

April 2014

Agricultural Auburn

Take a look at things
happening within
Auburn's College of
Agriculture.

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About the AUTHOR



Hannah Vaughn was born and raised in Huntsville, Ala., and is currently a student at Auburn University. She grew up around cotton, cattle, soybeans and wheat which formed a growing interest in agriculture.

Once she figured out her dream career was in agricultural communication, there was no doubt that she'd be going to Auburn.

In the fall of 2012, she transferred from a community college to Auburn University. She is now a senior in Agricultural Communication and plans to graduate August 2014.

I'll bet you don't know "Old Nancy"?

She is one of the college of agriculture's best kept secrets.

By HANNAH VAUGHN

“Old Nancy” is a 1905 J.I. Case steam tractor, currently housed in Auburn’s Seed Technology Building. She was bought and cherished by Dupree Whatley from Beauregard. Whatley admired the same model tractor displayed at the 1905 world fair in St. Louis. After the fair, he wrote home about it on a postcard with a picture of the tractor. In 1906 he bought one himself and went to work.

Whatley named her in honor of Nancy Hawkins, the steam powered passenger train, which ran between Atlanta and Columbus.

The “Steam Age” antique was passed down through the Whatley family and used to run a sawmill until the 1950s.

After a few years of sitting in the Whatley’s field, Auburn’s Dr. Gene Rochester frequently noticed the aged tractor and spoke with the family about donating it. The treasured engine was soon



Above: “Old Nancy” at work; Whatley on the tractor

donated to the University in the mid-1970s.

When “Old Nancy” was donated, she was disassembled, cleaned and restored by the Student Branch of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE) under the guidance of professors. The entire renovation process stretched from January 1974- February 1978.

To this day, the historic tractor is seen as an



Above: Above: Walter Clemons, local steam engine professional, and AU students disassembling the tractor around 1974

to a piston, causing the fly mill to spin. A band connected the fly mill on the tractor to another fly mill on a different piece of machinery to generate power. In the Whatley's case it, was a sawmill. There are very high dangers of running a boiler because pressure can build up, causing an explosion. On account of the safety issues, the state's boiler regulations call for certain

icon for the Agricultural Engineering Department. Dr. Steven Taylor, P.E., Professor and Department Head of Biosystems Engineering, said that the student's help in restoring the tractor was a great way for them to learn while participating and being involved.

"Old Nancy is an excellent reminder of our past and how engineering and technology advancements have improved the life of rural society, "

-Dr. Taylor

guidelines to permit the tractor to run. "Old Nancy" is annually on display at Ag round-up. ASAE will also be hosting a rally of regional schools on April 4-6; showing the tractor the first evening.

In its time, the Case steam tractor was one of the most powerful pieces of equipment around. Just as our cars and the tractors today are run on gasoline, the Case steam tractor was run on a steam engine.

The steam engine was powered by a furnace, which in "Old Nancy's" case used wood or coal. The furnace heated the water to its boiling point, then steam built up in the steam chest. Pressure from the steam chest was directed



Above: Displayed at '99 Ag round-up

Lottie gathering rice



Lottie's Lot in China

*The story of an Agronomy
and Soils major from
Hunan, China.*

By HANNAH VAUGHN

It is known that Auburn University became the first land-grant college in the South in 1872, and it was renamed the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Alabama. Ever since then we have remained one of the top Agriculture schools in the nation. Therefore it is no surprise that students from all over the world come to this university to gain better knowledge and insight on crops and food to take back to their homeland. Our Agronomy and Soils major, Lottie Ou is no exception.

Lottie is a foreign exchange student from the

mountainous area of Hunan, China. Leaving her parents, two sisters and brother to run the family farm back home Lottie moved to the states in the Fall of 2011. Their farm is involved with rice, swine, chicken and vegetable gardens; these are commonly produced in southern China. Cattle and wheat are mostly found in the northern region.

According to Lottie there are a few differences between the farms at her home and the farms here.

One different aspect of farming in China is that

they must plant rice by hand. This takes a good three to four days with the entire family helping. She says that hand planting it results in a better yield and of course is more meaningful when time to reap their harvest.

“Harvest time is the best of all because the families will work together and have big meals,” Lottie said.

When we look at crops in the United States, we see it as growing in a “field”, where as in China rice fields are called “rice paddies”. All of their rice is grown on about a 2.5 mu (acre) rice paddy. Lottie’s family uses their rice to feed themselves, sell to friends and to feed the livestock.

The livestock is also meant for family use, friends and any other buyers. It is usually sold alive and the owner will come to pick it up unless requested by a close friend to slaughter. They have around 70 swine, and their chickens are raised free-range, therefore they could have anywhere from five to 30 at a time.

Just like with vegetable gardens in the United States, there is never dull moment. Lottie says it is the same way in China. There

are always things to keep you busy whether it be planting or harvesting. Lottie says the 1 mu of land dedicated to vegetables consists of eggplant, peppers, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes and watermelon.

“My favorite activity is to go to the mountains and pick wild strawberries, mushrooms, and ferns.” - Lottie Ou

To add a little fun into the day, Lottie says the boys would all form a circle around a pile of rice straw and stab it with a pitch fork to watch mice run out and catch them.

she says for something different, she also enjoys snake hunting, but her favorite activity is going hiking.



Above: Lottice hiking on a mountain

Auburn's Ag Council is Helping "Heifer's for South Dakota"

Students on a mission to help farming friends in South Dakota

By HANNAH VAUGHN

Auburn's College of Agriculture is lending a helping hand to our farming neighbors in South Dakota. The college's Ag Council is taking part in the fundraiser; "Heifers for South Dakota."

Donations will go to farms that recently lost their cattle because of an unexpected fall blizzard last October.

The blizzard 'Atlas' was so sudden and unexpected that ranchers didn't even know it was coming and lost most or all of their cattle. Since the cattle

had not yet put on their winter coat, they died of hypothermia.

The donation of breed-able heifers or proceeds for them would help ensure the growth of South Dakota's cattle industry back to how it was before

the devastating storm.

Reviving the cattle population will not only help the ranchers and their families in this time of disaster, but also benefit consumers who enjoy meat.

"Ideally we would like to raise enough money to provide 40 heifers to the South Dakota area,"

-Brady Peek

"We are working on setting up an auction at a stockyard in Montgomery to help with the fundraiser," said Brady Peek, President of Ag Council.

According to the College of Agriculture and Ag Council it is their goal to provide 40 heifers or a donation of \$50,000 on behalf of Auburn University and the State of Alabama.

Monetary donations are accepted to go to the transportation or purchase of new cattle.

Donations of cattle are likewise accepted to benefit the ranchers in need.

Fifteen dollar t-shirts are also being sold with the proceeds going to “Heifer’s for South Dakota.”

The fundraiser is lasting the entire spring semester and will end on Friday, April 18.



Above: Auburn’s “heifers for South Dakpta” logo



Above: Farmers helping provide heihers for South Dakota

Cotton Isn't Only What You Wear

Most of your day-to-day products have cotton incorporated into it.

By HANNAH VAUGHN

Cotton is the largest textile fiber used in the world. It's produced in only 17 U.S. states and generates over 30 percent of the world's cotton, according to the National Cotton Council. The American cotton farmer yields about 15 million

bales (7.3 billion pounds) of cotton per year.

This white gold earns its name for the widespread contributions it makes to so many industries and society. It's a distinctive crop used as fiber, food and livestock feed in which no part of the plant goes unused.



Above: Cotton field in the fall

Even the cottonseed, the most overlooked and heaviest part of the plant, averages 5.2 million tons per year. More than 6 billion pounds of cottonseed hulls are used in livestock feed, and 90 million gallons of cottonseed oil are used in food products such as cooking oil and salad dressing. Cottonseed oil is also used in making soap, lotion, hairspray and toothpaste just to name a few.



Above: Cotton ready to be picked

The most well know part of the plant is the fiber or lint that is used in making cloth such as apparel, shoelaces or any household items such as towels, sheets, table clothes, curtains, napkins...you name it.

The short fuzz on the seed are called linters; they are used to make cellulose for plastics, gunpowder, bandages and high quality paper products. Linters are also processed for cushions in furniture, mattresses, automobiles and airlines.

After the cotton is picked, the stems are turned under to enrich the soil for the next crop.

According to the National Cotton Council, 75 percent of cotton goes into the apparel market,

eighteen percent into home furnishings and the other 7 percent into industrial products each year.

On average, one bale of cotton weighs 500

pounds which is enough to produce 215 pairs of jeans, 249 bed sheets, 765 men's dress shirts, 690 bath clothes, 1,256 pillowcases, 3,085 diapers or 313,600 \$100 bills.

So next time you use cash to pay for that meal

"Cottenseed oil is also used in making soap, lotion, hairspray and toothpaste just to name a few."

prepared with cooking oil, put your soft shirt on, or bath with soap before cuddling up in your sheets at night and laying your head on that soft pillow, remember this product in making all of those items.

Aubie's Busy Life

Aubie is constantly spreading his contagious spirit!

By HANNAH VAUGHN

As the Good Will Ambassador of Auburn University, Aubie the Tiger spends his days going to a variety of community, philanthropy and University events while having fun and making friends along the way.

Caroline McGill, the Director of Aubie, says that he attends from three to five events a day which averages out to be 20- 30 events per week. He already has 25 events scheduled for the week of homecoming. And eight to ten for the homecoming game day.

The power house team that works with Aubie regularly is called the Aubie Program. It includes three SGA Directors, two faculty advisors and one graduate advisor. On the other hand the Aubie Committee is composed of volunteers that meet



Above: Aubie cheering in his hawaiian costume

every Tuesday before a home game at 8 p.m. in the Student Center Loading Dock.

"Because of Aubie's very busy schedule, we don't get to start planning for each game until the Sunday or Monday before,"
-Caroline McGill

The Aubie Committee helps to construct and paint the props used for the upcoming football



Above: Aubie showing his spirit with his foam finger costume

games. McGill says he usually goes through six different props per game.

Along with his assortment of props, “Aubie has a variety of dance moves that he loves, but his

favorite song to Dance to is ‘Word Up’ which is played by the Auburn Band during the fourth quarter of every football game,” McGill said.

Game Day on the Green

*Auburn's Recycling Department
tries to make a greener Auburn.*

By HANNAH VAUGHN

After we get through drinking our water bottles and cokes while tailgating, most of us go to throw it away and not think anything of it.

According to Auburn's Waste Reduction and Recycling Department we should think again.

"Game day produces an inordinate amount of trash and we do our best to collect what we can by placing over 300 recycling bins and distributing recycling bags

to tailgaters, but when compared with the amount of waste generated, the recycling diversion rate is less than eight percent," said Leigh Jacobson, the Recycling Coordinator for Auburn's Recycling

Department.

For example, more than 24 tons of recycling was generated during the 2011 football season making an average of 3.5 tons per game. (This includes cardboard, bottles and cans in tailgate areas and at the stadium.) In the same year, the trash capacity was 285 tons with an average of 40 tons per game, showing that 7.88 percent of the trash was diverted into the recycling stream.

"To improve these numbers we need fans to bring less waste to campus and recycle ALL bottles and cans on game day!" Jacobson said.

The operational staff, recycling coordinators and



Above: Tailgeters recycling at their tent

student workers - 13 people total - work to better Auburn's recycling program every game day weekend. Volunteers help hand out bags and sort the recycling. "It's always long days of hard work in addition to our normal

weekly duties," Jacobson said.

Volunteers are encouraged to come out every Saturday and Sunday. Game day litter and recycling bag distribution is every Saturday (time pending on kick-off) located at the recycling



Above: The crew separating the resucaled materials

tailgate near the transit stop. Game day recycle sort is every Sunday from 1-3 p.m. at the Food Service Warehouse.

“Our department works hard to make sure there are ample trash and recycling receptacles throughout the campus. But keeping campus clean is up to the students, faculty, staff, fans and visitors to place their trash and recycling in the correct bin,” Jacobson said.

Auburn University Facilities Management and Sustainability Initiative was established in 2005.

It officially became The Auburn University Waste Reduction and Recycling Department in 2008 and works hard to this day to keeps the campus clean and beautiful.

“The average waste diversion rate is around 30 percent.”



www.hannahvaughn.org