Our annual reception for graduating students took place on June 13, 2003. Before devouring a huge carrot cake, we had the opportunity to recognize their achievements and encourage them on their future endeavors. Among those honored was Nancy Sweet who received the gold cords to adorn her commencement robes indicating her graduation with Highest Honors (see photo). On June 18, 2003, the EH Department and the California Ornamentals Research Federation (CORF) hosted a one-day conference on “Water Quality Management” for nurseries. The meeting was well attended by growers and representatives of allied industries. The morning session featured presentations on evaluating irrigation water quality, sand filtration systems, reverse osmosis and other membrane filtration systems, drainage water recirculating systems and control of pathogens in recirculating systems. During the afternoon, participants toured Hines Nursery and Four Winds Nursery in nearby Winters (see photo).

The Superior Chapter of the California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers (CANGC) held their June meeting at the EH Department featuring a barbecue. This was a valuable opportunity for students, staff and faculty to interact with local nursery representatives.

**Student Achievements**

An article co-authored by Fabrice deClerck, geography graduate student working with Michael Barbour, was featured as the cover story in the April/June issue of California Agriculture. Entitled “Looking back 60 years, California soils maintain overall chemical quality”, the authors compared archival soil samples collected in 1945 with samples from the same locations collected in 2001. Although the chemical quality of California soils has not decreased significantly, increased clay percentages in recent samples may be interpreted as a sign of accelerated erosion.

Kimberley Hunter, who worked with Lin Wu and received a double MS in Horticulture & Agronomy and International Agricultural Development in Fall 2002, was selected for the Presidential Management Intern Program (PMI). This program, established by Executive Order in 1977, attracts to the Federal service outstanding individuals from a wide variety of academic disciplines who have an interest in, and commitment to, a career in the analysis and management of public policies and programs.

Two EHUF undergraduate students, Robyn Conley and Kristin Dzurella, received Ellen C. Thomason Scholarships for the 2003-2004 academic year. The awards ranged from $1,000 to $2,000. The scholarship was established in memory of Ellen C. Thomason, a resident of Davis from 1927 to 1957, who had a love of gardening.

Six EH graduate students were awarded John and Terry Kubota Scholarships. In 1984, after a 32-year career as a Staff Research Associate in EH, John established a scholarship “in recognition of the encouragement scholarships can provide to outstanding students”. This year’s awards ranged from $500 to $1,400, and went to Jennifer Buck, Neil Mattson, Joshua Meidav, Alice Warrick, Steve Wathen, and Jeanne Wiltberger.

During August 11 to 24, a group of graduate and undergraduate students will be touring horticultural research and industry sites in Germany. I am leading this group in conjunction with Prof Fritz-Gerald Schroeder at the University of Applied Sciences in Dresden. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is providing some financial support that amounts to most of the local costs in Germany. The tour starts in Dresden and makes a large loop through Germany, going as far south as Munich and the “story-book castle” at Neuschwanstein, back north along the Rhein River to inspect viticultural interests. Then we will travel via Hannover to Berlin.

Some of us will be staying in Berlin for an International Society for Horticultural Sciences conference on “Models for Plant Growth and Control of Product Quality in Horticultural Production”.

**Faculty Activities and Visiting Scientists**

Michael Reid is the recipient of the 2003 Alex Laurie Award for Research and Education given by the Society of American Florists. He is being recognized for his broad-scope, long-lasting contributions to research and education in the floriculture industry. Congratulations, Mike!

Truman Young will spend the month of August at the Mpala Research Centre in Kenya. He will continue working on a long-term experiment determining the effects of large animal grazing on an arid savanna ecosystem.

We are honored to have a number of visiting scientists coming to UC Davis. Dr Wan Soon Kim will be returning to the department for a 6-month visit. He and I are collaborating on a hydroponics research project funded by his organization, the Rural Development Administration in South Korea. In August, Dr Byoung Ryong Jeong, Professor of Horticulture at Gyeongsang National University (GSNU) in Chinju, South Korea will join me to work on a collaborative project on greenhouse flower crops.

**Staff News**

Robin Williams, computer programmer in Dave Neale’s research group, gave birth to a baby girl, Shannon Joy Jackson, on April 28, 2003. Dad Anthony Jackson was reportedly shifty and happy.

Garth Brown, a researcher also in Dave Neale’s group, and wife, Kim Marshall, welcomed a baby boy, Mason Marshall Brown, on June 11, 2003. Garth swears the most often overheard comment in the hospital was: “Oh my, that is the most beautiful baby I’ve ever seen!”

Participants in the CORF Water Quality Management conference tour the water recycling facility at Hines Nursery, Winters.