

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

No. 3744 • April 2014

FROM THE DIRECTOR

There's an old adage about practicing what you preach. Our mission to help improve the quality of life for all Arkansans includes teaching good nutrition and other healthy living habits.

That's why ExtensionGetFit is so important. This statewide program, which began March 24 and runs through May 18, is aimed at encouraging our employees to get away from the desk and make exercise a regular part of their work day. The ExtensionGetFit project aligns with Walk Across Arkansas, a highly successful statewide effort that saw thousands of Arkansans – not just employees – walk millions of miles twice a year and turn an eight-week initiative into a long-term habit. OnLife Health, the UA System employee wellness plan provider, helped to initiate worksite wellness efforts.

I want to thank Lisa Washburn and LaVona Traywick, who jointly coordinated the committee of more than 20 dedicated, enthusiastic state office employees – and those employees who are taking time tallying up exercise minutes. This truly is a group effort – one whose benefits we hope will show through for healthier employees and less strain on our health plan.

– Tony Windham

2014 Ag Hall of Famers include two with Division of Agriculture connections

The 2014 class of inductees to the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame features two people with connections to the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, former interim Extension Director Ruben Johnson and retired Animal Science Department Head Keith Lusby.

Johnson, 83, is best known for initiating the Research Verification Program, in which research is applied to real-world farm fields.

Lusby, 66, was responsible for a major Animal Science Department renovation and building program where more than \$10 million was raised during his 16 years as department head. His efforts

(Continued, page 3)



Ruben Johnson



Keith Lusby



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

Lorenz honored by rice, entomology groups

Although only a few months old, 2014 has been a big year so far for Extension Entomologist Gus Lorenz. Lorenz has received multiple recognitions this year, including being honored with a Distinguished Achievement Award by the Southeastern Branch of the Entomological Society of America and a Southern Region IPM Educator Award. Lorenz was also part of an entomology team recognized at the Rice Technical Working Group meeting for its contributions to the rice industry. There was one additional highlight to his year so far, with one of his graduate students, Mallory Everett (co-advised by Nathan Slaton) winning a speaking contest at the ESA Southeastern Branch meeting.

Lorenz joked that the slew of awards “must mean I’m near the end of my career,” adding that he will begin his 30th year with the Cooperative Extension Service in April. ■



(Left to right) Ben Thrash, Mallory Everett and Derek Clarkson, graduate students advised by Gus Lorenz; Gus Lorenz, associate department head and Extension entomologist; Nicki Taillon, program associate - entomology; and Rob Wiedenmann, entomology department head.

U of A Extension to host 2015 NACDEP Conference

Arkansas is hosting the 2015 National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) Conference on May 17-20, 2015. This is an exciting opportunity to highlight the outstanding Extension work being done in Arkansas, learn about the wide range of community development work in progress across the country and show off our state and headquarters city. NACDEP is the youngest of Extension’s professional associations, celebrating its 10-year anniversary in 2014.

While Community and Economic Development is excited to play host to approximately 350 Extension professionals from around the country, we hope the rest of our Arkansas Extension family will partner with us to offer the best NACDEP conference ever. Volunteers are needed to serve on the local conference committee, help plan and host tours, identify and secure speakers, play host to visitors when they arrive at the conference, facilitate concurrent sessions, assemble conference packets and offer creative ideas for making the conference a fabulous success.

Do you have additional ideas or want to get involved at the ground-level in planning this fabulous event? If so, contact Stacey McCullough (smccullough@uaex.edu; 501-671-2078) today! ■



NACDEP members, including CED’s Bobby Hall, jumping for joy at the 2012 NACDEP Conference

Stan Carter retirement reception

There will be a retirement reception for Stan Carter, staff chair in Independence County, Tuesday afternoon, April 29, from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Independence County Extension Office conference room, 1770 Myers Street, Batesville. Please come and help honor Stan for his 36 years of service to the Cooperative Extension Service. ■

What’s new in publications? Find out at:

<http://www.uaex.edu/publications/new.aspx>



Bradley County 4-H program receives Project of the Year Award

For the past two years, the Bradley County 4-H program has participated in the annual One Day of Service by working with Alma's Home for Children, a foster home for teenage girls who have been court ordered from their homes. This year, the project was named Project of the Year by the Bradley County Chamber of Commerce. The award was presented Feb. 27 at the chamber's annual Gala Awards. Club Leader Angelia Lamb accepted the award on behalf of the 4-H program. ■



Angelia Lamb receives the award from Miss Pink Tomato Cindy Nolan.

One month with our new web site: How are we doin'?

So, how did our shiny new web site do in its first month? Here are a few facts and figures:

We had 64,770 new visitors and 51,602 of those visitors – 76.9 percent – came back in the first few weeks.

“The most interesting thing is comparing the new site to the same period a month earlier,” said Amy Cole, principal, digital services. “New visits increased more than 50 percent and overall, visits increased nearly 100 percent.”

The number of unique visitors since the hard launch increased more than 169 percent from the previous month. Visitors are also spending more time on the site. For example, the number of users who spent between three and 10 minutes at the site was 10,365, up from 3,757 the month prior.

Desktop computers remain the primary means of accessing www.uaex.edu at 80.84 percent of visits. Mobile phone users were second with 10.67 percent, followed by tablet users at 8.49 percent.

When it comes down to what devices are being used most to view the site, Google Analytics shows that 38 percent are using an iPad, while nearly 36 percent are using iPhones. While fewer in number, Galaxy phone users spent the most time on the site.

“With this increase in mobile traffic, we need to be more aware of the file sizes we upload to the site so people on slower connections can still download and view our files,” Cole said. “Always be aware of how our clients want to receive our information electronically.” ■

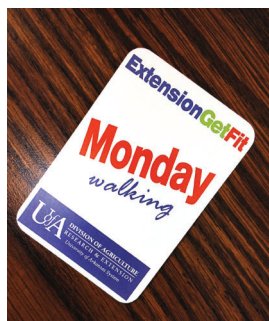


ExtensionGetFit initiatives are in the cards

As if good health wasn't incentive enough, the ExtensionGetFit program has a card incentive program of its own to keep you moving through the next eight weeks. Here's how it works. You will receive a card for taking part in any or all of these activities:

- 1) Walking with the lunch group on Mondays and Wednesdays
- 2) Taking part in Tuesday's fitness workshops
- 3) Riding with the after-work crowd on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- 4) Taking part in program-related special events
- 5) Reporting your Walk Across Arkansas exercise minutes weekly (and these don't have to be walking – these include any type of exercise!)

Turn these cards in at the end of the program to win prizes at the wrapup party including tumblers, t-shirts and other good stuff. Watch your email and check the posters to plan your week. For more information, contact LaVona Traywick at x2027 or ltraywick@uaex.edu and Lisa Washburn at x2099 or lwashburn@uaex.edu. ■



Ag Hall of Fame (continued from page 1)

increased scholarship endowments, enrollment numbers and faculty positions to the program.

Also inducted were former U.S. Rep. Marion Berry; O.H. “Doogie” Darling, a retired Georgia Pacific forester; Leroy Isbell, a farmer who pioneered zero grading of rice fields and the late J. Keith Smith, who had a big role in the development of Arkansas' broiler industry.

The induction ceremony was March 7 at Little Rock's Embassy Suites Hotel. ■

Oliver earns award from Arkansas Gerontological Society

Betty Oliver, Extension Homemakers liaison and former Pulaski County staff chair, was honored by the Arkansas Gerontological Society in March with its Sister Pierre Vorster Award. The award, named for a Benedictine nun who was a teacher in western Arkansas, is given to those active in volunteer services to those 65 and older. Oliver was nominated for her work with EHC.

Last year, “the Arkansas Extension Homemakers provided more than 600,000 hours of volunteer service to Arkansas communities with a value of almost \$13 million,” Oliver said. “At my age, and almost 56 years’ service to Extension, I am honored to receive this award.”

Oliver also learned that across the whole University of Arkansas System, she is the faculty member with the most tenure. It’s a milestone she achieved when that other long-serving faculty member, Frank Broyles, received emeritus status.

“I guess I now hold this honor,” she said. ■



Betty Oliver, right, with LaVona Traywick, associate professor - gerontology.

Retiree Scholarships awarded at Galaxy Conference

Stan Chapman, on behalf of Extension retirees, awarded scholarships of \$500 each to Sherry Beaty-Sullivan and Ashley Carroll at the Retiree Luncheon at the Galaxy Conference on March 20 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain. The Extension Retiree Scholarships are for the purpose of professional development of Extension faculty and staff and are funded by donations from Extension retirees.

Beaty-Sullivan, county Extension agent - agriculture, Howard County, is pursuing a doctorate in Agriculture and Extension Education at Mississippi State University.

She stated that “learning and education are an ongoing process and by pursuing an advanced degree I will be better able to serve my clientele and this organization.”

Carroll, county Extension agent - family and consumer sciences, Pulaski County, is enrolled in the Registered Dietitian program at the University of Central Arkansas.

She said she has always had a passion for nutrition and health education and that obtaining registered dietitian credentials will “allow me to be able to further help clients who may have more detailed needs and/or interest in the science of their nutrition concerns and how to practice a healthier lifestyle.” ■



Sherry Beaty-Sullivan, retiree scholarship winner, with retiree board members (left to right) Earl Wilson, Fann Woodward and Stan Chapman.



Ashley Carroll, retiree scholarship winner, with retiree board members (left to right) Earl Wilson, Fann Woodward and Stan Chapman.

Blast from the past: What Extension was doing 42 years ago

Blue Letter article from April 7, 1972: Food Price Survey to Be Made

A study of food prices in the Little Rock/North Little Rock area was begun this week. It is sponsored by the Governor’s Commission on Food Prices. As a result of publicity indicating that retail grocery prices in the area are higher than elsewhere in the nation, the Commission was set up at the suggestion of the State Department of Commerce. Governor Bumpers named Dr. Henry J. Meenen, head and professor, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, chairman. He will give direction to the six-month study. The study is designed to determine whether Little Rock/North Little Rock retail food prices are, in fact, higher than those elsewhere in the nation.

The study consists of a monthly collection of prices on 96 items in about 30 stores in the area chosen at random from the approximately 200 grocery stores in Pulaski County. To collect the prices, five “pricing agents” employed by the State Department of Commerce have been trained by Mrs. Mescal Johnston, Extension food marketing specialist.

The pricing agents are using the same items with the same specification and standards for each item as is being used by the U.S. Department of Labor in a similar study in 56 cities. Dr. Meenen will supervise the computation of data collected using a weighted average price for each item for each of the six months of the study. The prices then can be compared with the U.S. Department of Labor averages. ■

Wrong e-mail going to your junk folder? Try these steps...

It's a good practice to check your e-mail junk folder at least once a week just to ensure valid e-mails are not being misdirected.

If you're finding valid messages from colleagues in your junk folder, take the following actions to remedy the situation.

Step 1 – Open your junk folder and look for any message that should not be labeled junk. Right click on the e-mail and select 'Mark as Not Spam' from the dropdown menu.

Step 2 – Set your Zimbra preferences to allow e-mails from @uaex.edu, your management and senders of key information (Dr. Windham, Dr. Sortor, Dr. Cartwright, Dr. Prewett, Amy Hedges, etc.).

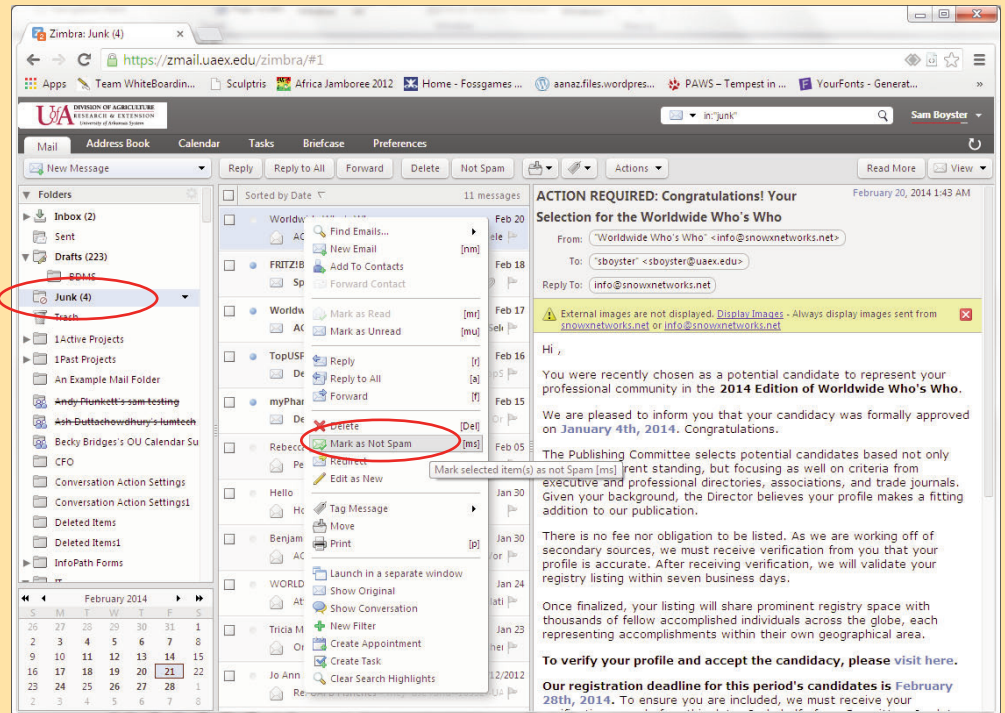
Step 3 – Check more frequently for the next week or two just to make sure it's working correctly.

Why does it appear to be happening more frequently?

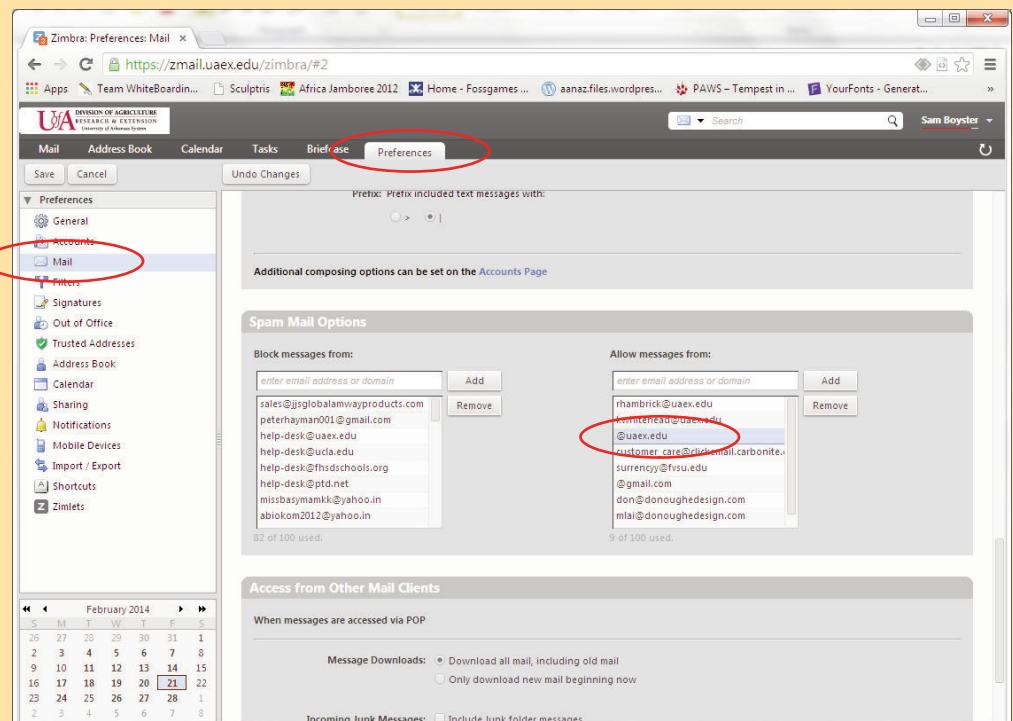
Based on incoming calls to the Call Center, the issue seemed to coincide with the addition of the 100th Anniversary images in employee's e-mails. Another likely contributor was the recent Zimbra security upgrade. Each time we have an upgrade, the spam filter must be retrained over time to accurately identify and block unwanted e-mails.

Feedback from users has been positive regarding using the above approach to resolve the problem. If it still doesn't fix it for you, please contact the Call Center for additional troubleshooting steps. ■

Step 1



Step 2



BENEFITS CORNER

Owe money to the IRS?

What steps can you take now so that you may not owe next year at tax time?

Make sure you are contributing the maximum that you can afford to the retirement plan. If the contribution is pre-tax this will lower your taxable income. The pre-tax limits for 2014 are \$35,000 if you are under 50 and \$46,000 if you are 50 or over. You may contribute even if you are not benefits eligible or if you are participating in an alternative state retirement system. To start contributing to retirement or to increase your contribution, complete a Salary Deferral Agreement Form, EBEN 228, and submit the form directly to the CES Human Resource Department.

You may also need to have more federal or state tax withheld out of each check. You may change your federal and/or state tax withholdings by completing a W4 Form, which can be located at www.irs.gov and submitting the form directly to the CES Payroll Department.

For more information about taxes, please visit the IRS web site at www.irs.gov. ■

Meet the *new* employees!



Lisa C. Brown
Administrative Specialist II
Family and Consumer Sciences

• **What's your background?**

I have worked as a secretary for twenty-five years. I have an associate degree in information technology, I am a member of the

National Technical Honor Society, and I worked as an IT analyst (contractor) for Windstream Communications.

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

Organizational, computer, problem-solving, communication and customer service skills.

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

I'm a shy and quiet person.

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

I want to continue working here with such great people. Everyone has been helpful, friendly and welcomed me with open arms. You can't ask for more than that.

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

This job was advertised in the newspaper. Prior to my interview, I was not familiar with the Cooperative Extension Service. After doing my research, I learned that families across the state are being helped by this organization, which is what I value about working here.

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

I enjoy going to church, reading, watching movies, learning new things, helping people resolve their computer issues and spending time with family and friends.



Shaliece Pearson
Institutional Services Assistant
Facility Maintenance

• **What's your background?**

My experience is in housekeeping.

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

I have about five years of experience in this field. I am always striving to do better.

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

I have a big heart.

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

I would love to get enrolled in school within my first year.

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

I knew it would be an exciting and positive place to work.

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

My interest outside of work is being with and spending time with my family.



Authur C. Smith, Jr.
Administrative Support Supervisor
Family and Consumer Sciences

• **What's your background?**

My background consists of accounting, program development/marketing and administrative support. I've worked in collegiate

and federal government capacities.

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

I bring to CES years of administrative support and interoffice operational experience. I have a very diverse and interdisciplinary background that will increase the productivity and continuity of the FCS and CES family.

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

I am the only male child of seven children from Luxora, Arkansas, and laughter is the medicine of my soul.

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

During my first year, it is my hope to work at filling the large shoes of my predecessor, Mona Norris. In addition to that, I seek to learn more about the Extension Service and the many opportunities offered to the state.

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

I was referred to Extension by a previous employer who recognized I needed to be in an environment that better suited my educational and career future. So I researched the web site and learned of the many programs that improved the quality of life to families across the state. It was this that led me to apply for a position within the Family and Consumer Sciences department.

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

I enjoy cooking, road tripping with friends and visiting my sisters singing outside on the porch. I live to learn and I've learned to live! ■

Grants and contracts

for Month Ending March 31, 2014

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
National Initiative to Enhance U.S. Strawberry Production Using Sustainable Practices Phase II	\$1,050,000	Ron Rainey	Walmart Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Ashley County	1,264	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Benton County	3,000	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Carroll County	2,529	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Crittenden County	983	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Greene County	3,000	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Hempstead County	3,000	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Independence County	1,029	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Lawrence County	2,300	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Logan County	1,042	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Lonoke County	2,940	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Marion County	3,000	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Monroe County	1,141	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Poinsett County	3,000	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Saline County	1,068	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
2014 4-H Shooting Sports Award - Union County	2,300	Anne Sortor	NRA Foundation
TOTAL NEW AWARDS	\$1,081,595		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Brittini N. Bolden

Fiscal Support Specialist, Credit Union, effective March 3, 2014.

Lisa C. Brown

Administrative Specialist, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective March 20, 2014.

Shaliece D. Pearson

Institutional Services Assistant, Facility Maintenance, effective March 10, 2013.

Authur C. Smith

Administrative Support Supervisor, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective March 3, 2014.

Extension says goodbye to:

Mary J. Callahan

Program Assistant - 4-H, Lawrence County, effective March 7, 2014.

Elaine C. Frost

Employment Assistant, Human Resources, effective February 28, 2014.

Sheryll A. Gregory

Program Assistant - Youth, Crawford County, effective February 28, 2014.

Blake A. McClelland

Cotton Verification Coordinator, Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences, effective February 14, 2014.

Lucinda G. Minton

4-H Program Assistant, Jefferson County, effective February 28, 2014.

Bob L. Reynolds

Director - Communications and Marketing, effective March 31, 2014.