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University of Arkansas System

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Division of Agriculture remembers Milo J. Shult for dedication, public service

Milo J. Shult, the longest-serving head of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, is being remembered for his dedication to improving the lives of Arkansans through research, extension and education, as well as his life of public service.

Shult died Friday, July 19. He was 75. He served as vice president for agriculture for the University of Arkansas System and head of the system's Division of Agriculture from 1992-2010.

Born in Keokuk, Iowa, Shult was raised in the Midwest and obtained degrees from Western Illinois and Iowa State University. He joined the faculty at Texas A&M in 1972 as a wildlife specialist. Shult would go on to serve as an associate director of extension and associate director of the experiment station, two of the three pillars of the land grant universities in the United States. He moved to Arkansas 20 years later to take on the

job as vice president for agriculture.

Shult was devoted to the land grant system and firm in his belief of the system's ability to elevate the people it served through research, extension and education. When he took over the reins of the Division of Agriculture, he coined a motto that has been use ever since: "Arkansas is our Campus." It's a phrase that reflects the Division of Agriculture's higher education presence in all 75 Arkansas counties.

In 2011, he was elected to Class XXIV of the Arkansas Agricultural Hall of Fame. His service to agriculture encompassed not just his 20 years in Arkansas, but also his 18 years at Texas A&M.

"Dr. Shult had a profound impact on Arkansas agriculture and the programs of the UA System Division of Agriculture," said Mark Cochran, who succeeded Shult as vice president for agriculture. "He was widely recognized as a leader in issues related to



Milo Shult

agriculture and rural communities. His leadership was pivotal in guiding the programs on agriculture and food production, environmental stewardship, food and nutrition and the well-being of our families, youth and rural communities.

"Milo Shult loved the land grant system – primarily because he cared so much for the people who could benefit from the programs and for the

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faculty and staff that contribute so greatly to the quality of those programs,” Cochran said. “He touched many lives of both stakeholders and employees.”

On the eve of his retirement, he sent a memo to all Division of Agriculture employees. He told them: “My enthusiasm for the job and belief in the importance of the Division’s service to the people of the state of Arkansas is as strong as ever.

“There are many things I could say about my time in this office,” he said. “However, my one overriding thought is how fortunate I have been and what a privilege it has been to work with you, the faculty and staff of the Division. Your total dedication to helping the people of our state improve their economic condition and quality of life has made this experience, not only the capstone of my career, but also a source of tremendous pride in what you do. We may not be the biggest organization of our kind


but I truly believe there is none better when it comes to serving people.”

Shult has held several state, regional and national leadership positions. They included serving as chairman of the Board of Agriculture and Farm Bill Committee for the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, as well as serving as a member of APLU’s CREATE 21 Committee. He was past president of the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists and has served on the National Agricultural Library Board of Directors, the 4-H Natural Resources Program Steering Committee and the U. S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource National Initiative Task Force. He served on the Arkansas Agriculture Department Advisory Board, the Arkansas Commission on the Coordination of Educational Efforts, and was chair of the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute Board. 

Burnett wins Governor’s Award, highest honor in Arkansas 4-H

Sagely Burnett was honored on July 24 as the Arkansas 4-H Governor’s Award winner, the youth development program’s highest honor.


The honor was bestowed during a ceremony during Arkansas 4-H State O-Rama. Burnett was one of four finalists for this award following a very demanding application and interview process.

This spring, she was selected as the 2019 inductee to the Arkansas 4-H Hall of Fame. She is majoring in agriculture business, with an emphasis on pre-law at the University of Arkansas. Among her many achievements, Burnett represented Arkansas in national competitions seven times, was a state 4-H ambassador and an Arkansas 4-H State Officer at Large. She has been self-employed since 2010, raising and selling dairy goats, dairy cattle and commercial swine. 




Sagely Burnett, a 4-H member from Winslow, Ark., was named winner of the Governor’s Award.

Gordon Barnes Passes

Gordon Barnes, 93, of Hensley passed away on Tuesday, July 30. Gordon was serving as an Extension Entomologist at his retirement in 1982. In retirement, Gordon served as the Farm Director for KSSN 96 FM until 1996. 

Joe Bradley Passes

Jimmie “Joe” Bradley passed away July 17 in Conway, at the age of 91. Joe was serving as county extension agent staff chair in Faulkner County at retirement. 

Donations to Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship tops \$2,200

The following gifts were recently received to support professional development opportunities for faculty and staff of the Cooperative Extension Service.

Margaret Alexander

*In memory of Mary Dunn
In honor of Liz Childs*

Ray Benz

In memory of James L. Gattis

Betty Brannan

Stan Chapman

In memory of Mike French

Gail Clark

In memory of Brenda Henderson-Pratt and Mary Dunn

Nita Cooper

*In memory of Bill Wallace
and J.O. Gibson*

George Davis

Beverly Fountain

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Donna Graham

In memory of Charlotte Fant

Bobby and Anita Hall

In honor of Joe Waldrum

Dorothy Hall

In memory of Kay Dickens

Brenda Hawkins

In memory of Joe Bradley

Brian Helms

Quinton Hornsby

In memory of Gordon Barnes

Ruben Johnson

In memory of Lionel Barton

Tom Leslie

In memory of Ken Combs

Yvonne McCool

In memory of Kelly Bryant

Darlene Millard

In memory of Dennis Millard

Nancy Winterbauer Olofson

In memory of Betty Oliver

Frank Plafcan

Don Plunkett

In honor of Gene Woodall

M Porta Short

In memory of Milo Shult

In memory of Mary Dunn

Doynne Potts

In memory of Ralph Williams

John Robinson

In honor of David Foster

Frank Roth II

Glenda (McLaughlin) Rushing

In memory of Juanita Fuller

Celia (Boon) Shireman

Barbara Simmons

In memory of Joe Bradley

Ann Shult

Tommy Thompson

Terrie Treadway

In memory of Beverly McNew


Tom Troxel

Brenda Vick

Earl Wilson

Howard Young

*In memory of Joe Bradley
and Henry Bowden*

Honorary or memorial donations should be forwarded to the Development Office, ATTN: Brian Helms, Cooperative Extension Service, 2301 South University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72204. If joint recognition is desired, please indicate. To ensure that proper notification is sent, please also include in whose honor or memory the gift is made and the mailing address of the person to receive the notification. 

New Retirees

The following Extension employees have joined the ranks of the retirees:

Mary Barrentine - Garland County

Mary began her career with Extension in 2014. She served as the administrative specialist I in the Garland County Office until her retirement June 26, 2019 after four years of service.

Bobby Coats - Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business

Bobby began his career with Extension in October of 1982. He was serving as professor - economics until his retirement on July 1, 2019. Bobby served for 36 years with Extension.

Allen Davis - Greene County

Allen served for 38 years. He began his career with Extension in July 1981. He served as county extension agent - staff chair in Green County until his retirement on July 2, 2019.

Richard Klerk - Faulkner County

Richard served for 33 years. He began his career with Extension in January 1986. He was serving as county extension agent-agriculture in Faulkner County until his retirement on July 26, 2019. 

September Birthdays

Mrs. Alberta J. James, Sep. 1	Ms. Irene Carlock, Sep. 18
Ms. Diana L. Baker, Sep. 4	Mr. Steven Simpson, Sep. 18
Dr. J. H. Denton, Sep. 4	Mrs. June Williams, Sep. 21
Ms. Vickie Leigh Huddleston, Sep. 4	Dr. Bill Frank Jones, Sep. 21
Mrs. Johnnie L. Younger, Sep. 5	Ms. Gloria Jean Mayhugh, Sep. 21
Mr. Robert E. Blake, Sep. 6	Ms. Belinda Sue Weaver, Sep. 21
Mr. James Michael Moss, Sep. 7	Ms. Sherry Johanna Ream, Sep. 22
Ms. Barbara J. Singleton, Sep. 8	Ms. Leveda Jeanette Tate, Sep. 22
Ms. Carol J Sanders, Sep. 8	Mr. Tom Mertens, Sep. 23
Mrs. Venetta Rice, Sep. 9	Mr. Willie J. Booker Jr., Sep. 25
Mr. Jerry L. Wooley, Sep. 9	Dr. Stephen Vann, Sep. 27
Ms. Catherine Grills, Sep. 12	Mr. William H. Dodgen, Sep. 28
Mr. Lee Hunter, Sep. 12	Mr. Henry Rice, Sep. 28
Mr. Raymond C. Benz, Sep. 16	Mr. Don Plunkett, Sep. 28
Mr. Joe P. Stuart, Sep. 16	Ms. Bettie Wilson, Sep. 30
Mr. Charles William Albritton, Sep. 17	

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Yes, I want to support the fundraising initiative in support of the Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship.

Enclosed is my gift of \$_____. My gift is in honor / in memory of _____.

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To Our Extension Retirees

August is about half way cooked and most of us already wish it was over, at least the heat and humidity part. Unless you are a certain insect or fungus, August weather is tough in Arkansas.



Lately, it has also been tough to see some of our friends pass forward. I was able to attend the services of Gordon Barnes, Dr. Milo Shult and noted the legacy of Jimmy Bradley. I knew Gordon the best and the longest, as he was one of my father-in-law's best friends and I first got to know him in 1974 when I was an undergraduate student and he was speaking to one of our classes about the exciting world of cotton insect management. His storytelling was impressive, and I am related to some great storytellers in the hills. But his adventures and stories stuck with me over the years, and I would run into Gordon time to time, and he remains one of the most original, caring and genuinely good people I have been lucky enough to have known. He lived the life, and inspired many of us in the work we chose. He always thought about and cared for his Extension family.

I worked with Dr. Shult for many years and he influenced me professionally in so many ways. I could not begin to add his influences together over time, and I dare say that would apply to many of us who worked with the Division during the 1990 – 2010 era – the Shult Years as it were. He set his brand on the organization and evidence of his leadership is very visible in the state today, and will be for generations. His was certainly an important and memorable life.

I did not personally know Mr. Bradley, but if you know anybody in Cleburne County, you will certainly have heard of him. As county agent, he took his community and community development very seriously, and became well known for creative ways to improve the vigor and sustainability of where he lived, his community. His legacy is also evident in family, friends and the fact that Heber Springs and Cleburne County – among other places – are better today because of his journey.

We honor their legacy and we do not forget.

Speaking of journey, mine as Extension Director will end by June 30, 2020, as I enter retirement at that time. It has been a singular privilege to serve in this and many other roles for the Division of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension Service, but I am close to done and I really need to take care of some family stuff before too much more time passes. We will keep on working as hard as possible to keep our progress going, and to find a leader with the right temperament, vision and fit to help this great work achieve even greater heights. In this context, I want to say thanks right now to all of our retirees for their continual support, good will and positive attitude while I finish up my part in this play over the next ten months and please know that I am always available if you need anything.

Have a great August if you don't burn up! 