

# SPECTRUM

Virginia  
Tech

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

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**TODAY'S EDITION**  
See page 2 for  
information on events  
and programs.

## General Assembly Committees Recommend Deep Cuts, Tuition Increases

By Ralph Byers, director of  
government relations

Faced with a three-year budget deficit approaching \$4 billion, two Virginia General Assembly committees recommend deep cuts in General Fund appropriations for higher education for the 2002-04 biennium, combined with tuition increases to offset partially the reduction.

On Sunday, Feb. 17, the Senate Finance Committee recommended a General Fund reduction of approximately \$300 million for higher education for the biennium. Projected tuition increases, to be determined by the institutions' boards of visitors, would cut this figure in half. The House Appropriations Committee recommended General Fund reductions for the same period of approximately \$275 million, coupled with locally determined tuition increases.

Both committees calculated their recommendations for individual institutions on base-adequacy guidelines developed by the General Assembly's Joint Committee on Higher Education Funding Policies. Using this method, General Fund reductions were figured according to the institutions' relative positions with respect to their base-adequacy targets. These targets were developed using comparisons with the institutions' national peer groups. Reductions in the budget introduced by Governor James Gilmore and modified by Governor Mark Warner, on the other hand, applied a uniform General Fund percentage reduction across the institutions.

To use the Senate Finance Committee

### Summary of General Fund Reductions

(in millions)  
For FY 04

	House*	Senate*
University Division	\$34.8 <sup>1</sup>	\$31.4 <sup>1</sup>
Tuition Offset	\$19.8 <sup>2</sup>	\$18.0 <sup>3</sup>
Net General Fund Reduction	\$15.0	\$13.4
<b>Other Reductions</b>		
VCE/VAES	\$4.9	\$4.9
Equipment Trust Fund	\$4.0	\$4.0 <sup>4</sup>
Maintenance Reserve	\$3.7 <sup>5</sup>	\$3.7
Net Overall Reductions	\$27.6	\$26.0

<sup>1</sup> On a base appropriation of \$185.9 million.

<sup>2</sup> Assumes tuition increase each year of the biennium of 6% In-state (undergraduate), 8% all other.

<sup>3</sup> Assumes tuition increase each year of biennium of 5% In-state, 8% Out-of-state.

<sup>4</sup> The Senate has proposed restoring \$1.6 million. Tech's loss would be reduced to \$2.4 million.

<sup>5</sup> The House has proposed eliminating all maintenance reserve. Tech's loss would increase to \$7.4 million.

\*The House of Delegates and Senate have reported out different versions of appropriations, which must be reconciled.

recommendations as an example, Virginia Tech's General Fund reduction for the university division Educational and General programs grows from \$25.5 million in Warner's budget to \$31.4 million for fiscal year 2004. At the same time,

the expectation for tuition revenue grows from \$13.3 million to \$18.0 million, resulting in a net reduction of \$13.4 million. The House General Fund reduction for Virginia Tech is higher (\$34.8 million), but it is accompanied

### McNamee, Ridenour discuss budget- reduction issues

By Clara B. Cox

Provost Mark McNamee and Executive Vice President Minnie Ridenour briefed the university community Tuesday on the nature of state budget reductions and the manner in which the university is addressing those reductions. About 450 members of the faculty and staff attended the University Budget Forum, some of them via V-Tel links between Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center auditorium, where the forum was held, and a number of extended campus sites.

McNamee and Ridenour called the meeting to provide employees with information about the effect of the state's revenue problems on Virginia Tech and to answer questions posed by the university community. Before taking questions, Ridenour discussed the state budget situation and proposed methods to address it (see accompanying article),

(See DISCUSS on 3)

by a tuition projection of \$19.8 million, for a net reduction of \$15.0 million.

According to Senate projections, total percentage reductions for Educational and

(See GENERAL ASSEMBLY on 3)

## Beers receives NSF grant to study genes, wood formation

By Netta Benson

Eric Beers, associate professor of horticulture and a researcher in the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, has received a \$345,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for a three-year study of wood formation. He expects to define the roles of some of the protein-degrading enzymes (proteases) important to wood formation and, eventually, to identify genes that regulate that process.

The molecular biology of wood formation is poorly understood. Current efforts to identify the genes that are important to wood quality and quantity in economically important tree species are hampered by the large size, long life span, and incomplete genome-sequence data for tree species.

Beers has developed a method for using the annual weed thale cress (*Arabidopsis thaliana*) as a model for understanding how wood is formed. The basic developmental processes that lead to the formation of xylem, the wood-forming tissue in plants, should be the same in *Arabidopsis* as in trees, so Beers expects his findings to be applicable to all woody plants. Beers is working with *Arabidopsis* because it is a small plant that

can be easily grown in the lab and has a short life cycle. In addition, the entire *Arabidopsis* genome has been sequenced, further increasing the value of *Arabidopsis* for identifying genes important to wood formation.

Since beginning work in this area in 1998, Beers has narrowed his focus to just three genes that code for proteases specific to wood-forming tissue. Currently he is attempting to use techniques for gene silencing and gene knockouts to define the functions of these three genes.

"We silence a specific gene, and then infer the function of the gene by observing the new phenotype," he said.

Woody xylem is a tissue that consists of three cell types, and all three are formed from a population of stem cells known as the vascular cambium. "I am interested in the fundamental question of how cell fate in the xylem is specified at the vascular cambium," Beers said. "How do these cells know what to do? What tells them what to become?"

The expression of the protease genes Beers is studying is limited to specialized water-conducting cells within the xylem, known as tracheary elements. With a technique known as one-hybrid analysis and using genetic analyses

(See BEERS on 4)

## Internet2, Net.Work.Virginia, Jason Project tested in Tech distance-learning experiment

By Beth Bottom and Jean Elliott

Virginia Tech's outreach efforts have extended to Alaska, where glacial geologists at Chugach National Park are studying dendrochronology (the history of glaciers) and wildlife biologists at the Alaska Sea Life Center are investigating the Stellar sea lion's eating patterns and how its body uses fat for energy.

Using satellite and Internet2 technology, Tech's College of Human Resources and Education (CHRE) helped bring these real-time scientific investigations to Virginia fourth through ninth graders by collaborating with Internet2, Net.Work.Virginia, the Jason Project, the Science Museum of Virginia, WBRA Public Television, Virginia Community College System and the Virginia Department of Education.

John Wenrich, associate director of CHRE's Institute for Connecting Science Research to the Classroom, represents Virginia Tech on the Internet2 K-20 Initiative Advisory Committee and helped coordinate this outreach effort. "This was a test, an experiment, of Internet2 technology in the K-12 environment. It was very successful and involved a number of different individuals inside and outside the university," Wenrich said.

Last week, students throughout Virginia gathered around computer monitors and participated in the distance-learning experiment where they were connected to the Alaska-based Jason Project. Virginia Tech took the satellite signal of the conference, converted it to a digital format, and funneled it via Internet2 fiber optics and along Net.Work.Virginia to the student sites.

Net.Work.Virginia is an advanced, broadband network that connects the state's colleges and universities, community colleges, K-12 schools, research facilities and state agencies. Communications Network Services on campus was instrumental in making the experimental link from satellite to network possible.

"The bandwidth available over Internet2 is 10 times greater than the everyday Internet people are used to. This experiment showed how using Internet2 can help link students to scientists across the state in real time for a learning experience," Wenrich said.

The Alaska researchers were broadcast live, allowing students in rural and remote locations to view the video conference and

(See INTERNET2 on 4)

# ACTIVITIES

## EVENTS

### Friday, 22

#### Last Day to Drop.

**Art Exhibit Opening**, 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., Squires Studio Theater: "Since September 11, 2001... a community exhibit." (Through 2-28).

**CEUT Program**, 1 to 2:15 p.m., Hillcrest Dining Hall.

**Black History Month Event**, 3 p.m., Fralin auditorium.

**Indian Film Festival**, 6 p.m., Squires Haymarket.

**TA Event**, 8 p.m., Squires Studio Theater, "Never in My Lifetime." (Through 2-23).

**SOTA Facilitated Discussion**, 10:15 p.m., Squires Norfolk Room: Nonviolent Resistance.

### Saturday, 23

**YMCA Hike**, 11 a.m., YMCA Parking Lot.

**Indian Film Festival**, noon, Squires Haymarket.

**Men's Basketball**, 2 p.m., Cassell Coliseum: Providence.

**Women's Basketball**, 2 p.m.: At Villanova.

**Black History Month Event**, 5th Annual Ebony Affair, 6 to 10 p.m., Owens Banquet Hall.

**New River Valley Symphony**, 8 p.m., Burruss auditorium.

**SOTA Facilitated Discussion**, 10:15 p.m., Squires Norfolk Room: Growing up in Belfast.

### Sunday, 24

**SOTA Ensemble Concert**, 3 p.m., Squires Recital Salon.

### Monday, 25

**Workshop**, 5 to 7 p.m., Blacksburg Public Library conference room: Critiques of the Culture Industry.

**Hort Club Class**, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Greenhouse classroom: Create a Terrarium.

**TA Event**, 8 p.m., Performing Arts Building: "Stairs to the Roof" (Through 2-27).

### Tuesday, 26

**Connection 2002 Job Fair**, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Squires Old Dominion/Commonwealth ballrooms.

**Family, Work/Life Resources Program**, noon to 1 p.m., 219 Squires.

**Women's Basketball**, 7 p.m., Cassell Coliseum: Rutgers.

**Black History Month Event**, 7:30 p.m., Squires Brush Mountain room A.

### Wednesday, 27

**Black History Keynote**, 7 p.m., Squires Colonial Hall.

**Men's Basketball**, 7 p.m., Cassell Coliseum: Rutgers.

### Thursday, 28

**Black History Month Event**, 7 p.m., Squires Black Cultural Center.

### Friday, 1

**Pay Date for Faculty and Staff Members.**

**Women's History Month Begins.**

## SEMINARS

### Friday, 22

**Highlands in Chemistry**, 11:15 a.m., 3 Davidson: Daniel E. Falvey, Maryland.

**MCBB**, 12:20 to 1:10 p.m., Fralin auditorium: Troy Duster, NYC/UC-Berkeley.

### Thursday, 28

**Geological Sciences**, 11 a.m., 4069 Derring: A.T. Anderson Jr., University of Chicago.

**Geological Sciences**, 4 p.m., 4069 Derring: Chuck Naeser, U.S.G.S., Reston.

**Statistics Colloquium**, 3:45 p.m., 409 Hutcheson: J. Fan.

**CSES**, 4 p.m., 246 Smyth Hall: Todd Luxton.

### Friday, 1

**Highlands in Chemistry**, 11:15 a.m., 3 Davidson: Jon R. Parquette, Ohio State.

**MCBB**, 12:20 to 1:10 p.m., Fralin auditorium: Timothy C. Hall, Texas A&M.

## BULLETINS

### Service-Learning Center accepting applications

The Service-Learning Center is accepting applications for its spring Faculty Service-Learning Course, planned for May 21, 22, and 23. The course is open to all tenured, tenure-track, or administrative/professional faculty members interested in using service-learning in their teaching. More information on the course is available at <http://www.majbill.vt.edu/sl/faculty.html>.

### Indian-Nation representatives to speak

Representatives from Virginia's eight state-recognized Indian Nations will speak February 23 on "What It Means to be a Virginia Indian in the 21st Century."

Virginia's indigenous peoples of the Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Mattaponi, Upper Mattaponi, Monacan, Nansemond, Pamunkey, and Rappahannock nations will share—through song, dance, stories, poetry, and oral tradition—their histories and personal experiences as a celebration of survival and diversity.

The presentation will be in the Donaldson Brown auditorium at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 23.

A reception will be held after the program.

This forum is being held in conjunction with the Virginia Indian Nations Summit on Higher Education. Sponsors include Virginia Tech's American Indian Studies Program, Humanities Program, Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, Department of English, Race and Social Policy Research Center, College of Arts and Sciences, Office of the Provost, and American Indian Science and Engineering Society, as well as the Virginia Council on Indians and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

For more information contact Samuel R. Cook at 1-9596 or [sacook2@vt.edu](mailto:sacook2@vt.edu).

### GSA Research Symposium scheduled

The Graduate Student Assembly invites all graduate and undergraduate students to participate in the 18th Annual Research Symposium. The Research Symposium provides an opportunity for graduate and advanced undergraduate students to showcase their achievements in research. The symposium will be April 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Squires Commonwealth Ballroom.

Students may participate in the symposium by submitting

an abstract describing their research and presenting a poster. The top three presenters in each category will be awarded a cash prize and will also be invited to attend an Awards Banquet on Thursday, April 4. There is a limit of 100 abstracts, so students should submit abstracts as soon as possible.

Registration can be accessed at <http://gsa.uusa.vt.edu>. The deadline for abstract submission is March 15.

For more information, contact Selen Olgun at [solgun@vt.edu](mailto:solgun@vt.edu), or Shireen Hafez at [shafez@vt.edu](mailto:shafez@vt.edu).

### Pamplin presents Wachovia, First Union speakers

The Pamplin College of Business will present two Wachovia First Union distinguished speakers in March.

Philip S. Thompson, IBM vice president of business transformation and chief information officer, will speak on diversity and the workplace Tuesday March 19, at 2 p.m. in Owens Banquet Hall.

Bridget Ryan Berman, president and chief operating officer of Polo Ralph Lauren's retail division, will discuss career and leadership issues Wednesday, March 27, at 4 p.m. in the DBHCC auditorium.

## SEC makes \$50,000 available for projects

By Karen Gilbert

The Virginia Tech Student Engineers' Council (SEC) is soliciting proposals in search of projects that will benefit the largest number of engineering students and best reflect the needs of the College of Engineering. The students have allocated \$50,000 for the selected projects.

The SEC is looking for projects that best reflect the needs of the college. Applicants should identify ways in which money can best be used to improve the college. There are no restrictions on ideas for the types of projects to submit for funding—anything from physical improvements to scholarships will be considered. The proposal can be for a project with a budget as high as \$50,000, or the SEC can choose to award several smaller projects totaling \$50,000.

During the past four years, the students (See SEC on 4)

## 'Destinations' career fair expanded to two days

By Jean Elliott

The thirteenth-annual "Destinations," a career fair for the students in the College of Human Resources and Education, will be expanded to two days and held in Owens Banquet Hall and Dining Room February 26 and 27.

Despite the recession, 70 companies will be represented this year. The event is coordinated by Associate Dean Valerie Giddings and graduate assistant Becca Farrell.

"The expanded two-day format, along with the move to Owens, should only serve to improve an event that has thrived in the past," Giddings said.

Students from each department in the College of Human Resources and Education will find appropriate representatives. Traditionally, the hospitality-and-tourism-management field boasts the largest number of potential employers—including hotels,

(See 'DESTINATIONS' on 4)

## Staff Senate seeks governance nominations

Each year at this time the Staff Senate Elections and Nominations Committee puts out a call for nominations of classified staff members to university councils, commissions and committees. We encourage all interested classified staff members to consider participating in one or more of these campus-wide bodies which provide input into the operation of the university. It is a wonderful opportunity for staff members to have a voice in matters that affect the university while learning how things really work and meeting people from other parts of campus.

Information on the councils, commissions and committees along with nomination forms

have been distributed to Staff Association presidents and staff senators. They are responsible for making this information available to staff members in their areas. To let us know you're interested in serving, we offer these options: 1) fill out the nomination form and return it through campus mail to Jon Wooge, mail code 0402; 2) send an e-mail to [jwooge@vt.edu](mailto:jwooge@vt.edu); 3) or call Wooge at 1-1589. Nominating another person is acceptable, provided you have their permission. Please note that some of the councils, commissions and committees require the staff members to be senators.

## Classes offered through Hort Gardens

The following classes are being offered through the Horticulture Gardens:

Monday, Feb. 25: "Create a Terrarium," 6 to 7:30 p.m. Greenhouse classroom, Washington St. \$30;

Saturday, March 9: "Prune and Train Home Fruit Trees," 10:30 a.m. to noon, Greenhouse classroom, Washington St. \$25,

Monday, March 11: "Orchids are Easy," 6 to 7:30 p.m. Greenhouse classroom, Washington St. \$25;

Monday, March 18: "Propagating Indoor Plants," 6 to 7:30 p.m. Greenhouse classroom, Washington St. \$20,

Contact web site [vtgarden@vt.edu](http://vtgarden@vt.edu) for more information.

# EMPLOYMENT

## CLASSIFIED POSITIONS

The following classified positions are currently available. Position details, specific application procedures/position-closing dates may be found on Personnel Services web site <http://www.ps.vt.edu>. Positions are also listed on the Job Line, a 24-hour recorded message service. For information on all job listings, call 1-5300. Some positions include state benefits. Positions with numbers beginning with "W" are hourly and do not include state benefits. Individuals with disabilities desiring assistance or accommodation in the application process should call by the application deadline. Closing date for advertised positions is 1 p.m. Monday. An EO/AA employer committed to diversity.

### FULL TIME

**Administrative Staff Assistant**, 001771Y, PB 3, VP for Admin./Treas.  
**Assistant Manager**, 001209H, PB 3, RDP.

**Banquet Manager**, 007424G, PB 3, DBHCC.  
**Construction Project Manager**, 006686F, PB 5, Physical Plant.  
**Data Reporting Coordinator**, 007916S, PB 3, University Development.  
**Executive Secretary**, 004406S, PB 3, MME.  
**Housekeeping Worker**, 007340H, PB 1, RDP.  
**Housekeeping Worker**, W022490H, PB 1, RDP.  
**Library Courier Assistant**, 007919G, PB 2, Library/Circulation.  
**Motor Vehicle Operator B**, 002862F, PB 2, Physical Plant.  
**Program Support Technician**, 001615R, PB 3, Graduate School.  
**Radiologic Technologist**, 002394M, PB 3, VTH.  
**Sales/Marketing Manager**, 000478H, PB 3, RDP.  
**Service Leader Senior**, 007797H, PB 1, RDP.

**Sous Chef**, 007881H, PB 3, RDP.  
**Special Projects/Utilities Crew**, 000216H, PB 1, RDP.  
**Venture Out Manager**, 007470J, PB 3, UUSA.

### PART TIME

**Accounts Receivable Technician**, W023299J, PB 2, UUSA.  
**Laboratory Specialist**, W023377M, PB 3, CSES.  
**Library Assistant**, W023374G, PB 3, Library/Digital Libraries.  
**Multimedia Department Specialist**, W023375M, PB 3, AHNH Information Technology.  
**Office Services Specialist**, W022374J, PB 2, VT Athletic Fund.  
**Program Support Technician**, 004570M, PB 3, CSES.  
**Program Support Technician**, W023259B, PB 3, Mathematics.  
**Radiologic Technologist**, W022412M, PB 3, VTH  
**Security Guard**, W020470Y, PB 1, Police.

**Veterinary Technician**, W023340M, PB 4, VTH.

### UNIVERSITY ONLY

**Field Engineer**, U007920F, PB 5, CD/C.  
**Isb Program/Fiscal Assistant**, U007921M, PB 3, Biochemistry.

### OFF CAMPUS

**Director of Nursing**, 002178M, PB 4, CVM—Equine Medical Center.  
**Extension Assistant, Family/Youth Education**, 006969M, PB 3, VCE—Pittsylvania County.

**Geographic Data Developer**, 007913M, PB 4, BSE.

**Radio Announcer**, W020800S, PB 3, UR/WVTF Radio.

**Underwriting Account Executive**, 001963S, PB 4, UR/WVTF.

### NON-STATE POSITION

**Fiscal Technician**. Contact: Virginia Tech Foundation, Inc., Assistant Business Manager, 141 Pack Bldg., Blacksburg, 24061, 0172.

## Campus diversity initiatives inventory available on line

By Clara B. Cox

After three years of work and two iterations of a survey to accumulate information on campus-wide assets and tools that address climate-related issues, the Office of Multicultural Affairs has completed its "Diversity Initiatives Inventory" and has made the report available on line at <http://www.multicultural.vt.edu/docs/inventoryreport.PDF>.

"We need to be able to respond to questions regarding what is actually being done to increase student, faculty, and staff diversity at Virginia Tech, as well as to know what is in place that supports and promotes a welcoming environment for all groups," said Benjamin Dixon, vice president for multicultural affairs.

According to Dixon, the project began during the 1998-99 academic year through the efforts of Myra Gordon, associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, and other members of the Advisory Council on Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, which advises Dixon's office. The group honed an on-line inventory

and distributed it in 1999 to all academic colleges and major administrative units.

After reviewing the submissions, the staff of the Office of Multicultural Affairs modified the process and developed criteria for identifying diversity initiatives and activities. To be included in the inventory, a program or activity must meet five minimum standards. It must address diversity or multicultural issues, be approved by the administrative unit, have personnel assigned or dedicated to it, be supported by resources and be structured by specific objectives and stated outcomes.

Program types also were defined, and the decision was made to exclude academic courses, although workshops, seminars, and retreats that address issues of diversity are included.

"Our definitions and criteria need to be more explicit, but the university community also needs a better understanding of the

definitions and criteria already in use. We know that there are programs and activities that were not reported," Dixon said.

Some of those that were reported, he said, have no method for evaluating their effectiveness. "It would be beneficial if there were more assessments on various programs to determine their effectiveness," he said. "Overall, though, the inventory provides valuable information regarding diversity activities at Virginia Tech, and we plan to update it periodically, at least every two years."

Individuals interested in additional information about the inventory should contact Alicia P. Cohen, assistant to the vice president for multicultural affairs, at 1-1820 or [acohen@vt.edu](mailto:acohen@vt.edu). For information on specific initiatives listed in the inventory, questions should be referred to the contact person listed for each of those initiatives.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Continued from 1

General programs, including tuition revenue, will range from less than 2 percent to a high of 4.7 percent at Virginia Commonwealth University. The figure for Virginia Tech is 4.4 percent; George Mason University, 4.3 percent; and the University of Virginia, 4.0 percent. In General Fund reductions, the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, and VCU account for about \$70 million of the recommended \$132-million reduction for the first year of the biennium, and \$89 million of the recommended \$171-million reduction in the second year.

While institutions' boards of visitors will be responsible for approving tuition increases, each committee provides extensive guidelines to be used in deciding the amount of the increases. These policies relate primarily to protecting in-state undergraduate students and ensuring larger increases for out-of-state students and graduate and professional students. In addition, the House specifies that institutions that currently enroll more than 25 percent out-of-state students should not increase their enrollment numbers "until a rational policy on this issue can be determined," signaling the committee's intent to pursue this issue in the coming year.

The Cooperative Extension/Agricultural Experiment Station reductions remain at \$4.2 million and \$4.9 million for the two years, as in Warner's budget. As previously reported in *Spectrum*, in Warner's budget the state-wide Equipment Trust Fund was reduced from \$50

million to \$25 million, a \$4-million reduction for Virginia Tech. The Senate would restore \$10 million to the state-wide figure in FY 03. Also, the Maintenance Reserve Fund was cut in half in Warner's budget (a \$3.8-million reduction for Virginia Tech). The House recommends eliminating Maintenance Reserve funding entirely.

Both House and Senate propose reductions to research and public-service centers at the institutions. While the Senate recommends a reduction of \$135,000 for Virginia Tech in FY04, the House recommendation is \$463,000 in FY03 and \$535,000 in FY04.

Finally, the Senate recommends employee bonuses of 2.5 percent of salary for the first year of the biennium and 2.0 percent in the second. These bonuses would not become part of an employee's base salary going forward. The House, on the other hand, recommends a 2.75 percent increase for all state employees in fiscal year 2004, to be implemented in December 2003.

These committee recommendations are now being considered by the full House and Senate, respectively. Next week a Conference Committee will begin meeting to iron out the differences between the two chambers, and the General Assembly is scheduled to adjourn on March 9.

Information on the state budget recommendations can be found on the Legislative Information System at <http://leg.1.state.va.us>.

For more information, contact Ralph Byers at 1-7111 ([byers@vt.edu](mailto:byers@vt.edu)); or Laura Fornash at 804-786-1604 ([fornash@vt.edu](mailto:fornash@vt.edu)).

## DISCUSS

Continued from 1

while McNamee discussed the university's response to the situation.

"It is critical to keep investing in core programs and new initiatives so Virginia Tech can continue to do as many things as it chooses to do as well as it can do so that when we recover from the situation, we can rebuild as quickly as possible," McNamee said.

He said all units of the university will be expected to participate in addressing the budget situation through expenditure reductions or revenue enhancements; that auxiliaries will be asked to generate funds to assist the university's core missions; and that the university is working with related corporations, such as the Virginia Tech Foundation, to gain additional revenue.

According to McNamee, the deans, vice presidents, and vice provosts will be submitting by March 1 their respective internal detailed plans to accompany a percentage cut. The idea for the plans, he said, is not to focus on across-the-board cuts but rather to make judgments for re-investments of resources.

McNamee said this also "seems to be a time to look at the structure of the university" and said he has already begun discussions with various university groups.

Responding to a question about newspaper reports that 255 positions would be eliminated at the university, Ridenour said the state had asked early in its planning process for reduction scenarios, including possible position eliminations. He said that many of those positions are either currently vacant or will become vacant through normal turnover, adding that departments and colleges are looking at programs that can assist should further reductions in personnel be required. Approximately 80 percent of the university's budget is tied up in personnel costs.

When asked if the university would consider an early-retirement option, McNamee said, "All signals are that the state is not going to have a buyout. We can't unilaterally institute a buyout plan, but we're looking at what we can do to manage workforce changes for our employees."

A video of the forum is available on line at <http://www.unirel.vt.edu/vt/budgetnews.html>.



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE  
AND STATE UNIVERSITY

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## Hodges to lead CSES department

By Stewart MacInnis

Steven Hodges, a professor of soil science with extensive experience with Cooperative Extension, will become head of Virginia Tech's Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences on May 1.

"Extension is a critical component of this department, which provides support to a large segment of Virginia's agriculture industry," Agriculture Dean Andy Swiger said. "Dr. Hodges' knowledge of and recognized leadership in Extension programming will allow us to continue to provide the support our farmers have come to expect from Virginia Tech and the support they deserve."

Just as important, Swiger said, is Hodges' experience with research and the education of students. Hodges will be leading faculty members who conduct basic and applied agronomic and environmental research, communicate that research to farmers, policy makers, and other clientele through Virginia Cooperative Extension, and teach undergraduate and graduate students.

"It is unusual to find a department with nationally recognized research and Extension programs in areas as diverse as biotechnology, crop improvement and management, and soil and water science that is so committed to excellent teaching," Hodges said. "Although these are very challenging times, I am very excited to join a department focused on meeting the critical scientific and educational needs of today's and tomorrow's farmers and environmental managers."

Currently a professor in the Department of Soil Science at North Carolina State University (NCSU), Hodges also has served as the department's Extension leader and as an Extension nutrient-management specialist. Hodges replaces Jack Hall, who retired January 1. The department is being led in the interim by professors Dan Brann, Mark Alley, and Dave Parrish

Hodges earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Florida and his doctorate from Virginia Tech. He served on the faculties of Clemson University and the University of Georgia before joining NCSU in 1993. He is a member of the American Society of Agronomy, the Soil Science Society of America, and other professional and honor organizations.

## SEC

Continued from 2

have distributed \$123,000 to support the college. Projects they funded or contributed to include the college's Student Assistance Center, the Frith Freshman Design Engineering Lab, the virtual corporation, the Freshman Engineering Program, and an endowed scholarship.

The council, which sponsors a number of services for engineering students each year, receives no funding from the university. Instead, the majority of its budget stems from fees that companies pay to attend the SEC-run Engineering Expo, a two-day career fair held each fall.

Proposals to the SEC are due Friday, March 15 in 333 Norris. All proposals will be reviewed by the SEC Executive Board. Selected finalists will be asked to present to the SEC General Assembly on Wednesday, March 27.

For more information, call 1-6036; e-mail [sec@vt.edu](mailto:sec@vt.edu), or visit web site <http://www.sec.vt.edu>.

## Fishwick's *Popular Culture in a New Age*, presents 'aerial mosaic' of everyday life

By Sally Harris

Marshall Fishwick's latest book, *Popular Culture in a New Age*, presents "an aerial mosaic" of popular culture the way photographers create pictures of large areas by matching up adjoining aerial photographs.

With a foreword by renowned author Tom Wolfe, "*Popular Culture in a New Age* shows how the poorly understood and often underestimated area known as popular culture affects all of our lives. "It will help you understand the way we eat, think, vote, and respond to our fast-changing world in the era of hype, spin doctors, chat rooms, and jargon," according to the publisher.

Just what is popular culture? "The people are a giant Atlas, carrying the world on their shoulders," wrote Fishwick, professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and director of the American Studies and Popular Culture programs. "How and why do they do it? To ask such questions will always be popular culture's first task."

Fishwick's book, from its aerial vantage point, covers a multitude of topics, including "What to Make of the Millennium," "The New Gold Rush," "Folk/Fake/Pop," "Sacred Symbols," "Carnivals—Old and New," "The Celebrity Cult," "Black Popular Culture," "The Most Popular War," "Faith Takes a New Face," "The Most Popular Myth," and "Global Village—Utopia Revisited?"

Ray B. Brown, emeritus professor of popular culture at Bowling Green University in Ohio, calls *Popular Culture in a New Age*

"brilliant and entertaining." "Widely read and deeply observant, Fishwick has scanned many aspects of our age, shown how it has grown out of life in earlier ages, and speculates where it will end up and why."

"I try not only to answer questions but to raise them and urge readers to ask new questions for themselves," Fishwick said. "We live in exciting but confusing times, when high hopes fall prey to false hypes." He writes not about reform and remedy, nor about political, social, or diplomatic history, but about popular culture. "I do so because I think the 'culture of the people,' more than some older and more formal disciplines, holds the mirror up to humankind in our postmodern, multicultural democracy. Reflecting sudden and dramatic changes, the mirror also suggests some recurring similarities, patterns, motives, and meanings."

Fishwick holds several honorary degrees and teaching awards. He received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Culture Association and is a co-founder of the Popular Culture Association. Having served as Fulbright distinguished professor in Denmark, Italy, Germany, Korea, and India, he helped establish the American Studies Research Center in Hyderabad, India, which now houses the largest collection of American books in Asia. Fishwick is the author of many books, including *American Heroes: Myth and Reality*, *Icons of Popular Culture*, *Go and Catch a Falling Star*, and *Popular Culture: Cavespace to Cyberspace*.

## INTERNET2

Continued from 1

interact with other students who have been participating in the Jason Project, a non-profit educational organization that conducts research internationally.

Several students from the Tall Oaks Montessori School in Blacksburg gathered in Virginia Tech's Durham Hall to view the broadcast-quality interactive video with high-fidelity audio.

"It was a very good experience," said Terry Cook, the educational director at Tall Oaks. "At each of the Virginia sites, local experts enhanced the learning and made it more real by taking the expedition topics further, engaging students in an interactive session on line and applying the learning experiences

locally."

The Jason Project experiment was initiated by Hud Croasdale of Virginia Tech's Internet2 Studio in Richmond.

Internet2 is a consortium being led by more than 180 universities working in partnership with industry and government to develop and deploy advanced network applications and technologies. The Internet2 K20 Initiative brings together Internet2 member institutions, K-12 schools, colleges and universities, libraries, and museums to get new technologies—such as advanced networking tools—into the hands of innovators across all educational sectors in the country.

For more information, please see [www.icsrc.org/I2K20](http://www.icsrc.org/I2K20).

## Kenly Bovard, 73

By Stewart MacInnis

Kenly P. Bovard, 73, retired associate professor of animal science, died February 5.

Bovard joined the faculty at Virginia Tech in 1957 as an animal breeder and geneticist. He conducted cattle-breeding research as a university faculty member at a federal research station in Front Royal until 1973, when he began similar research and took up teaching duties on the university's main campus.

Among the research projects he worked on were a number involving the management of dwarfism in Hereford cattle, and projects to improve the genetic vigor of various cattle breeds.

"He had a great heart in him," said Ike Eller, a former colleague. "He was the most helpful fellow you could want to meet. He was a real joy."

Upon his retirement from the Virginia Tech faculty in 1988, Bovard took up duties as federal excess property manager for the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station. The job entailed finding tools, vehicles, and other equipment being discarded by federal agencies and matching it to the needs of academic departments on campus and agricultural research and extension centers across the state. He retired from that position in 1999.

Bovard earned his bachelor's degree from Cornell University and his master's and doctorate degrees from Iowa State University. He was named a fellow by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and was a member of the American Society of Animal Science, the American Genetic Association, and the Virginia Academy of Science.

## BEERS

Continued from 1

of mutants that express the xylem proteases incorrectly, Beers intends to use these protease genes as "molecular handles" to get hold of other genes that act earlier in the sequence of events leading to tracheary-element differentiation.

"By identifying the genes that regulate the expression of our tracheary-element protease genes, we will be taking the first steps toward the long-term goal of identifying the master regulators that control wood formation," he said.

Such information could have important implications for forest-product development and would represent an important contribution to the understanding of this fundamental aspect of plant development.

Candace Haigler of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, is co-principle investigator for the work supported by the NSF grant. Haigler is a professor in the biological sciences department and director of the Texas Tech University Electron Microscope Facility.

(Editor's note: This is the first of a series of articles covering university faculty members who have received NSF funding.)

## 'DESTINATIONS'

Continued from 2

restaurant chains, amusement parks and tourist attractions. More than 25 companies compete for graduates majoring in residential-property management in the Department of Near Environments.

Students in the departments of Human Development; Human, Nutrition, Foods and Exercise; as well as Teaching and Learning also will find representatives from various organizations, including school districts from across the state.

A complete list of exhibitors is available at [www.chre.vt.edu/destinations](http://www.chre.vt.edu/destinations).

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