

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

When the John White Awards were announced earlier this month, there were plenty of Cooperative Extension Service names in the roll call.

I hope you'll join me in extending congratulations to: **Karl VanDevender**, a biological and agricultural engineer, for earning the John W. White Award for Outstanding Extension Faculty. Among other things, Karl has been a national leader in providing training to help livestock producers implement new environmental regulations.

For more than 20 years, Howard County's **Jean Ince** has made excellence her mantra. This year's John W. White Outstanding County agent has many honors in her career, including the community involvement and distinguished agent awards from the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Extension was also well represented on the John W. White-award winning, inter-departmental Farm Bill Research and Extension Team, which included **Sam Boyster**, **Bobby Coats**, **Amy Cole**, **Archie Flanders**, **Steven Hefner**, **Mary Hightower**, **Ryan McGeeney**, **Chris Meux**, **Mary Poling**, **Kevin Quinn**, **Julie Robinson** and **Scott Stiles**.

This year, we have two people being honored with the Non-Classified Support Personnel Award: Design Specialist **Chris Meux**, who was the first recipient of the Extension Employee of the Year Award, and Animal Science Program Associate **Kenny Simon**, who, among other things, manages the 300 Days of Grazing program.

And last, but not least, Franklin County's **Christa Littlefield** is known not only for her outstanding office management and creativity, but also her volunteer work, offering support as a 4-H volunteer. For her work, she's earned the Division of Agriculture award for Extension Classified Support Personnel.

I'd also like to thank the personnel at the Arkansas 4-H Center and the 4-H members and state officers for their hard work and their time in making this event a success.

Congratulations to all of our Extension personnel for their hard work and for the ways they continue to inspire all of us in our day to day work.

— Tony Windham

Digging 4-H youth get published

4-H youth from southeast Arkansas took part in a four-day archeological excavation at the Hollywood Plantation in Winchester, Arkansas. This investigation involved having the youth learn all aspects of the archeological process, from deciding where to dig, excavation, lab work and the process of documenting and presenting research. The youth attempted to locate the original footings of an 1840s dogtrot home. The results of their efforts were published in the newsletter of the November-December issue of *Field Notes of Arkansas Archeological Society*.



4-H youth Bree L. and Kenny B. screen for artifacts as archeologist Michelle Rathgaber supervises.

(Continued, page 3)



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION

University of Arkansas System

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

Inside:

- Extension honors employees for excellence
- Cooperative Extension Service America Saves campaign
- Rural Life Conference set for March 4
- 4-H'ers travel to Atlanta for National 4-H Conference
- Jack Hoyle has Supreme Champion Market Goat at Arizona National
- Save time. Save money. Zoom now. Here's how.
- Benefits Corner
- Meet the new employees
- Personnel changes
- Grants and contracts

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

Extension honors employees for excellence

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture honored members of the Cooperative Extension Service during its annual faculty conference Dec. 7, 2015.

"The state faculty conference is one of our best opportunities each year to recognize our faculty and staff for everything they do in the service of the people of Arkansas," Tony Windham, associate vice president for Agriculture-Extension, said.

Honors awarded during the conference include:
County Team Award – Faulkner County. Team members include **Melody Boyd, Hank Chaney, Melanie Malone, Kami Marsh, Leigh Helms** and **Rebecca Thomas**.



County Team Award winners Hank Chaney, Kami Marsh, Leigh Helms, Rebecca Thomas and Melanie Malone with Dr. Tony Windham.

Diversity Award – Expanded Food and Nutrition Program, or EFNEP. Team members include **Celia Boon, Keith Cleek, Serena Fuller, Teresa Henson, BeVerly Sims** and **Holley Tucker**.



Diversity Award winners Holley Tucker; Keith Cleek, BeVerly Sims, Serena Fuller and Teresa Henson with Dr. Windham.

Early Career Award - Classified – Angelia Anderson, Drew County.

Early Career Award - County Agent – Dianna Bowen, Lonoke County FCS agent.

Early Career Award - Faculty – Travis Faske, plant pathologist.

Early Career Award - Non-Classified – Ray Blevins, Community and Economic Development.



Early Career - Classified Award winner Angelia Anderson with Dr. Windham.



Early Career - County Agent Award winner Dianna Bowen with Dr. Windham.



Early Career - Faculty Award winner Travis Faske with Dr. Windham.



Early Career - Non-Classified Award winner Ray Blevins with Dr. Windham.

Employee of the Year Award – Dustan Clark, poultry scientist.

Innovation Award – Soybean Science Challenge. Team members include **Karen Ballard, Blake Bennett, Ray Benson, Angie Blacklaw-Freel, Sam Boyster, Mary Hightower, Terry Kirkpatrick, Chris Meux, Mary Poling, Julie Robinson, Kerry Rodtnick, Jeremy Ross** and **Lynn Wilson**.



Employee of the Year Award winner Dustan Clark with Dr. Windham.



Innovation Award winners: (seated) Mary Poling, Lynn Wilson, Karen Ballard; (1st row): Sam Boyster, Mary Hightower, Julie Robinson, Angie Blacklaw-Freel, Tony Windham; (2nd row): Chris Meux, Kerry Rodtnick, Terry Kirkpatrick and Jeremy Ross.

Issue Team Award – 4-H Citizenship/Leadership Initiative. Team members include **Angie Blacklaw-Freel, Lance Blythe, Shannon Caldwell, Amy Heck, Stacey McCullough, Janice Shofner, Anne Sortor, Priscella Thomas-Scott, Noah Washburn** and **Sarah Whitaker.**



Issue Team Award winners: (1st row) Angie Blacklaw-Freel, Stacey McCullough, Anne Sortor, Tony Windham; (2nd row) Shannon Caldwell, Noah Washburn and Priscella Thomas-Scott.

Unit Team Award – Information Technology. Team members include **Sheryl Baker, Sam Boyster, Becky**

Bridges, Amy Cole, Pat Doss, Norm Duquette, Bill Gu, Steve Hall, Steven Hefner, Bob Hilton, Susan James, Hong Kang, Bruce Knox, Wilma Lewis, Yvonne McCool, Buff McCree, Diana Morian, Andy Plunkett, Mary Poling, BeVerly Sims and **Russell Wilson.**



Unit Team Award winners: (seated) Susan James, BeVerly Sims, Yvonne McCool; (1st row) Bruce Knox, Buff McCree, Hong Kang, Sam Boyster, Amy Cole, Mary Poling, Bill Gu; (2nd row) Steven Hefner, Russell Wilson, Becky Bridges, Steve Hall, Diana Morian, Tony Windham, Sheryl Baker and Bob Hilton.

Cooperative Extension Service America Saves campaign

The Cooperative Extension Service is a national partner with the Consumer Federation of America for the annual America Saves campaign which is designed to encourage people to save and invest. Participants will learn about tools and resources that can help make the most of financial resources.

Family and Consumer Sciences, Human Resources and the Cooperative Extension Service Federal Credit Union (CESFCU) are partnering to bring the 2016 America Saves campaign to Extension employees and credit union members. Discover tips to build wealth, reduce debt and increase saving. Starting in January 2016, look for opportunities to participate in a variety of activities.

Take the free online training course, Building Financial Stability, to learn basic financial management strategies for spending, saving and credit. The one-hour course is open to all employees. Sign up at <http://learn.uaex.edu>. Visit our website at <http://www.uaex.edu/health-living/personal-finance/america-saves.aspx> to take the 2016 America Saves pledge and to learn more about recommended savings strategies.

As part of the campaign, CESFCU is encouraging saving by offering chances in a drawing for a \$100 gift card. Get your name in the drawing each time you open an account for yourself or a family member or for setting up or increasing automatic saving through payroll deduction.

Extension's America Saves campaign begins in January and runs through America Saves Week Feb. 22-27, 2016. Weekly information and activities can be shared by county FCS agents who opt to conduct a local, county office campaign. Follow Laura Hendrix on Facebook for up-to-date information about Extension's America Saves campaign. ■



Digging 4-H youth (cont.)

Landscape Change at the Hollywood Plantation: Archeology at the Taylor House (3DR26) (Field Notes 387:3-9) was co-authored by nine 4-H youth, along with four professionals. Comments and analysis provided by the youth were compiled and reported. These 4-H'ers now have a published article to demonstrate their talents when it is time to apply to college, along with the satisfaction of knowing and experiencing how the scientific process works.

Contact Hope Bragg, county Extension agent - 4-H in Desha County, if you would like to learn more about archeological opportunities for 4-H in Arkansas or to get a copy of the handbook on implementing the Field to Youth program developed from this experience. ■

Rural Life Conference set for March 4

The 60th Rural Life Conference will be Friday, March 4, at the Isaac S. Hathaway-John M. Howard Fine Arts Center on the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff campus. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. with the opening session at 8:45 a.m. The conference theme is "Sustainable, Healthy and Profitable Rural Development."

Sponsored by the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences, this year's conference features eight workshops, a poster session highlighting research projects and exhibits by governmental and community agencies.

Dr. Craig Tucker, research leader, Warm Water Aquaculture Research Unit of U.S. Department of Agriculture, will be the morning speaker and deliver the S.A. Haley Memorial Lecture. Kasey Taylor, UAPB alumna and Natural Resources Conservation Service Delaware state conservationist, will be the luncheon speaker. The luncheon will be at the Pine Bluff Convention Center.

Preregistration is requested of everyone even though the conference is free to producers, homemakers and retirees. The cost for professionals and agency personnel is \$50; after Feb. 19, \$75. To preregister or for more information, contact Delila Thurman at (870) 575-8968 or thurmand@uapb.edu. ■

4-H'ers travel to Atlanta for National 4-H Congress

On Thanksgiving night, 36 4-H State Record Book winners and five adults traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, to participate in National 4-H Congress.

The annual event, with the theme "Excite, Spark, Ignite Change," hosted more than 900 delegates from throughout the United States and its territories. The program was a mixture of educational, service and recreational opportunities, including an Evening of Culture at the Atlanta History Center, International Night and the Congress Gala, featuring Betty Cantrell, Miss America 2015.



Also this year, Arkansas had several youth serving in leadership roles during conference. Emma W. of White County and Melissa E. of Benton County were selected to be on the Congress entertainment team. Olivia M. of Saline County was the State Delegate Advisor and Miles H. of Benton County served as the State Flag Bearer at the Flag Ceremony and Inspirational Assembly. ■

Jack Hoyle has Supreme Champion Market Goat at Arizona National

Columbia County 4-H'er Jack Hoyle ended the year with a bang by rising to the top and receiving the honor of Supreme Champion Market Goat at the Arizona National in Phoenix on Dec. 31. Bryan Bernhard of Lubbock, Texas, sorted through over 325 market goat entries before selecting Jack's goat as the champion. The Marley Foundation purchased Jack's goat, Marshall Tucker, for \$14.50 per pound during the livestock sale.

Jack purchased Marshall Tucker in March from 7T7 Livestock located in Santo, Texas. Jack has exhibited the goat at numerous jackpot shows and fairs, claiming several champion titles throughout 2015. ■



Jack Hoyle, pictured with his sister Riley Hoyle, of Columbia County won Supreme Champion Market Goat at the 2015 Arizona National in Phoenix.

Save time. Save money. Zoom now. Here's how.

Welcome to 2016! If you haven't used your UAEX Zoom account to host or join a Zoom session, check out the following resources on your "new" UAEX Zoom Support & Resources page (<http://www.uaex.edu/support-units/information-technology/zoom.aspx#>):

- How to sign into your UAEX Zoom account with an Internet Browser, the Zoom Client App for desktop and on a mobile device
- Listing of UAEX Zoom Licenses
- Links to download Zoom, manage your Zoom profile, system requirements, Using Zoom (quick tips) and Zoom Support

Get started now. Go to <http://uaex.zoom.us>. Sign in with your Active Directory username and password (not your email).

Still not sure about your Zoom skills? Contact Mary Poling, Coordinator for Interactive Communications, at mpoling@uaex.edu to set up a practice session. ■



BENEFITS CORNER

Benefits Quick Reference Chart

- UMR Medical Customer Service: 1-888-438-6105
- List of providers: www.umar.com. Click on "Find a provider," "Medical," type in "University Arkansas System." Scroll down to "Find a Provider/Getting Care."

Before accessing any provider information, please note the following providers are not included in the University of Arkansas System provider network. These providers may appear in the UMR directory but are not part of the University of Arkansas System provider network.

Excluded facilities

- Arkansas Heart Hospital
 - Baptist, Little Rock
 - Baptist, North Little Rock
 - Baptist, Breast Center
 - Baptist, Extended Care Hospital
 - Baptist, Imaging Center
- MedImpact Prescription Drugs:
1-800-788-2949

- Flexible Spending Account (FSA):
UMR Benny Card
- Delta Dental: 1-800-462-5410 or
www.deltadental.com
- Superior Vision: 1-800-507-3800 or
www.superiorvision.com
- Onlife Health: 1-877-369-0285
Health Coach: www.OnlifeHealth.com
- Retirement Issues:
Fidelity – 1-800-343-0860
TIAA-CREF – 1-800-842-2776
APERS – 1-800-682-7377

UA Employees eligible for retirement should provide Extension with a minimum of ninety (90) days advanced notice and are urged to retire on the last working day of the month.

- CES Human Resources: 501-671-2219

Please keep your home address updated in Banner Self Service

What's new in publications? Find out at:
<http://www.uaex.edu/publications/new.aspx>

Meet the *new* employees!



Amy Greenwalt Carroll
Bio and Ag Engineering Program
Associate
Little Rock State Office

• What's your background?

I grew up on a row crop farm in central Prairie County. I attended Arkansas State University where I received my bachelor's in agricultural business and my master's of science in agriculture.

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

I have knowledge of row crop production, precision agriculture and ornamental plants. I also have a plant pathology background obtained from working with the UofA Extension Service from 2006 to 2012.

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

I live in Hazen near my family's farm. I have two girls, Addie Beth (5 years old) and Ella Grace (2 years old).

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

Just do the very best I can.

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

What I value about Extension and why I want to be a part is the usable information that is brought to the producers of Arkansas. I have seen firsthand my grandfather and father refer to and use the information given to them by Extension and implement it on their farm.

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

Outside of work I spend a lot of time outdoors hunting and working on landscape in my yard. I also stay busy with various activities with my girls. I am very active in Center Point Missionary Baptist Church, where I am a youth sponsor developing activities and classes for youth. ■



Nytalya Salter

Human Resources Specialist - FMLA and Wellness
Little Rock State Office

- **What's your background?**

I have almost 13 years of prior human resources management including almost 5 years at Home Depot and 8 years at Lowe's.

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

I have a strong background in training, health and safety programs, benefits and staffing. I have extensive working knowledge of labor and employee relations.

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

I have spent the last year and a half as a stay-at-home mom, and I am excited to be back amongst big people. I love meeting new people and learning new things.

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

My first year at Extension I would like to learn as much as I can to help me grow as a person and to use what I've learned to help others.

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

I did not know much about Extension prior to coming here. My second day I was fortunate enough to participate in the Check In and Tune Up for New Hires. I learned about all of the things that Extension does and offers. It was at that moment that I knew that I made the correct choice by coming to work here.

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

I enjoy being a mommy. I have a 2-year-old daughter who keeps me on my toes. When I have a few minutes to myself, and I do mean a few, I enjoy reading. ■

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Amy Carroll

Program Associate - Bio and Agricultural Engineering, effective December 1, 2015.

Nytalya Salter

Human Resources Specialist, Human Resources, effective November 16, 2015.

Edwin Wilson

Maintenance Manager, Vines 4-H Center, effective November 16, 2015.

Extension says goodbye to:

Jack Clark

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Yell County - Danville, effective December 18, 2015.

Grants and contracts

for Month Ending December 31, 2015

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Cover Crop Education and Demonstration Project for the Bayou Bartholomew Watershed	36,844	Gus Lorenz	Univerity of Arkansas
Sustainable Nutrient Management	55,000	Karl Vandevender	Agriculture Experiment Station
Fire Ant Control in Soybean	3,485	Kelly Loftin	Soybean Promotion Board
Faithful Families: Implementation and Outcome Evaluation of Paraprofessional and Volunteer Delivery Methods in Low-Income Faith Communities	39,745	Lisa Washburn	University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
Point Remove- Lake Conway Watershed WQ Monitoring	10,320	Michael Daniels	Univerity of Arkansas
Edge of Field Water Quality Monitoring Data Collection and Evaluation (201)	32,548	Michael Daniels	Wilbur Wood Farms
Development of a User-Friendly, Rapid Scouting Procedure for the Invasive Sugarcane Aphid, <i>Melanaphis sacchari</i> , in Sorghum	9,082	Nick Seiter	Oklahoma State University
Developing a Comprehensive Management Program for Foliar Diseases of Soybean	5,000	Travis Faske	Southern Illinois University
Total New Awards for December 2015	\$192,023.66		