

BLUE LETTER

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From the Director

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Ivory W. Lyles
Associate Vice President
for Agriculture-Extension

UofA

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

From the Director

the horse show during the county fair.

Bryan Cornelious, Marion. Cornelious serves on the Crittenden County 4-H Foundation board. He comes to the 4-H Foundation with much experience in serving foundations.

– Ivory W. Lyles

Honorary and Memorial Gifts

- Extension Service Retiree Scholarship

*In memory of Gerald
Crossland*

Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Haney
*In honor of Fann Woodward
J.W. and Bobbie Lehman*

Honorary or memorial donations may be forwarded to the Development Office, Cooperative Extension Service, P.O. Box 391, Little Rock, Ark. 72203. 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.

– Merritt Royal

Garner Recognized as National Winner

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) will celebrate its 40th anniversary this year. EFNEP is a federally funded program for families with limited incomes. Several cost benefit studies conducted show that for every dollar spent to implement the program, an average of \$2.48 is saved on food expenditures.

This savings can reduce the need for emergency food assistance and save money for other necessities.

A special recognition will be conducted in Washington, D.C. for the anniversary. As part of that recognition, a call was sent out for award nominations for program assistants, program participants and champions of EFNEP. Over 120 applications were submitted. Nominations were collected and reviewed, and **Janie Garner** from Union County was selected to represent the Southern Region as a national winner.

Janie has been recognized in Arkansas numerous times as an outstanding program assistant. She is consistently a high performer: recruiting, maintaining and graduating much more than the required number of participants. She is recognized in the state as an outstanding trainer and has assisted with training many new program assistants.

Janie is very passionate about the work she does for EFNEP. She has had the opportunity to work in three counties in her 31 years with the organization, and her work ethic and commitment to the job have been exemplary. Janie is very flexible when it comes to working with the clients and is willing to adjust her time in order to meet with the clientele.

Janie will be recognized at the EFNEP 40th Anniversary Celebration on March 9 in Washington, D.C. Please join us in congratulating Janie on this outstanding achievement!

– Easter Tucker

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LeadAR Class 14 Meets for First Seminar

Twenty-five men and women representing 20 Arkansas counties were selected for Class 14 of the LeadAR program in late November. They took part in their first three-day seminar in Little Rock on Feb. 5-7. The seminar focused on learning about major issues facing Arkansas, including agriculture, education, the environment, the criminal justice system and legislative issues.

The seminar was the first of 11 in which they'll participate in the next two years, according to **Dr. Joe Waldrum**, LeadAR director. LeadAR is a two-year leadership development program that also includes a national and an international study tour and a community service project.

"The purpose of the seminars and tours is to enhance leadership skills and give participants a better understanding of key economic and social issues facing Arkansas and the nation," Waldrum said.

This year also is the 25th anniversary of the program that began in 1984 with a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The program has graduated more than 350 adults since its inception.

Class 14 members are:

- Phyllis Bell, farmer, Mena, Polk County
- Greg Bess, business owner, Hardy, Sharp County
- Glendora Bright, insurance agent, Hot Springs, Garland County
- Kellen Carroll, apartment manager, Forrest City, St. Francis County
- Paul Casey, farm manager, Heifer Ranch, Perryville, Perry County

- Debbie DeRossitte, county agent - family and consumer sciences, Jonesboro, Craighead County
 - Reneé Eads, insurance agent, Magnolia, Columbia County
 - Ruth Ellis, grain elevator manager, Pocahontas, Randolph County
 - Emma Fowler, service specialist, DHS, Department of Disabilities, Little Rock, Pulaski County
 - Robin Freeman, planning director, Central Arkansas Development Council, Benton, Saline County
 - Bob Haines, director of maintenance training, FlightSafety International, Lonoke, Lonoke County
 - Jason Hayes, loan officer, First Service Bank, Shirley, Van Buren County
 - Rich Heineman, forest inventory manager, Weyerhaeuser Company, DeQueen, Sevier County
 - Chris Hiriyak, apprentice, Dripping Springs Gardens, Huntsville, Madison County
 - Todd Hunter, workforce training coordinator, ASU, Searcy, White County
 - Anita Langhove, owner, Cosmic Cave, Berryville, Carroll County
 - Bill Luther, customer service manager, Entergy, El Dorado, Union County
 - Celia McQuiston, land manager, Albemarle Corp., Magnolia, Columbia County
 - Martha Moore, owner, McCormick Asphalt Paving & Excavating, Altus, Franklin County
 - John Nabholz, information services manager, Nabholz Construction, Conway, Faulkner County
 - Nick Palangio, farm manager, 108 Ranch, Damascus, Van Buren County
 - J.J. Pitman, 4-H Center program director, Benton, Saline County
 - Judy Riley, farm financial manager, Riley Farm, El Paso, White County
 - David Taff, owner, Taff Pressure Washer, Waldron, Scott County
 - Jennifer Victory, safety coordinator, Arkansas Farm Bureau, North Little Rock, Pulaski County
- Joe Waldrum

Constant Contact Lives Up to Its Name for Animal Science Newsletters

The Animal Science Department has turned a tool that is sometimes used to create spam into an avenue for education.

Animal Science has been using Constant Contact, an e-mail direct marketing service that allows users to customize the look of an e-mail by inserting photos and text. A Constant Contact e-mail also allows readers to link directly back to www.uaex.edu to read the latest research-based content.

One of the most valuable tools in Constant Contact and similar services is the ability to track readership.

Currently, Animal Science sends all of its newsletters by Constant Contact, including *Animal Science E-News*, *Beef Champs*, *Beef Research Update* and the new *Horse E-News*.

The Jan. 23 issue of the *Animal Science E-News* had an open rate of nearly 37 percent from 1,023 e-mails sent. Of those who opened, nearly 50 percent clicked on article links from the e-mail.

For most other business types using Constant Contact, the open rate runs around 21 percent with a click-on rate of 5 percent.

"Constant Contact has data on other industries and their open rate, click rate and bounce rate," said **Dr. Tom Troxel**, associate department head for animal science. "Our open rate is among the highest of any industry using Constant Contact. I feel very good about our 36.8 percent."

"I feel very good about the acceptance of Animal Science's electronic newsletters," he said.

– Mary Hightower

EFNEP Team Approach Continues to Benefit Families in Craighead County

A training workshop on "The Effective Teaching of Adults" was conducted on Jan. 23 at the Craighead County Extension Office. Initiated and sponsored by **Nelvia Agnew**, CEA - FCS/EFNEP, the workshop was designed for EFNEP program assistants and expanded to include para-professional educators in partnering agencies.

"In working closely with our EFNEP partners in the county," Nelvia stated, "I found we shared common concerns about better reaching adults from limited-resource households, so it seemed only natural to invite our partners to participate along with our staff. Working together benefits our community, as we each improve our effectiveness and gain knowledge of each other's respective programs."

The workshop was presented by Dr. David Agnew, associate professor, Arkansas State University College of Agriculture - Career and Technical Education, who donated his time and expertise in adult education. Topics included the characteristics of adult learners,

methods of teaching, common problems encountered in working with adults, cultural diversity and strategies for teaching and leading adult groups effectively. In addition, participants were taught about “the little things that make a difference,” such as a welcoming environment, appropriate materials for the audience, awareness of body language and the importance of being genuine and providing thoughtful followup.

Dr. Agnew stated that adult learners “don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” With over 20 years of experience in adult education, Dr. Agnew shared many “real life” experiences to illustrate his points and responded to specific concerns in the final question and answer session.

– *Nelvia Agnew*

Extension Joins AEDC, Other Agencies to Bring Strengths to Disaster Recovery

Following a year of flooding, tornadoes and hurricane remnants, five agencies began taking stock of ways they could – together – help Arkansans recover from disasters.

“The Arkansas Economic Development Commission wanted to bring together contacts from agencies that could help with disaster response and recovery,” said **Dr. Deborah Tootle**, extension associate professor for community and economic development for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture. “Don Gibel of the AEDC helped make that happen.”

Gibel is in the Business Retention and Expansion Division and is the representative for the AEDC eastern region.

The result is the Arkansas Disaster Response Working Group, composed of the AEDC, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management, the Small Business Administration, Arkansas Planning and Development Districts and the Cooperative Extension Service.

The group held its first meeting Dec. 18.

“We shared information on what our respective agencies could contribute to disaster response and recovery efforts in Arkansas,” Tootle said. “Our next step is to identify gaps in services and organizations that can fill the gap and to develop specific strategies for working together and sharing information.”

Tootle has plenty of expertise for the extension service in disaster response; she worked with communities in Louisiana and later in Arkansas recovering from Katrina and other hurricanes.

Of course, nature isn’t the only source of disasters.

“We’re also looking forward to working with AEDC in developing ways our agencies can address economic and hazard-based disasters,” Tootle said.

– *Mary Hightower*

Let’s Get Moving, Arkansas!

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions with over a third of the U.S. population weighing in as obese (indicated by a BMI of 30 kg/m² or higher). Obesity increases the risk of mortality and many chronic diseases (i.e., heart disease, cancer, diabetes, etc.) along with other health and quality of life problems. Ultimately, obesity overburdens the health care system, adding over \$600 million dollars to

health care costs in Arkansas alone. This impact is felt in our ever-increasing health care costs deducted from our paychecks each month in the form of co-pays and health insurance.

The Family and Consumer Sciences Department has responded to the obesity epidemic by encouraging Arkansans to move more. Walk Across Arkansas (WAA) is a statewide physical activity campaign in the form of a walking competition. It is offered twice per year for eight-week increments with eight-person teams. Miles walked are counted using pedometers or conversion formulas (if other forms of activity are utilized). At the end of the program, teams with the most miles and improvements, across various categories, receive prizes and are announced statewide.

In 2008, 1,224 Arkansans participated in WAA. Seventy-nine percent (n=969) reported they increased walking activities from <3 times per week to 3+ times per week. Participants reported improvement in health and well-being in terms of food habits, activity, energy, sleep, blood work, stress and relationships. Our estimates indicate that each Arkansan who participated in WAA had an average health care savings of \$420 per year, or a potential statewide savings of \$514,080 for the year.

Last season’s winning team reported a whopping 3,158 miles (Arnette’s High Steppers of Cleveland County) and was featured on *Arkansas Daybreak* (KATV). They looked like real Olympic champions sporting their medals, compliments of their county. Whether you officially win or not, this program is a win-win situation for all involved.

Let’s support each other and get Arkansas moving! Join us for our next Walk Across Arkansas starting March 8. All instructions and forms are found on our website at http://www.arfamilies.org/health_nutrition/walk_acrossar/default.htm. Who will be the next featured winner? It could be YOU!

– *Margaret Harris*

2009 Jefferson County Home and Garden Seminar and Show

The Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service, Jefferson County Master Gardeners and the Pine Bluff/Jefferson County Clean and Beautiful Commission conducted the 2009 Home and Garden Seminar and Show on Valentine’s Day.

The “My Heart Is in the Garden” seminar and show attracted close to 1,200 registrants, and there were close to 100 exhibit booths used. Counting exhibitors and Master Gardeners, there were Master Gardeners from many of the central and south Arkansas counties who came to be a part of this year’s seminar and show.

Seminars on Herbs You’re Going to Love, Lighting and Design Outdoors and Must-Have Plants (with **Janet Carson**) were presented in the morning sessions. After lunch, sessions on Diabetics – Healthy Cooking, Bones of the Garden and Creating the WOW Factor were taught. Debbie Tripp, seminar speaker on Herbs You’re Going to Love, had a brisk sales day at her booth – Rosemary Hill Herb Farm. Diane Crowder of The Light House explained the methods to use for outdoor lighting in her session, and Janet Carson had so many people that

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extra chairs were brought in for her talk on Must-Have Plants. After lunch, Vanessa Woods Evans, Mary Ann Kizer and Teresa Horton gave an overview of diabetic meals and healthy cooking while demonstrating some of the recipes. Ms. Horton made cook-books available during the session as well as at the South Central Center on Aging booth. Michael Don Fess discussed the Bones of the Garden, a session about sculptures and landscaping mixes. The final speaker on

Creating the WOW Factor was Chris Olsen, known as a TV personality and guest speaker for many events across the state. Olsen has his own greenhouse and landscape program as well.

Plans will soon be underway for the 2010 seminar and show. For more information on the Jefferson County Home and Garden Seminar and Show, contact Don Plunkett at the Cooperative Extension office by calling 870-534-1033.

– Don Plunkett

Personnel Changes

Please help me welcome the following:

Andrew Justin Hood,
County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Desha County, effective February 16, 2009

Heather Margaret Runyan,
County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Perry County, effective February 16, 2009

David Michael Stritzinger,
County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Hot Spring County, effective February 16, 2009

Sandra T. Williams,
Director of Post Award Grant Administration, Financial Services, effective February 2, 2009

Extension says goodbye to:

Shayla Deloris Henderson,
Secretary, 4-H and Youth Development, effective January 23, 2009

Stephen W. Hughes, Printer, Print Shop, effective January 2, 2009

Vetress I. Thompson,
Program Technician - BioEnergy and BioFuel, Bio and Agricultural Engineering, effective January 30, 2009

Grants and Contracts

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Assessment of Pecan Industry: Production Practices, Pests and Cost	7,468.00	Elena Garcia	Internal Innovative Grants Program
FFNews	68,372.00	Martha Sartor	Arkansas Department of Human Services
Southern Region Plant Diagnostic Network	39,000.00	Rick Cartwright	University of Florida
United States Navy/4-H Youth Development Partnership	30,000.00	Maureen Rose	The University of Hawaii
Wildlife Habitat	89,545.00	Tamara Walkingstick	Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Legumes and Grazing Management with Nutrient Management Planning of Pastures	15,000.00	John Jennings	Arkansas Grazing Lands Coalition
Advocates for Community and Rural Education Community Vitalization Project	5,000.00	Deborah Tootle	Advocates for Community and Rural Education
MOA - Storm Water Education Program/EPA	132,161.00	Katherine Teague	Northwest Arkansas Planning Commission
Achieving Profitable Cotton Production: Defining Optimal Seeding Rates Over Varying Soil Textures	28,500.00	Tony Windham	Cotton Incorporated
The Use of Gypsum for Improved Cotton Productivity	23,715.00	Leo Espinoza	Cotton Incorporated
Cotton Research Verification/Applied Research-Cotton Agronomist Position II	31,073.00	Tom Barber	Cotton Incorporated
Determining the Optimum Time to Defoliate Cotton Cultivars	14,600.00	Tom Barber	Cotton Incorporated
Fast Pyrolysis of Cotton Gin Waste to Produce Liquid Fuel	30,872.00	Samy Sadaka	Cotton Incorporated
Achieving Profitable Cotton Production: Irrigation Initiation and Termination	23,780.00	Tom Barber	Cotton Incorporated
TOTAL =	\$539,086.00		