabled veteran, a life member of the Disabled American Veterans since 1996, and the Southern Research Station's Disabled Veteran Affirmative Action Program Coordinator, I am committed to making sure that all veterans, disabled and non-disabled, receive the benefits that they deserve for serving in the armed forces and putting their lives on the line for our country.

I have spoken to veterans who have filed claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs who have been disheartened by the experience and given up. The process is a long one and can take up to a year or more. In preparing for a claim I recommend that you get a copy of your medical record and the investigation report for your injury. And, don't give up!

In the past few years there have been major issues facing veterans' medical care, unemployment, homelessness, and the need for volunteers to help veterans that can't get to VA hospitals for treatment. Over the past several years the budget for veterans' medical care has dropped compared to what is needed for proper medical care.

The appropriation for fiscal year 2002 is \$1.6 billion in discretionary funding, which is about \$2 billion less than independent budget recommendations. The House and Senate appropriations committees have failed to provide adequate resources to improve the quality and timeliness for health care at the appropriate level. The bills from the House and Senate appropriations will increase the spending slightly, but would not meet the levels to

(continued on page 12...)

¹The lead-in quote and information for this article was obtained from the DAV Web site located at: <http://www.dav.org/>

How's Our Web Site Doing?.....and Other Marketing Efforts

by Melissa Carlson and Randy McCracken

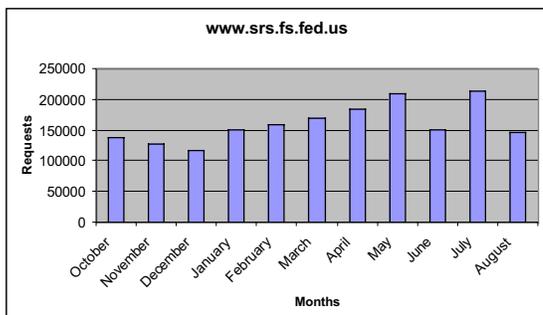
The Southern Research Station Web site is a keystone of our marketing and technology transfer efforts. With over 14 gigabytes of information available to the public electronically, we have seen dramatic increases in the number of visitors to the site in the past three years. Following are estimates of numbers of publications distributed for the past four years.

Fiscal Year	Hard Copy	Electronic Downloads
1998	70,000	25,000
1999	33,500	151,000
2000	22,000	200,000
2001 (thru 08/31)	21,000	500,000

All of the publications listed in our "Compass" catalogs are put online before the catalog is distributed, and our intern scanner whiz, Ed Mundy, continues to work on older publications as well, with the count now over 2,400 documents available for downloading.

The full statistical report by month is available on line at <http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/stats> — if you would like to see it in detail, click on "Full Report." Following are some highlights from the period October 1, 2000 through the end of August, 2001:

Visits to publication section of Web site, by month:



How do people find us?

A large percentage of site users are either coming directly to the site, from their own bookmarks or address entry, or via the major search engines, primarily google.com or google.yahoo.com. Many others are referred to our Web site by a full spectrum of other search engines or site links, such as from altavista.com, search.netscape.com, or forestry.about.com. Many follow links from the national and other Forest Service Web sites, from USDA, and from universities.

Where do they go on our site?

As expected, more than half of the people who visit go to the publications section. This past year, the Web site for the Sustainability Assessment has been the second most popular section. The employee directories are also well-visited. The next most visited areas are research work units. Southern Pine Beetle has been a much-requested topic this fiscal year. The "About" section, which contains our Annual Reports and news releases, also attracts noticeable use.

New Publications Evaluation Comment Card

A recent addition to our publication service is getting approval from OMB for a publication evaluation comment card, that is now operational online (www.srs.fs.fed.us/pubeval). We anticipate having the printed version of the card this Fiscal Year for distribution with hard copy publications.

An important part of the SRS marketing effort is to make the Web site known to as many potential customers as possible. We include the Web site address on news releases, brochures, mailings, displays, etc. and have built in "metatags" on the Web pages to enhance their visibility to search engines. We also contact search engines directly to request that they search our site and we ask other related sites to create links to our site.

(continued on page 8...)

The 23rd Annual Blacks in Government

By Pearley Simmons



Gerald R. Reed,
National President
of Blacks in
Government (BIG)

The 23rd Annual BIG conference was held in Los Angeles August 27th through August 31st, 2001. Ellen Dyson, the chairperson on the Blacks in Government National Board of Directors welcomed everyone and told us this year's theme "Retooling for the 21st Century-Setting New Standards of Performance and Productivity." Then she told us these workshops are designed to provide growth and change needed to perform and produce to capacity (smart business).

Gerald R. Reed – National President of BIG (pictured) welcomed everyone to our first Training Conference of the new millennium. He stated this conference theme underscores BIG's efforts to recognize its training curriculum to focus on technological and communication skills, the bedrock of tomorrow's high performance employees." Reed outlined the topics of discussion and how they affect both private and public sector employees such as government reinvention, health care, HIV/AIDS, racial profiling, economic development, election reforms, the criminal justice system, and reparations. Then he advised everyone to utilize this training as a stratum for career progression and upward mobility.

Honorable Judge Greg Mathis was the keynote speaker for the opening. He discussed the criminal justice system and even told of his own run in with the law as a juvenile- the impact it had on his career, and how it has been used against him in spite of his rehabilitation, work in the community and current accomplishments. He was a very motivating speaker who showed through his own life experiences that you can accomplish anything just set your goals and don't give up!

Other notable guest speakers were the Honorable Maxine Waters, U.S. House of Representatives member from California and Dr. M. Joycelyn Elders, former U.S. Surgeon General.

After the Opening Plenary Session the workshops began. Some of the workshop topics were: *Marketing your Skills, Negotiation and Conflict Resolution, Retooling your Communication Skills, Establishing a Character-Based Attitude of Personal Leadership, Anger Management, Self-Esteem Issues for Women, Getting the Ear of Your Audience, Managing Anger in the Workplace, Diversity Management, and Performing with High Standards in the Workplace.* The workshops were conducted Monday through Friday 8a.m. to 5p.m.

The closing plenary session featured Jewel Diamond Taylor as the keynote speaker. Mrs. Taylor is a nationally known author and speaker. Her speech addressed the topic of relationships in the workplace and in our personal lives. The session ended with a prayer by Elder Harry Hendricks, Senior Pastor, Church of the Living God, C.W.F.F., Temple # 44.

Wilma Fant, a first-time attendee at the conference stated "I found the workshops & organizational structure quite informative. I felt the instructors were very knowledgeable and brought years of experience with them. It was a great opportunity to meet people from all different agencies from all over the U.S."



(BIG) National Training Conference



(upper left) Sharon Crowell (left) and D'Juana Wilson from the Alexandria Forestry Sciences Laboratory in Pineville, LA enjoy a break at the 23rd Annual BIG National Training Conference.

(upper right) Theodore Green from SRS Headquarters heads for the next session offered at the Blg Conference.

(lower left) The Honorable Judge Greg Mathis was the Keynote speaker at the BIG Conference.

photos by Pearley Simmons

Deadline for next issue: November 20, 2001

Web Site (cont. from page 5)

Other Marketing Activities

Other efforts to increase the visibility of the Southern Research Station include:

Annual Report

The production of the Southern Research Station Annual Report is into its fifth year now. It is distributed in person and by mail to a wide variety of key and interested constituents – all Congressional staff offices of members from our 13-State region, including their Washington, DC offices, State Foresters, University Deans, environmental and industry organizations, libraries, and many individuals. Besides highlighting representative accomplishments from each year, it provides an overall reference document about our research work units, a bibliography, and the work we do.

Southern Forest Science Conference

The Southern Research Station is playing the lead role, including doing all the mailings, for this landmark conference that is scheduled for November 26-28 in Atlanta. We have recruited other partners to participate in planning the conference, and have been highly visible in the advertising efforts throughout the South and nationwide. Our research and development work are a strong component of the conference itself, which will result in a major publication and CD. The conference should result in an even higher awareness among our current and potential constituency.

Congressional Visits

Members of Congress are a critical target market segment for SRS. The Leadership Team, Management Team and Office of Communications continue to improve on the visits and mailings that we do for Members and their staffs. The LT has designated a "State Contact" for each of our 13 States who coordinates with local Forest Supervisors for Congressional visits. We provide one-page color updates by State that highlight SRS accomplishments each year, as well as a copy of our Annual Report.

Compass

The Catalog of Recent Publications has been revamped into the *Compass*, which is distributed hard copy and electronically. The hard copy now features an eye-catching full-color cover to make it competitive for attention with all the other material that people receive. It also includes information about the Southern Research Station and personnel, a theme focus on some of the recent publications, as well as the current abstracts that have always been its primary content.

News Releases

The Communications group is attempting to increase the number of news releases distributed to media outlets. We are taking one new journal article each month and sending out a news release concurrent with the publication of the journal. Stories for news releases are always welcome; please send information by e-mail to mcarlson01@fs.fed.us, or to rkindlund@fs.fed.us.

Conservation Education Outreach Program

The summer CEOP interns serve well as ambassadors of good will for the Southern Research Station. This summer, the Station hosted eight interns on two separate teams, one located in Asheville, NC with the second team in Huntsville, AL. The CEOP interns travel throughout the South during their 10-week tenure teaching children, mainly in urbanized areas, about conservation education concepts including recycling, habitats, and land stewardship. The official name of the CEOP program is "Branching Out to the Youth of America" and next year is the 10th year the Southern Research Station will have been involved. During the last five years, the program has been coordinated from Asheville by Rod Kindlund. The program involves recruiting and hiring coordinated by Louise Wyche at Alabama A&M, as well as orientation and training of the summer interns. This year the orientation and Project Learning Tree training was done by Rod with the assistance of Ron Coates, public affairs assistant in Asheville. During the summer each of the two intern teams meet about 3,000 children while effecting their duties.



photo by Nelida Rodriguez

Linda Cortes tends the SRS booth at the Fiesta Latina event in Asheville on September 15th.



photo by Linda Cortes

Wanda Carambot awaits fiesta-goers during the Fiesta Latina event in Asheville on September 15th.

SRS PILOTS NEW CIP SURVEY

by Laura Lipe

This year, the Southern Research Station has been asked to pilot the Gallup Organization's "Q-12" survey as a part of the Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) survey in mid-October. For more than 60 years, the Gallup Organization has been a world leader in the measurement and analysis of human attitudes, opinions, and behavior. Although the company is best known for *The Gallup Poll*, most of Gallup's work is in providing measurement, consultation, and education to many of the world's largest companies.

The Gallup Organization has surveyed thousands of employees throughout the country and the World. They have narrowed down the most important questions for measuring the strength of a workplace to twelve. These questions capture the most important information to measure the core elements needed to attract, focus, and keep the most talented employees. The twelve questions are:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In the last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my coworkers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
12. This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

The first six questions are the most important questions. They measure whether the manager demonstrates that they know what motivates employees and what obstacles need to be removed for the employees. Questions 7-10 measure the employees' sense of belonging in the workforce. The last two questions deal with employee development and growth and whether the manager is paying attention to this area. High scores equate to retention, productivity, profitability, and customer satisfaction.

The survey will be available electronically. Gallup will train managers in holding what they call "Impact and Planning Sessions" when the results are returned to us.

Piloting the Q-12 survey is an important opportunity for our Station. Hopefully, this will be the survey instrument used by the entire FS on the next CIP survey cycle.

Our employees will also have the opportunity to respond to local questions developed at the Station level, as well as questions from the National level. Some of our employees may also be randomly selected to participate in the original CIP survey being administered to 1000 FS employees to allow our agency to retain baseline data.

The Continuous Improvement Process offers employees a excellent opportunity to take an active role in improving our work environment. You are encouraged to participate.

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the only officially-sanctioned charity drive for the Federal Government. You can make a difference in someone's life by making a pledge this year. See your CFC representative.

IN THE NEWS . . .

Two SRS scientists quoted in Arizona Daily Star

A Sunday feature article in the Tucson, Arizona Daily Star about birding included information and quotes from Ken Cordell, RWU-4901, and Paul Hamel, RWU-4155. The article, by Jeannine Relly, headlined "Birding takes flight as major revenue source in S. Arizona," is an extensive look at the fun and revenue from recreational bird-watching. "An estimated 70 million people went bird-watching at least once in the United States in the last year – up from 54 million in 1995, according to a U.S. Forest Service report to be published in the fall issue of Birding, a publication of the American Birding Association. . . 'Birding is the fastest-growing recreational activity in the country that we track,' said Ken Cordell, a senior scientist with the U.S. Forest Service in Athens, GA. . . 'For hummingbird watching this time of year, it's (Ramsey Canyon in the Huachuca Mountains) by far the place to go' in the United States, said Paul Hamel, a research wildlife biologist with the U.S. Forest Service in Mississippi." Claire Payne of the Office of Communications in Asheville, NC assisted the reporter with making Southern Research Station contacts.

Wyoming project gets Bob Rummer on the front page

Bob Rummer, RWU-703 Project Leader, recently conducted a study on the Medicine-Bow-Routt National Forest near Laramie, WY. The study was designed to evaluate alternative systems for harvesting small-diameter material. The Laramie Daily Boomerang ran an extensive, technical article as their lead story, "Man versus Machine," on August 17, 2001 about the project. It included testing a Neuson harvester, which was designed in Austria and costs about \$280,000. The study included a public field day, and Bob provided radio spots for the local station, KOWB, and Wyoming NPR, as well as being quoted several times in the article.

Please send your news clips in to Communications in Asheville

Copies will be faxed on to the W.O. and circulated around the LT. A summary will appear in this column in the SRS newsletter. Thanks for helping to get the good news out!



The Neuson harvester during its test-run on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest in Wyoming.

photos contributed by Bob Rummer

Veterans' Issues *(cont. from page 4)*

properly care for disabled and sick veterans. The House bill would provide \$52.2 billion for the total VA budget categorized into discretionary spending, medical care, veterans benefits, and National Cemetery funding. The Senate would provide \$52.03 billion in funding the same categories as the House.

Compared to non-disabled veterans and other workers in the workplace, disabled veterans have fared horribly in obtaining and keeping jobs. A study done by the Department of Labor released in 1996 showed that service-connected disabled Vietnam veterans with ratings of 60 percent or higher were employed or in the job market. The total percentage of Vietnam veterans with a 60 percent service-connected rating is only 33 percent, showing that 67 percent of these disabled veterans are unemployed or underemployed. Annually more than 500,000 veterans experience homelessness. According to VA estimates at least 275,000 veterans are homeless on any given night.

With reductions to travel benefits for

veterans, treatment volunteers have provided double-duty as drivers so that veterans may get back and forth for needed treatments. Some of the volunteers have very little contact with patients that come to the VA medical facility for treatment. They are generally the people who assist the professional staff with other matters at the VA facilities.

The events of September 11, 2001 may change the VA system in the future. With the onset of a war against terrorism, veterans will need equipped VA facilities to handle the men and women who may need treatment for physical and mental disabilities that come from fighting what maybe a long and drawn out war.

During and after the war on terrorism, the American people need to take time to thank the men and women who have served or provided care for our military forces; it is because of them that we have the freedoms we enjoy today.

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