



Keeping you connected

extension cord

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U of A
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
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No. 4

Extension honors retirees at luncheon

The Cooperative Extension Service honored its retirees March 31 at the annual retirees luncheon held at the Arkansas 4-H Center.

Nearly 100 retirees and guests attended the event, where they reminisced and reconnected with former colleagues. The program that followed included the presentation of four retiree scholarships, guest speakers, and an update from extension director Dr. John Anderson.

Dr. Anthony Bowden, extension ornamental horticulture specialist presented on "Arkansas Diamonds", locally grown plants proven to be tough and thrive in Arkansas.

Saline County Family and Consumer Science Agent LaTaaka Harvey presented a lesson on optimism and positivity.

Four scholarship recipients were also honored. Extension retirees awarded \$850 scholarships to Lane Fritch, Kevin Lawson, McKenzie Rigdon and Heather Wingo.



Extension director Dr. John Anderson delivers Division updates to retirees gathered at the annual retiree luncheon.



Retirees pose for a group photo at the 2025 Retiree Reception & Luncheon.

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Extension Retiree Scholarships awarded for 2025

Extension retirees awarded \$850 scholarships to Lane Fritch, program technician - 4-H; Kevin Lawson, county extension agent - agriculture; McKenzie Rigdon, county extension agent - 4-H; and Heather Wingo, program associate - health . Recipients were recognized at the retiree luncheon on March 31 at the Arkansas 4-H Center.



Lane Fritch is a program technician for 4-H Programs at the Vines Center. She is pursuing a master's degree in agriculture & extension education at the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville.



Kevin Lawson works as a county extension agent – agriculture in Faulkner County. He is working on a Ph.D. at the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville. Ag education, communications and technology is his field of study.



McKenzie Rigdon works in Miller County as the county extension agent – 4-H. McKenzie is attending the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville and pursuing a master's in agriculture and extension education.



Heather Wingo is working in Family and Consumer Science as a program associate – health. She is attending the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and pursuing a doctor of public health in public health leadership.



McKenzie Rigdon

Kevin Lawson

Heather Wingo

Lane Fritch



Beth Phelps and Terrie Treadway

Visit the
Retiree Luncheon
Photo Album
to see more!



Retirees and guests hear updates from extension director Dr. John Anderson.



Dr. Anthony Bowden presents on "Arkansas Diamonds" plants.



Martha Ray Sartor and Karen Ballard



Dr. Anderson constructs a DIY "Be Optimistic" magnet.



LaTaaka Harvey, CEA-FCS, tells retirees about the benefits of positivity and optimism during tough times.



Retirees visit before lunch begins.



Tom Riley, David Sutherland, and Stan Chapman catch up.

Message from the director



I once heard a joke that went something like this:

A man dies and goes on to his eternal reward. As he's being shown around Heaven, he encounters all kinds of people enjoying the eternal bliss of paradise. However, he encounters one unfortunate gentleman who is bound hand and foot and chained up to a tree. He is struggling against his bonds with all his might, obviously desperate to get loose.

"My goodness!" he exclaims to his guide. "What is that about? I didn't expect to see anything like that here."

"Oh, that's Jim," his guide explains. "You see, he's from Arkansas. It's springtime down there. This time of year, this is just about the only way we can keep him here."

I doubt that springtime in the Natural State really does beat Heaven, but it is awfully nice: the blooming redbuds and dogwoods, greening hillsides with grazing cattle, and peaceful valleys cut with babbling streams. The balmy weather is nice, too. Except when it's trying to kill you. We've had our share of that this spring, unfortunately. Many of our communities have been hit with damaging storms this season, including widespread floods that put a lot of prime farmland underwater. I know many of our Extension personnel have been busy lately helping friends, neighbors, and other stakeholders with storm recovery – in many cases when they have had their own messes to deal with at home. We have also had a large team of county agents and specialists working to develop estimates of economic losses from flooding. Those estimates are used by community leaders and policy makers as they seek state and federal assistance for disaster recovery. I don't think any other organization has the statewide network or the necessary subject matter expertise to do this work.

To be honest, storm recovery work and disaster estimates probably aren't the kind of thing that looks all that impressive on anyone's vita, but it is definitely the kind of thing that provides our stakeholders with a tangible reminder of our value to the state.

Make a Gift to the CES Retiree Scholarship Fund

By Check:

Check payable to: Agricultural Development Council

Memo: CES Retiree Scholarship

Mail to:

Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Sciences
Attn: Elizabeth Tipton
1371 West Altheimer Drive
Fayetteville, AR 72704

Give Online:

Visit https://bit.ly/Donate_UADA

May Birthdays

Eva Johnson - May 1	Donna Swift - May 11	Vicki Brakefield - May 21
Paul Cooper - May 2	Kristopher Rutherford - May 11	Charlotte Freeman - May 22
Richard Klerk - May 3	Robert Rhodes - May 12	Kathryn McElderry - May 23
Shirley West - May 5	Clyde Stuart Jr. - May 17	Donald Johnson - May 24
Glenda Sutherlin - May 6	Dianna Cox - May 17	Dana Stringfellow - May 25
Kim Hughes - May 7	Debie Head - May 17	Faye Suitt - May 26
Gustav Lorenz III - May 9	Harold Williams - May 18	Larry Smith - May 29
Earl Wilson - May 10	Deborah Dority - May 18	Jane Newton - May 29
Terrence Kirkpatrick - May 10	William Russell Jr. - May 19	Donald Slate - May 30
Lillie Teel - May 10	Teresa Booth - May 21	Darlene Zeh Millard - May 31

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