

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

March was a busy month for Extension retirees. Margaret Alexander and Lanny Ashlock were inducted into the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame. This honor recognizes leaders who have given selflessly to the agricultural industry, their communities and economic development in the state. Both of these individuals were well deserving of such recognition and honor.

Later in the month, Extension retirees were recognized at the CES Retiree Luncheon held during the 2013 Galaxy Conference. During the luncheon, retirees awarded two \$500 scholarships, one to Cally Shore, 4-H program assistant in Randolph County, and Leigh Ann Bullington, FCS agent in Cross County. Shore is working toward her bachelors and Bullington is pursuing a masters.

Retirees appreciated the opportunity to visit with new faces and were especially proud to award two scholarships. They have worked hard to build the endowment fund for the scholarship program and have awarded seven scholarships to Extension employees for a total of \$3,500.

If you know a retiree, be sure to thank them for their service. Thank you to those who served on the Galaxy planning committee for a job done well.

— Tony Windham



Cally Shore, retiree scholarship winner, with Delta District Director Martha Ray Sartor (second from left), and retiree board members (left to right) Fann Woodward, Earl Wilson, Lorraine Hupp, Stan Chapman and Gene Woodall



Leigh Ann Bullington, retiree scholarship winner, with retiree board members (left to right) Lorraine Hupp, Gene Woodall and Stan Chapman



**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION**
University of Arkansas System

University of Arkansas,
United States Department of
Agriculture, and County
Governments Cooperating

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DR. TONY WINDHAM
Associate Vice President for
Agriculture - Extension and
Director, Cooperative Extension Service

Master Gardener program honored with Henry Award

The Arkansas Master Gardener program was honored with a Henry Award at the Arkansas Governor's Conference on Tourism.

The annual "Henrys" honor Henri de Tonti, whom historians consider to be one of the first "Arkansas Travelers." In 1686, Tonti directed establishment of the trading post that would become known as Arkansas Post.

The Master Gardener program earned the Outstanding Volunteer Service Award at the March 5 presentation. The award is given to an individual or organization that, through outstanding volunteer spirit, has made a substantial contribution to Arkansas' tourism industry. Master Gardeners maintain hundreds of public projects statewide.

The Master Gardener program is a statewide educational initiative of the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service in which members learn about horticulture in exchange for service hours each month.

"We're pleased that our hard-working faculty, staff and volunteers, whose efforts contribute to the beauty of our state's attractions, have been honored with a Henry," said Tony Windham, associate vice



From left, Richard Davies, executive director of the state Department of Parks & Tourism, Sloan Roberts, Miss Arkansas 2012; Laurie Black, Keep Arkansas Beautiful commissioner; Janet Carson, extension horticulture specialist; Mimi Cox, president of County 76, the state Master Gardener Advisory Group; Holly Beason, extension support supervisor-horticulture; Julie Treat, extension horticulture program associate; and Tony Windham, University of Arkansas associate vice president for agriculture-extension.
(Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism photo by Tim Shultz)

president for agriculture-extension for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

In 2012, there were 3,234 members statewide who provided 118,549 service hours to various projects around Arkansas. ■

Battelle: 'Agbioscience' growth in South buoyed by Ag Experiment Stations, Extension

Agriculture means \$240 billion to the South's economy, an impact due in part to public research and innovation from the land-grant universities, according to a new study by Battelle.

Each year, millions of dollars worth of public agriculture research is carried out by the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, both part of the University of Arkansas System's Division of Agriculture.

The study, "Impact and Innovation: Agbioscience in the Southern United States," released March 11, found that agriculture, forestry and fisheries production supports more than 2.2 million jobs in the South, with labor

income totaling \$62 billion. Processing into value-added food and industrial products added \$1 trillion in output across the region.

"The current and future importance of agbiosciences is hard to overstate," said Simon Tripp, a co-author of the report. "This science and industry sector is fundamental to the survival of the world's expanding population, the food security of our nation and the health of our population."

The report warned that inflation and lack of federal budget increases could put a damper on the public research and education that has helped U.S. agriculture become the world's most productive. ■

What's new in publications? Find out at:

http://www.uaex.edu/depts/Administration/blue_letter/Monthly_Publications_Report.htm

LeadAR Class 15 sees familiar faces in PRC

Halfway around the world, members of LeadAR Class 15 still managed to see a few familiar faces during the 10-day international study trip to the People's Republic of China. The trip took the class to Beijing, Xian, Zhengzhou and Shanghai.

"We met with members of the Chinese equivalent of the chambers of commerce at Beijing and the Henan Province," said Joe Waldrum, LeadAR program director.

"China is the world's second-largest economy, and there are plenty of opportunities for Arkansas businesses in China; but they should begin developing relationships there now," Waldrum said.

In addition to visits to a Tyson plant and U.S. Embassy, the class also visited the 60,000-student Zhengzhou University, which boasts a 95 percent graduation rate.

Among the familiar faces was Xie Feng, director general of the Department of North American and Oceanic Affairs for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs who visited Arkansas in 1999.



Members of LeadAR class 15 pose in front of the Shanghai skyline. The group visited China for its international study trip.

The group also met Lindsay Liu, China liaison for the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and Changji "Bubba" Lu, who earned his PhD in Poultry Science at the University of Arkansas.

Probably the most familiar face was that of Sam Walton, whose larger-than-life image greets customers in Shanghai's Sam's Club. ■

Allen Davis recognized by Paragould Daily Press

Allen Davis, staff chair, Greene County, was one of 12 individuals recognized recently by the *Paragould Daily Press* for his leadership and impact upon Greene County.

Davis has worked in the county's Extension office for 24 years and has proven himself extremely valuable, says Douglas Threlkeld, a producer cited in the paper.

Davis' work during the 2012 drought was valuable to producers and to people living in town, says the paper.

The newspaper quotes Threlkeld as saying, "Extension service is worth millions and millions of dollars to farmers, ranchers, garden folks and just regular city folks."

Threlkeld went on to say Davis has "a true caring spirit for this county and for the kids in this county." ■

Content strategy:

Using the web to reach your audience



As Extension moves to its new web home, many have had questions about how to clean out the cyber closets, basement and attic to move in only the best content, or decide whether to toss the old and create new content.

Extension's web content is the billboard that advertises our expertise to the world. So moving it means it's more than simply cut and paste. We need a plan – and that's what "content strategy" means. Making that plan takes a few simple steps:

- **Evaluate your existing content:** Is it relevant to your audience? Does it address questions your clients have been asking recently? Is it out of date? Have

there been new findings that make the current content obsolete?

- **Update it.**
- **Migrate it.**
- **Review and repeat as needed.**

While the scope of the content migration job may seem daunting, think of the web as simply another channel to answer those questions clients ask you in person, and extend your reach to new audiences.

Be sure to visit <http://areyouwebready.wordpress.com> to find how-to's, content migration ideas and answers to any questions you might have between now and the launch. ■

Have a field day!

Mark your calendars and set your GPS for the 2013 Rice Expo, set for Friday, Aug. 2, at the Grand Prairie Center in Stuttgart. Look for plenty of opportunities to engage the public, all in air-conditioned comfort. Other upcoming field days:

- April 16 – The Livestock & Forestry Research Station celebrates its 75th anniversary

- May 30 – SWREC hosts its horticulture field day
- Aug. 15 – The Pine Tree Station hosts its field day.
- Oct. 8 – SEREC hosts its beef and forage field day.

Stay tuned for other field day dates for Rohwer, the Vegetable Research Station, Lonn Mann, Judd Hill and Fruit Research Station in future Blue Letters. ■

AEHC leaders meet at 4-H Center

Nearly 400 Arkansas Extension Homemakers from across the state met Wednesday, March 13, at the C.A. Vines 4-H Center to decide the educational direction the organization will go the next two years.

AEHC Vice President Johnette Johnson, Education Chair, Montgomery County, presided over the meeting. The theme for the education workshop was “Membership Matters.”

Bobby Hall, program associate, Community and

Economic Development; Dr. Lisa Washburn, assistant professor, Health, FCS; Dr. Laura Connerly, assistant professor, Resource Management, FCS; Dr. Rosemary Rodibaugh, professor, Nutrition, FCS; and Elizabeth Johnson, program assistant, Early Childhood, FCS; presented the future emphasis programs to FCS agents and delegates.

It was voted that “Living Well” would be the major emphasis and “Leadership” the minor emphasis. ■

Follow the leader

Ever wonder what Tony Windham is thinking about? Get some insight by following Extension’s chief executive on Twitter, @TonyWindham.

“Twitter is a quick way for me to see what’s going on around the state, especially the Legislature,” he said. “And I can access it anytime. It also provides an opportunity to talk about what Extension is doing and share that with others.”

While you’re on Twitter, support these other Arkansas Extension-related accounts:

@asortor (Anne Sortor)
@ARAgiculture
@uaces_families
@uaces_health

@uaces_consumer
@uaceshomegarden
@uaces_NatRes
@Arkansas4H

BENEFITS CORNER

The University of Arkansas Health Plan has plenty to offer

To help you attain or maintain a healthy weight, the University of Arkansas Health Plan offers nutritional counseling for all plan members and weight management options for those who qualify. For questions regarding the nutrition counseling weight management benefit, please call the UMR dedicated UAS Customer Help Line directly at 888-438-6105.

The University of Arkansas Health Plan offers a Diabetic Management Program through UMR’s disease management team which is made up of registered nurses who can motivate and guide you in making informed decisions to control your diabetes.

The University of Arkansas Health Plan offers a Healthy Heart Program at no charge to plan members ages 18 and older. This program offers the support needed to help you reach your optimal health care goals. Take advantage of this opportunity to speak with a health coach as a first step on your road to better heart health.

Call UMR Disease Management at 866-575-2540 for more information on the U of A Diabetic Management Program or to enroll in the U of A Healthy Heart Program.

Meet the *new* employee!



Tania D. Johnston
Administrative Specialist I
Prairie County Extension Office

- **What's your background?**

I was born and raised in Des Arc and attended Arkansas State University where I received a Bachelor of Science in Marketing Management. My husband Jack

and I have two little girls, Adysen (6) and Talyn (2). I spent the last year working from home and spending time with our children. The previous three years I spent with Stephens Media as their regional business manager.

- **What knowledge, skills and experience are you bringing to Extension?**

I am bringing my knowledge of business systems and operations to Extension. My skills and experience in business management will enable me to be successful as an Administrative Specialist I.

- **What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?**

I'm very creative and passionate about what I do. I love new challenges and the opportunity to learn new things.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

I hope to help inform people in our area of all that Extension has to offer. I'm also looking into the prospect of starting a Cloverbuds 4-H program.

- **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

I love how involved Extension is in our community. There are many areas I never realized were connected with Extension, and it's very exciting to me to learn more about all that we offer.

- **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

I'm a very active person who loves to be outside, especially gardening. In my spare time I decorate wedding/birthday cakes and I enjoy selling Tupperware. I'm an active member of FBC in Des Arc where I'm also on staff in their Mother's Day Out program.

Grants and contracts for Month Ending February 28, 2013

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Central Arkansas Water's Water Conservation Education 2013	\$ 41,198.00	Elisabeth Phelps	Central Arkansas Water
Educational Programming in the City of Conway for Horticulture Program	25,000.00	Hank Chaney	City of Conway
Exploring Potential of Corn, Wheat, Soybean Rotation in AR	30,000.00	Jason Kelley	Soybean Promotion Board
NEFE High School Financial Planning Program	1,250.00	Laura Connerly	National Endowment for Financial Education
City of Paragould 4H Education Program	15,000.00	Martha Ray Sartor	City of Paragould
4-H Military Partnerships: 4-H Army Youth Development Project	24,000.00	Maureen Rose	Kansas State University
Lockheed Martin 4-H Robotics	15,000.00	Noah Washburn	National 4-H Council
National Initiative to Enhance U.S. Strawberry Production Using Sustainable Practices	3,000,000.00	Ron Rainey	Walmart Foundation
Protomace Project	20,259.00	Susan Watkins	R&D Lifesciences
TOTAL	\$ 3,171,707.00		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Leah M. Collie

Program Technician - Weed Science, Crop, Soil & Environmental Sciences, effective March 1, 2013.

Cory R. Hallmark

Discovery Farm Technician, Crop, Soil & Environmental Sciences, effective February 25, 2013

Kristen G. Hensley

Administrative Specialist, Animal Science, effective March 1, 2013.

Tania D. Johnston

Administrative Specialist, Prairie County - Des Arc, effective March 1, 2013.

Extension says goodbye to:

Crystal S. Anderson

Project/Program Specialist - ANNCDC, Office of Sponsored Programs, effective February 15, 2013.

Christopher R. Elkins

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Greene County, effective March 1, 2013.

Denise K. Murdoch

Administrative Specialist, Washington County, effective March 1, 2013.

Joe D. Vestal

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Ouachita District, effective March 1, 2013.