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BLUE LETTER

October 2017
No. 3786



Fall brings changes and opportunities

October represents that month when change is really in the air. Summer is leaving, winter is coming. My mom still reads the “signs” in the hills and thinks a colder-than-normal winter is coming this time. She is usually correct about half the time, no matter how fluffy the squirrel tails appear.

Change certainly came to Scott County back in July, when Walmart left the county and left a big hole in the local economy. This sort of thing has been common for years in rural America and in rural Arkansas counties, as opportunity and youth slip away to the more metropolitan areas of the state. I like the word “kudos,” so kudos to Stacey McCullough, Shaun Rhoades, Mark Peterson and other Community and Economic Development and extension staff for rallying the community to work together to move forward into a future that does not depend on a single company but one that rests on local shoulders as it truly should. Kudos to Scott County. We certainly hope we can address the issue of rural opportunity in a larger and more creative way in the future, and Stacey informed me recently that CED had received a grant from the Southern Rural Development Center to work on Stronger Economies Together (SET) concepts in six northeast Arkansas counties and ten southeast Arkansas ones. Kudos!

Change can be good or bad, and we want to focus on positive change; but I read a note the other day that 40 percent of Americans are now obese. This is hugely disappointing, as is the growing opioid epidemic nationwide. These are obviously not good changes, but we have an outstanding Family and Consumer Sciences staff taking on these complex challenges. I commend our FCS specialists and agents for working tirelessly to educate and encourage all of us to eat and exercise properly. Dr. Sartor informed me that Dr. Lisa Washburn and the FCS staff recently received a new grant to battle the opioid epidemic through education, so kudos again.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

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Scott County Extension staff chair Shaun Rhoades emcees a community meeting on Sept. 26.

Waldron, Scott County moving on after Walmart closure

On July 14, the Walmart store in Waldron closed its doors, creating a retail hole and removing 98 jobs from this community of 3,372. This led to great concern for friends and family of the newly unemployed, for those who shopped at and used Walmart's pharmacy and for the future of the community.

To respond to this event, a community meeting was held in Waldron on Aug. 29, sponsored by the Arkansas Regional Coalition of the Ouachitas (ARCO), the City of Waldron, Scott County government, the U of A at Rich Mountain, the U of A Cooperative Extension Service and the Waldron Area Chamber of Commerce. The meeting attendance of over 170 reflects the concern in the community.

A job fair was held a week later, with a followup meeting of ARCO – Scott County on Sept. 26. The meeting featured updates from city, county and state officials and several concrete strategies to move forward: courses offered through U of A at Rich Mountain, a web presence workshop for

local businesses, a fall community cleanup, a shop local campaign and downtown revitalization with assistance from Extension's Breakthrough Solutions Program.

"Our future does not depend on Walmart," stated Sherry Johnston, city clerk/treasurer. ■



Junior 4-H bread makers learn about different leavening agents and fats.

Quick breads camp teaches Polk County 4-H'ers about food science

Polk County Family and Consumer Sciences agent Bridgett Martin recently did a quick breads camp with junior 4-H'ers at the county education building.

The camp focused on the importance of whole grains in the diet and the significant benefits of fiber. Students learned the basics of quick breads, including making muffins and scones.

Initially, 4-H'ers learned the difference between quick bread and yeast bread. However, focus was on leavening agents and the food science of fat replacement. They implemented the concepts they learned and experimented

with various types of fat in their recipe for muffins. Each group of students tested a different type of fat including oil, butter and Greek yogurt.

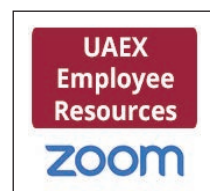
Students enjoyed learning about substitutions and how they impact the final product's texture and flavor. The 4-H group unanimously voted the Greek yogurt substitution as the best. The consensus was that the yogurt imparted a flavor to the muffins "similar to McDonald's pancakes" that they enjoyed. ■

Online Zoom resources for you

Did you know? All employees with a UAEX Active Directory username and password have access to a UAEX Zoom account. What is Zoom? Zoom is the program used by UAEX for online meetings and webinars. Check out the IT Department's newly updated Zoom Support & Resources site.

- Zoom Support & Resources (main page): www.uaex.edu/zoom
- Zoom Help for UAEX Employees: www.uaex.edu/zoom-employees
- Scheduling & Hosting Zoom Meetings Help: www.uaex.edu/zoom-scheduling-hosting
- Non-employee Zoom Resources: www.uaex.edu/zoom-non-employees
- Zoom Room Resources: www.uaex.edu/zoom-rooms
- Zoom Webinar Resources: www.uaex.edu/zoom-webinars

Get started by watching the videos located on the Zoom Help for Employees page to learn how to sign into your account. Download the UAEX Zoom Quick Guide for a quick, one-page reference. ■



Annual forestry workshop held at Southwest Research and Extension Center

More than five dozen landowners from as far away as Oklahoma City learned about pine plantation management, marketing and timber value during the annual forestry workshop held Sept. 14 at the Southwest Research and Extension Center at Hope.

"We started the workshop with a field tour of a pine plantation that has been managed for about 35 years at the experiment station," said Jon Barry, extension forester and assistant professor - forestry. "Guests were taught how to recognize what a thinned pine stand should look like."

After the field tour, guests were treated to dinner sponsored by the Arkansas Forestry Association. Rob Beadle, a representative of the AFA, explained to the landowners the mission of AFA and invited them to join the organization.

After dinner, Kyle Cunningham, assistant professor - forestry, showed how to estimate the value of standing timber and where to find timber price reports.

Barry described issues landowners encounter during timber sales and the importance of hiring a consulting forester. He told landowners about forest certification systems and why forest certification has become important to a successful timber sale.

The 62 landowners at the workshop represented 12,869 acres of forestland.

"At the workshop and in phone calls afterward, several landowners expressed interest in having their forests certified," Barry said. ■



Kyle Cunningham and Jon Barry, extension foresters, listen as Paul Beck, interim station director, welcomes the crowd to the forestry workshop.

Malli Nix represents Columbia County 4-H in Washington

Columbia County 4-H member Malli Nix was one of 34 Arkansas 4-H delegates chosen to take part in 2017 Citizenship Washington Focus in Washington, D.C.

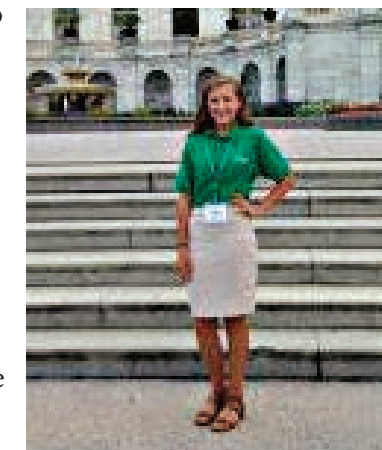
4-H delegates from across the nation were afforded the opportunity to meet with members of the U.S. House and Senate. While there, Nix participated in a group discussion with members of Congress.

She was invited to participate in a night tour of the Capitol hosted by U.S. Rep. Bruce Westerman and to "step a foot" in the U.S. Senate Chamber.

Nix met other 4-H members from across the nation and was able to exchange ideas and form friendships with youth from diverse backgrounds, gain citizenship skills and hands-on experience and improve her leadership skills.

Members are hosted at the National 4-H center in Chevy Chase, Maryland, which reportedly, "had great food, great rooms, an awesome game room, and a great staff!" Places she visited included Mount Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery, Capitol Hill, the National Cathedral, the Holocaust Museum and various memorials and monuments. Her favorite part of the trip was Arlington National Cemetery where she saw the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

Nix has been active in 4-H for 10 years. She is excited because she is "of age" to be a 4-H Teen Leader now. ■



Malli Nix spent several days in Washington as part of the 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus.

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

From your credit union

Celebrate International Credit Union Day

In 1948, credit unions in America, and later around the world, began celebrating the philosophy and achievements of credit unions every year on the third Thursday in October. The theme for International Credit Union Day 2017, "Dreams Thrive Here," is meant to serve as a reminder of how effective not-for-profit credit unions like the Cooperative Extension Service Federal Credit Union are at helping all people chase and achieve their biggest dreams in life. ■



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Randolph County 4-H Teen Leaders appreciate first responders

The 4-H Teen Leaders of Randolph County held a dinner at James Ranch on July 18 to show their appreciation to first responders and community helpers and to raise awareness of the Randolph County Teen Leadership Program.

A large crowd was on hand including Arkansas State Rep. Linda Collins-Smith and members of the Pocahontas Police Department, Randolph County Sheriff's Department, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Survival Flight Air Ambulance Service and more.



4-H teens spoke at appreciation dinner.

President of the Randolph County Cornerstone Coalition, Shonna Allen, gave thanks to those who helped out during the flood disaster and noted, "The main thing is that we had no fatalities during the flood.... We had numerous meals and food that came in. Nobody there was without housing, food or anything."

Cally Shore, 4-H Program coordinator and youth leader for the Teen Leader Program, said, "I'm really, really proud of all of these teens. They do a lot in our community and are very impactful. My teen leaders believe we need to inspire and create... To be proactive leaders in working with our community. It takes commitment for our teen leaders to do what they do - to sharpen their leadership skills, self-confidence and self-respect so they can be active in playing a positive role in our community with other youth and adults."

The mission of the Teen Leader Program, in conjunction with the Randolph County Cornerstone Coalition, is to be a "network of prevention services to encourage healthy behaviors in the county while promoting positive lifestyle choices by providing education, awareness and prevention programs including alcohol, tobacco and other drugs."

The officers of the 4-H Teen Leaders of Randolph County are president Will Sparks, vice president McKayla Sorg,

secretary Morgan Sanders, events coordinator Madelyn Hart and photographer Caleb Hovis. They and other members of the club spoke about their various projects.

The Teen Leaders expressed their great appreciation to the police, sheriff's department, Pocahontas Fire Department, Pocahontas Survival Flight, Department of Human Services, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Arkansas state representatives and the Randolph County Judge's Office for their support of the 4-H program. They also gave thanks to Mike and Molly James, owners of James Ranch, Amy Lynch and Travis James. ■

Veterans4Ag at ASU

On Oct. 6, the Veterans4Ag Summit was held at Arkansas State University.

This meeting was designed to educate and prepare military veterans for potential careers in the agriculture field and was sponsored by the Arkansas Agriculture Department, Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs, Arkansas Farm Bureau, Arkansas State University College of Agriculture and Technology and University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service.

At the event, veterans had access to resources and networking designed to help them get started in agriculture. Leaders in both agriculture and veteran affairs presented and participated in panel discussions. A showcase of agriculture and veterans organizations provided attendees with networking opportunities and the chance to speak to industry partners one on one.

Congressman Bruce Crawford addressed the group about the importance of agriculture and the opportunities for veterans. "We don't want to ever get to a point where we don't invest in the people who feed and clothe us," he said.

Dr. Ron Rainey was on the planning committee, and Dr. Vic Ford was on the panel to discuss preparing for careers in agriculture. ■

Animal Science 4-H Club hosts goldfish contest at Crawford County Fair

This year, there was a new addition to the Crawford County Fair lineup. Animal Science 4-H Club sponsored a goldfish contest. Participants had to bring a decorated container, and once they arrived, they were given a fish to put in their container. The best decorated container for every age group won a gift card to Atwood's Ranch and Home. There were 17 participants, which is great for the first year. We look forward to making this an every year tradition. Great job, Animal Science! ■

BENEFITS CORNER

Flu shot clinics: Flu shots will take place at the Little Rock State Office in conference room 107 on Thursday, Oct. 19, 2017, from 10 am until 12 noon.

Anyone who misses the clinic date can receive a vaccination Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at:

*Freiderica Pharmacy & Compounding
400 West Capitol Ave. Suite 101A
Little Rock, AR 72201

(*Provide your driver's license and insurance card.)

Open Enrollment begins Nov. 1, 2017.

Any changes made during the open enrollment period will be effective Jan. 1, 2018. Materials will be mailed to your home address and emailed to your work email in late October, 2017.

UMR Webinar: UMR, the UA health care provider, will present a webinar on Nov. 7, 2017. More information will be provided.

Effective July 1, 2017, the UA began offering two new voluntary benefit programs, **ID Watchdog** and **LegalShield**. These benefits are not payroll-deducted, but are available on an individual pay basis at a large group discounted rate. If you would like more information about these programs or if you are interested in enrolling in one of these programs, call HR at (501)671-2019 or email yourbenefits@uaex.edu.

Make sure your home address is up to date in Banner. ■

Salem Superstars provide habitat for cavity-nesting birds

The Saline County 4-H Salem Superstars are building bird houses with support from a 4-H Innovative Program Grant sponsored by the 4-H Foundation and 4-H Alumni. 4-H members learned that cavity-nesting birds can have difficulty finding nesting habitat in residential areas. Snags, or standing dead trees, pose a safety hazard and are often removed. 4-H'ers chose to build boxes for screech owls, great crested flycatchers, American kestrels, prothonotary warblers, northern flickers, eastern bluebirds, house wrens and Carolina chickadees. Predator guards will be added to some boxes before being placed in late winter in the Benton and Bryant area. The club will monitor the nest boxes and report findings to the Nest Watch program through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Club leader is Becky McPeake, wildlife specialist. ■



Kristin Higgins, program associate in Public Policy, helps her daughter Kahlan build a nest box at the 4-H Salem Superstars club meeting.

CES inaugurates Diabetes Prevention Program

The Cooperative Extension Service Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is a lifestyle change program that offers education and support for people with prediabetes and those at risk for prediabetes. Prediabetes involves blood sugar levels that are higher than normal but not quite high enough to be diagnosed with diabetes. Classes began Sept. 6 at the Little Rock state office with a pilot group of 13 CES employees. The class meets each Wednesday at noon and lasts for about 45 minutes. The goal of the program is to assist attendees with two core lifestyle modifications: (1) 150 minutes per week of moderate physical activity and (2) modest weight loss of 5 to 7 percent of the individual's initial body weight. To date, participants in the program have walked over 4,000 minutes, decreased intake of sugar-containing foods and practiced goal setting for healthier lifestyle modifications. Classes are taught by Dr. Debie Head, nutrition specialist and National Diabetes Prevention Program lifestyle coach. CES DPP has received pending recognition status from the Centers for Disease Control. Cohort groups meet for 12 months, and outcomes data is reported annually to CDC. Our goal is to reach Arkansans with prediabetes or risk for prediabetes in each county by training Family and Consumer Sciences agents as lifestyle coaches. ■

Fall changes and opportunities (continued)

Changes in health care costs are another negative that seems to be a fact of life, nationally and locally. We do not see this stabilizing anytime soon for anybody, and if you watch the national news, you know what I mean. All these things will affect us in the future, so it is very important to take care of your health and to pay attention to Open Enrollment and those plans and changes that make the most sense for you and your family. We have a very dedicated staff in Human Resources that works hard every day to inform and assist. Talk to them. In addition, FCS staff offer many resources for you to improve and manage your health, including proper nutrition and exercise regimes literally anybody can follow and benefit from. If I can do it, anybody can, and my health scores have improved markedly in the past four months. Please take charge of your health and don't wait. Please note that October is National 4-H Month, and there are lots of activities going on. We need to make noise and be very visible about 4-H this month and every day from now on. If you read the all-negative, all-the-time news, it seems clear we need more 4-H youth leaders in this country. I greatly appreciate all of our 4-H staff, our 4-H volunteers and all the 4-H youth in the state and nation. They ARE making positive change! With that in mind, please know we are in the process of starting the 4-H 20 for 2020 campaign to encourage everybody to donate \$20 per month until 2020 to support 4-H programs. We hope you will support these efforts as they develop. We are also working to make all donations easier and more web-friendly, and our support staff will keep you informed as these changes are made. Finally, I wish to once again recognize ALL faculty and staff in the Cooperative Extension Service for working hard and holding true to our mission that positively changes the lives of our citizens. We may still be a best kept secret, but I see evidence that our visibility efforts are having an effect. I hear daily from stakeholders now about the positive impact we are having in the unbelievably diverse programs we offer in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, youth education and leadership, community and economic development and natural resources. Kudos to all of you, the incredible professionals in this organization willing to stand each day on science and fact. How refreshing in the "information" age. ■

- Dr. Rick Cartwright ■

Pope County 4-H'er wins big at State Fair of Texas 4 x 4 Chute Out



On Sept. 16, Katelyn D. from Pope County, along with several other 4-H'ers from surrounding states, traveled to Fair Park, Texas, to compete in the State Fair of Texas Invitational 4 x 4 Chute Out held annually for 4-H'ers. The Chute Out invites 4-H'ers from Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico and Oklahoma to compete in four events: barrel racing, pole bending, team roping and break away roping. Prizes are awarded to top competitors and all-around winners. Katelyn won the barrel race first-go, short-go and average barrel races, which placed her first in the high point competition for Arkansas and third place for high point for all the states. Congratulations Katelyn D. on your wins and for representing Arkansas and Pope County 4-H so well. ■

Ag Science Day at the Southwest Research and Extension Center

Introducing children to agriculture is a very important component in producing citizens who have a better understanding of agriculture and encouraging further study to determine future careers. The Hempstead County Extension Office and the Southwest Research and Extension Center held a two-day event that highlighted agriculture science. There were 180 fourth grade students who attended the event from Clinton Primary School and the Garrett Memorial Christian School. Students participated in a variety of events, such as the smoothy bike; electricity; hay ride tour; combine simulator provided by Farm Bureau; a petting zoo with a calf, horse, goats and chicks provided by Tyson; a duck hunting simulator provided by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission; an insect collection provided by the Department of Entomology of the Bumpers College; a forest product exhibit; an introduction to beekeeping; and a microscopic introduction to nematodes and mites. This was the second year of the Ag Science Day, and plans are being made for next year. ■

Grants and Contracts for Month Ending September 30, 2017

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Multiple 2017 Protocols (NA17B001 and NA17B005)	\$ 12,000	Bob Scott	Dow AgroSciences LLC
Multiple 2017 Protocols (NA17B003, NA17B004 and NA17B006)	30,000	Jarrod Hardke	Dow AgroSciences LLC
Heart of Arkansas United Way 2017-18 Community Grant/4-H and Other Youth/Dallas County	1,500	Keith Gresham	Heart of Arkansas United Way
Market News Service	10,000	Michael Looper	Agricultural Marketing Service
Development of a User-Friendly, Rapid Scouting Procedure for the Invasive Sugarcane Aphid	4,978	Nick Seiter	Oklahoma State University
Grow for the Green Yield Inspection	9,000	Rick Cartwright	Arkansas Soybean Assoc.
Stronger Economies Together Phase VII	31,900	Stacey McCullough	Mississippi State University
Enlist Soybeans/Enlist Duo/Glufosinate/2-4.D Choline/AMAPA Program Na17P2E004	3,500	Tom Barber	Dow AgroSciences LLC
Multiple 2017 Protocols (NA17FB001 and NA17F7B005)	12,000	Tom Barber	Dow AgroSciences LLC
Total Awards for September 2017	\$ 114,878		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Kurt Beaty, County Extension Agent, Jefferson County, effective August 16, 2017.

Holli Davis, CES Program Assistant, Pulaski County, effective August 16, 2017.

Ally George, County Extension Agent, Randolph County, effective September 1, 2017.

Renee Hunthrop, Administrative Specialist, Cleveland County, effective September 1, 2017.

Crystal Johnson, County Extension Agent, Dallas County, effective September 1, 2017.

Bryan Mader, PROV - Program Associate, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective September 1, 2017.

Jewell Miller, Program Technician, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective August 16, 2017.

Melissa Warren, County Extension Agent, Calhoun County, effective August 16, 2017.

Extension says goodbye to:

Whitney Wright, Fiscal Support Specialist, Financial Services, effective September 5, 2017.

Kaitlyn Baker, Administrative Specialist, Community and Economic Development, effective September 5, 2017.