

ARKANSAS HORTICULTURE FALL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 01 | 26 NOVEMBER 2024

NOTE FROM THE DEPT. HEAD

Greetings from the Department of Horticulture.

After a hiatus, Arkansas Horticulture News is back. There have been some changes in the department over the past few years. Horticulture now boasts six faculty located in Little Rock, one in Clarksville, and nine in Fayetteville. Of faculty, Horticulture has Teaching and Extension instructors, six Assistant Professors, six Associate Professors, Professor, and a University Professor. Dr. Wayne Mackay retired in March and I started as Department Head in April of this year.

This issue will highlight some of the latest news in teaching programs (such as a new study abroad faculty-led program), student and faculty awards and recognitions, research developments, and extension outreach successes that have positively impacted the department, state, and horticultural discipline. We hope to keep you informed and rekindle relationships with our departmental alumni and friends. Please send us your updates and be looking for new issues in the spring and fall going forward.

- MARY SAVIN

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MEET THE NEW DEPARTMENT HEAD



ABOUT DR. MARY SAVIN

Q: How do you feel about moving to the Horticulture Department?

A: Horticulture is such a strong department with some excellent faculty and staff, and I think Wayne's done a fabulous job leading the department, so I'm very excited to be here.

Q: What is your educational background?

A: I earned my bachelor's degree in biology/biological sciences from the University of Notre Dame, followed by a master's in biodegradation and doctorate in soil ecology, both from the University of Rhode Island.

Q: Can you tell us more about you?

A: I am originally from the northeast and have been here in Arkansas and UARK for 22 years. I am a strong supporter of study abroad, I love the oceans and the mountains, and I love to read when I can.

DR. WAYNE MACKAY RETIRES

After ten years leading the Department of Horticulture at the University of Arkansas, Dr. Wayne Mackay has retired.

Mackay earned a bachelor's degree in horticulture from Virginia Tech, a master's degree in plant science at the University of Delaware and a doctorate in horticulture at the University of Maryland.

Mackay began his career in horticulture as a grower of specialty plants and worked for a nursery. After completing his Ph.D., he started as an Assistant Professor for Texas A&M University at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station-El Paso in 1991. He was promoted to Associate Professor at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station-Dallas in 1997. He became Associate Resident Director of the station in 2003 and was promoted to Professor there in 2005.

In 2007, Mackay moved to the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences as Professor and Director of the Mid-Florida Research and Education Center. In 2013 he became Professor and Chair of the University of Florida-IFAS Environmental Horticulture Department, serving in that post for a year before coming to the Division of Agriculture and Bumpers College.

His passion and achievements will forever impact our program and the Horticulture industry.



RESEARCH & EXTENSION HIGHLIGHTS



Production & Genomics

[Grant of \\$7 Million to Support Effort to Improve Grape Disease Resistance, Quality](#)

[New Nectarine Released by Arkansas Fruit Breeding Program](#)



Sustainable Horticulture

['New' Herbicides in Blackberry Production Could Soon be an Option for Growers](#)

[Center For Arkansas Farms and Foods](#)



Landscape & Ornamentals

[Arkansas Home Landscaping Resources](#)

[Arkansas Master Gardener Program](#)



Turfgrass Science

[Ph.D. Student Presents Research at Trifecta of Golf Course Management Associations](#)

[Multi-State Study Offers Recommendations for Keeping Bermudagrass Greener All Season](#)

HELPFUL RESOURCES

DISCOVER MORE

Want to read the latest news on our research and extension efforts? Check out UADA pages for more stories, highlights, videos, and podcasts.

Click on the links below:

[Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station](#)

[Commercial Horticulture in Arkansas](#)

[Arkansas Local Foods](#)

[Arkansas Master Gardeners Program](#)



STUDY ABROAD



GREAT GARDENS AND HORTICULTURE OF SCOTLAND & ENGLAND

May 10-25, 2025

Program Info:

[https://horticulture.uark.edu/
students/studyabroad.php](https://horticulture.uark.edu/students/studyabroad.php)

Learn more about our new study abroad program as we travel to the beautiful Great Gardens of Scotland and England lead by Dr. Curt Rom and Ms. Michelle Wisdom.

STUDENT AND FACULTY AWARDS

Arkansas Blackberry Growers Association Award of Thanks

Amanda McWhirt

2024 Corliss Knapp Engle Scholarship in Horticulture- Garden Club of America

Zoe Baucum

Horticulture Outstanding Undergraduate Student

Katie Jansson

Vaile-Watts Outstanding Senior

Katie Jansson

Horticulture Outstanding Masters Student

Sarah Paschal

Outstanding Grad Hort Students in U.S. by American Society for Horticultural Science

Sarah Paschal

Horticulture Outstanding Ph.D. Student

Alexander Silva

Texarkana Cup Golf Tournament Winners

Kaden Owens, Hayden Hawthorne, Logan Gregory, Brayden Gilson, Wendell Hutchens, Thatcher Stafford, Will Green, Ben Morgan, Mike Battaglia, and Sharandeep Chahal

AAES Early Career Recognition of Professional Excellence Award (ROPE)

Ryan Dickson

One to Watch- Greenhouse Grower Magazine

Ryan Dickson

UADA Outstanding Support Personnel Award

Lizzy Herrera

2024 Fruit and Vegetable 40 Under 40

Aaron Cato

ASHS Undergraduate Poster Contest Winner

Megan Jo Daily

ASHS Second Place in J.B. Edmond Undergraduate Paper Contest

Megan Jo Daily

ASHS Elected Secretary ASHS Southern Region Collegiate Branch

Ann Bell

ASHS Second Place in Fruit Crops Judging Contest

Ann Bell, Katelyn Bishop, Jillian Dibiase, and Morgan Humphrey

ASHS Third Place in Trees, Shrubs and Ornamentals Plant ID Competition

Ann Bell, Katelyn Bishop, Jillian Dibiase, and Morgan Humphrey

ASHS Blue Ribbon Publication Award

Amanda McWhirt, Aaron Cato, Taunya Ernst, and Renee Threlfall

John W. White Outstanding Team Award

Amanda McWhirt, Aaron Cato, Margaret Worthington, Jackie Lee, and Renee Threlfall

County Master Gardeners' Endowed Scholarship for Student Development

Caroline Ford

Garland Tynes Scholarship

Hayden Hawthorne & Mike Battaglia



RYAN DICKSON



SARAH PASCHAL



AMANDA MCWHIRT

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

03/29/2024- Dr. Mackay Retirement Party
04/18/2024- Horticulture Entrepreneurship Lecture Event
04/30/2024- Strawberry Field Day
05/10/2024- Bumpers College Commencement
06/12/2024- Blackberry Field Day
06/27/2024- Horticulture Field Day
08/12/2024- Bumpers Open House
08/22/2024- Horticulture Fall Orientation
10/17/2024- Horticulture Fall Picnic
10/18/2024- Horticulture Alumni Luncheon



Rachel Woody-Pumford-
Bumpers College
Commencement



Margaret Worthington-
Blackberry Field Day



Mary Savin & Katie Jansson-
Hort Entrepreneurship Lecture



**Wayne Mackay, Mary Savin, Ken Kupperman, &
Waltram Ravelombola-**
Alumni Awards Luncheon

ALUMNI AWARDS

Horticulture
Distinguished Alumni
Award-
Ken Kupperman

Young Horticulture
Alumni Award-
Waltram Ravelombola

Service to the
Horticulture
Department Award-
Wayne Mackay

IN LOVING MEMORY

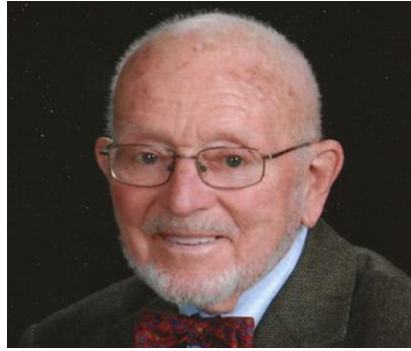


Elena Garcia

Professor
1953- 2024

Elena worked at the University of Arkansas for fifteen years, from 2005-2020. Dr. Garcia was revered for her research and extension work in the area of cultural practices in plant nutrition, protected agriculture and organic fruit production; taught numerous classes in Principles of Horticulture and Fruit Crop Production. She was also known as Princess Elena.

[More About Elena's Life](#)



Roy C. Rom

University Professor
1922-2024

Roy worked at the University of Arkansas from 1959-1989. He was a renowned fruit breeder and pomologist and enjoyed an impressive career in horticulture. He was revered for his work in tree fruit breeding and taught numerous classes. His efforts went beyond the classroom as he received many accolades for his research and served as a leader in many organizations.

[More About Roy's Life](#)



John King

Associate Professor
1938-2024

John worked as an Associate Professor of agriculture, specializing in turfgrass research from 1970 to 1998 at the University of Arkansas. Dr. King contributed to the development of the Arkansas turfgrass industry through service with the Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Arkansas Turfgrass Association, the City of Fayetteville, and more.

[More About John's Life](#)

WHERE TO FIND US

Instagram: @uarkhorticulture

Facebook: Uark Horticulture

Twitter (X): @uarkhort

LinkedIn: University of Arkansas
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ALUMNI INFORMATION PAGE



We want to connect with all of our alumni from over the years who were a part of our program. We want to keep you in the loop on all of our activities, awards, and upcoming events. We are also looking for outstanding alumni to nominate for our annual alumni awards.

If you would like to enter your information or any other alumni contacts, we can get you in our system and stay in touch.

Click the link below and fill out the contact information and submit.

We look forward to connecting with you!

**Alumni Contact Information
Survey**

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

Want to help support our program? You can donate to our department by going to onlinegiving.uark.edu

In the Fund Designation drop-down menu, choose "other" and type in "Bumpers Horticulture Department"

Any donations are appreciated and helps support our students, academic programs, study abroad efforts, garden renovations, and more.

