

North Carolina Flower Growers' Bulletin

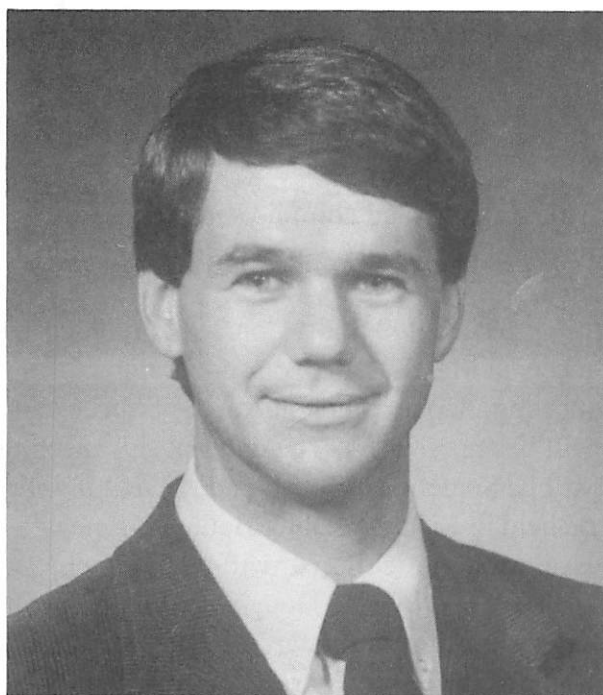
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Forests and Fried Okra

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Five days and 2140 miles after leaving Tucson, I arrived in Raleigh just in time to unpack, rest up for a day, and start work at State on Monday, January 22. That evening, I was honored at a delightful reception hosted by the North Carolina Commercial Flower Growers' Association, and the next two days attended the third annual N.C. Floral

Marketing Expo (*See Wayne Crowder's article on Page 2*). It is now February 22, and things have been going strong the entire month.

When I realized I had the opportunity to come to North Carolina, I felt privileged to have been chosen to serve your dynamic and progressive industry; honored when given the chance to "fill the shoes" of such a well-known and well-respected floriculture extension specialist as Joe Love; and truly excited to be able to interact with N.C. State's floriculture faculty of Gus De Hertogh, Bill Fonteno, Roy Larson and Paul Nelson. Now, I look forward to fulfilling those expectations placed upon me when I came to North Carolina.

Currently, I am starting to visit growers and getting a better feel for the status and needs of the industry. As I travel around the state I see a creative industry, interested in meeting the challenges of today and tomorrow such as implementation of best-management production practices, increased utilization of integrated pest management procedures, and eagerness to try new products and grow new

plants. My responsibility is to supply you with the information you need to achieve these goals, and I thank you for giving me that opportunity.

The title? When my wife Peggy and I told our 4 year old son, Stephen that we were moving to North Carolina and that it was similar to Grandma and Grandpa's home in Georgia, he told us he very happy because "now we are going to live in a forest!" I suppose that is what growing up in the desert Southwest will do to a child. Last week I was up in Henderson and the guest of Sammy Franklin of Franklin Brothers Nursery for lunch. To my delight, fried okra was on the menu. Now after 6 years in Lafayette, Indiana and over 3 years in Tucson, Arizona, I had almost forgotten about the culinary pleasures of fried okra; being deprived for 10 years is long enough. So in closing, my family and I certainly feel at home here, and I look forward to meeting and working with you all.
