

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

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Spotlight:

From the Director

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Tony E. Windham
Associate Vice President
for Agriculture-Extension

UofA
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

Nothing makes you take stock of a situation like an anniversary – and Feb. 8 is my 22nd anniversary working for the Cooperative Extension Service. It’s an honor to mark that milestone as director.

Over the past two decades, I’ve had a chance to see the extension service from many angles: at its peak and in some of its more difficult times. I believe I can use that perspective and experience to continue guiding the organization to provide excellent service to our clients in Arkansas.

Here are some of the issues I see for the coming year:

Budget. You’ve all seen the memo from Dr. Shult about the budget. We will be focused on minimizing the impact of revenue declines on our ability to maintain the programs and services our clients need most.

Administrative vacancies. The vacancies in the administrative ranks are a challenge. We are working on a plan to systematically manage the many tasks with current staffing levels. I’d like to thank those who are putting in long hours and extra energy to keep us running smoothly.

Communications. In the coming year, I’d like to improve communications internally with our employees, as well as externally across the state. We’ll be seeking a medium that will help everyone stay in the loop while managing the enormous amount

From the Director

of information that bombards us daily.

During my tenure, I’ve had the privilege of traveling and seeing firsthand what’s going on in other states. I believe we have one of the strongest extension services in the country, and we’ll work to keep it that way.

– Tony Windham

Boyster Named IT Director for Cooperative Extension Service

Samuel Boyster has been appointed information technology director for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service.



“We’re excited about having Sam join us as IT director,” said Bernadette Hinkle, associate director for finance and administration for the extension service.

“Having grown up around farming in eastern Arkansas will provide him insight as he helps the Cooperative Extension Service execute its mission,” she said.

Boyster joins the Division of Agriculture with more than two

decades’ experience in IT, software development and research and development. He was manager for computer resources at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics from 1986-97. Most recently, he served as -manager of enterprise director services with FedEx in Collierville, Tenn.

He earned two degrees from the University of Arkansas: a bachelor’s in zoology and a master’s in operations research with an emphasis on computer science.

Boyster grew up in eastern Arkansas and graduated from Osceola High. He and his wife, Dana, have been married 23 years and have two boys.

“I appreciate being given the opportunity to serve the people of Arkansas in this role,” Boyster said. “Information technology continues to change rapidly, becoming a key enabler in communication as well as providing the ability to drive efficiency throughout the Cooperative Extension Service.”

4-H Foundation Board Honors Jack Justus

The Arkansas 4-H Foundation Board has honored retiring board member Jack Justus for his years of service to 4-H in Arkansas. Justus was instrumental in obtaining matching grant money for construction of the Donald W. Reynolds Continuing Education wing completed in 2003.



Jack Justus, former 4-H Foundation President, accepts a framed proclamation from 4-H Foundation Board President Ewell Welch in recognition of his years of service. (Division of Agriculture photo by Kevin Quinn.)

“Justus is truly one of the most hard-working and steadfast supporters of the 4-H program in Arkansas,” said Dr. Brad Davis, foundation executive director. “When he agreed to take the job as foundation general manager, it was just meant to be part-time work.

“Jack made it a full-time commitment, and the more than 130,000 youth in 4-H programs around the state are the better for it,” he said. “Our proclamation is a small way of saying thanks for his big efforts.”

—Mary Hightower

Building Resilient Communities Project Earns NACDEP Honor

Congratulations go to the “Building Resilient Communities” project team for earning accolades from the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals. The team won in the category of Excellence in CD Work – Team Award at both the regional and national levels.

Under this project, the Southern Rural Development Center and partners from Arkansas, Florida, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Missouri worked to:

- Assess the impact of a new FEMA project designed to build capacity for disaster resilience in vulnerable communities;
- Facilitate interaction among diverse stakeholders in vulnerable communities to

build local capacity for disaster awareness, preparedness and response.

Deborah Tootle is a co-PI along with Bo Beaulieu, director the Southern Rural Development Center. Arkansas team members include Tootle and Bobby Hall.

The team will be recognized in April. —Bob Reynolds

Poster Set Nets Regional Hort Society Award

The Southern Region American Society for Horticultural Science has selected an Arkansas publication for a blue ribbon award in extension communications. The “Color Tree Poster” was created by Jim Robbins, professor - ornamentals, and Chris Meux, design specialist. The award for this poster will be presented at the SR-ASHS meeting Feb. 6-8 in Orlando, Fla.

The publication is actually a set of three full-color posters depicting appropriate tree choices for urban settings, lawns and under powerlines.

The project was funded by a grant from the Arkansas Forestry Commission.

—Bob Reynolds

Barber Honored as 2010 Cotton Researcher of the Year

Tom Barber, assistant professor and cotton agronomist for the Division of Agriculture, was named 2010 Cotton Researcher of the Year at the 13th Annual National Conservation Systems Cotton and Rice Conference.

“His skills include public communication through presentations and producer relations; design and evaluation of experimental field plots and greenhouse studies; knowledge of proper pesticide and fertilizer applications; as well as experience with GPS, GIS, remote sensing, precision field scouting, application maps, software and equipment and yield monitors,” said John LaRose, publisher of MidAmerica Farm Publications and organizer of the conference.

Barber was also recognized for research and education efforts that enabled him to secure more than \$680,000 in grants and gifts. Barber serves on two graduate student advisory committees, five committees in his professional associations and five committees for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture.



Barber is congratulated by John LaRose, organizer of the National Conservation Systems Cotton and Rice Conference, on his researcher of the year honor.

Jefferson County Home/Garden Show February 13

The Jefferson County Cooperative Extension Service, Jefferson County Master Gardeners and the Pine Bluff/Jefferson County Clean and Beautiful Commission present the 22nd Annual Home and Garden Seminar and Show Feb. 13 at the Pine Bluff Convention Center. The theme for this year’s event is “Grow It Green in 2010,” and the hours are 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. for the

exhibits. Five seminars have been set. The seminars start at 10 a.m.

Topics of discussion include Michael Seals on "Beautiful and Bizarre Bromeliads," Janet Carson talking about "Is Your Garden Green?" and Debbie Tripp discussing "10 Great Herbs." Victoria Norton and Diane Crowder will speak on "The Art of Transforming Your Space," and Kandy Jones will discuss "The Art of Recycling." At the end of each seminar, drawings will be held for a fantastic giveaway of Stihl products.

There will be exhibits and vendors in addition to the seminars. Admission is free, and hourly door prizes and drawings will be held.

Spend the day, purchase a lunch prepared by Jenkins Memorial Center, shop the various vendors and get new ideas on gardening and home decorating.

For more information on the 2010 Home and Garden Seminar and Show, call 870-534-1033 or 870-543-4901.

– Don Plunkett

February 19 Deadline Approaching for Retiree Scholarship Applications

The application deadline for the second annual Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship is noon, Feb. 19.

For an application to be fully considered, letters of support must be received by the application deadline.

The award recipient(s) will be recognized at the annual Retiree Luncheon scheduled for April 15. Questions about application criteria may be directed to Merritt Royal, director of development (479-575-2322, 501-658-2753, 501-671-2156, mjroyal@uark.edu).

– Merritt Royal

Registration Deadline Approaching for Commercial Tree, Fruit Workshop

Marketing, pest control and sustainability for commercial fruit and nut tree growers are among the topics on the agenda at the statewide Tree and Small Fruit Workshop set for Feb. 16 in Conway.

The registration deadline is just around the corner – Feb. 8.

The workshop will run from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the Natural Resources Center in Conway, 110 S. Amity Road. A fee of \$25 will be charged to cover food and educational materials. Checks should be made payable to Faulkner County Extension Service and mailed to 110 South Amity Road, Suite 200, Conway, AR 72032.

To call with questions or to RSVP, contact Kami Marsh, Faulkner County extension agent for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, at 501-329-8344 or kmarsh@uaex.edu.

– Kami Marsh

Personnel Changes

Please help welcome the following:

Monica M. Betts, Administrative Specialist, Southern Regional Risk Management Education, effective January 19, 2010.

Samuel L. Boyster, Director of Information Technology, Office of Information Technology, effective January 19, 2010.

Yolanda M. Bryant, Financial and Reporting Analyst, Financial Services, effective January 4, 2010.

William M. Drake, Program Tech/Biological and Agricultural Engineering, Biological and Agricultural Engineering, effective January 11, 2010.

Anna J. Goff, County Extension Agent - FCS, Washington County, effective January 4, 2010.

Sandra J. Martini, Grants Program Coordinator, Southern Regional Risk Management Education, effective January 19, 2010.

David B. Moulder, County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Yell County, Danville, effective January 4, 2010.

Barbara A. Rolax, Institutional Service Assistant, Facility Maintenance, effective January 19, 2010.

Mark R. Russell, Instructor-Equine, Animal Science, effective January 19, 2010.

Karen M. Withers, Administrative Support Supervisor, Biological and Agricultural Engineering, effective January 4, 2010.

Extension says goodbye to:

Wanda G. Brown, Program Assistant-Family, Chicot County, effective January 22, 2010.

Linda F. Floyd-Chappell, County Extension Agent - FCS, Carroll County, effective January 22, 2010.

M. Allisen Penn, Assistant Professor, Leadership Development, Program and Staff Development, effective January 19, 2010.

2010 Galaxy Conference
Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean

Triple "R" on the Rocks

March 10-12, 2010 *Retreat* | *Relax* | *Renew*

A reminder that the early-bird, \$100-per-person registration for the 2010 Galaxy Conference closes Feb. 8. Part-time registration is also available. Lodging rates are \$69 for rooms in the Meadows and \$79 in the President's Lodge, tax not included. Registration and other information can be found online at <http://intranet.uaex.edu/galaxy>. To reserve lodging, call WRI at 501-727-5435 and ask for the Galaxy Conference Group Rate. Sign up today to take advantage of

this fabulous opportunity to Retreat, Relax and Renew!

This year's Arkansas Galaxy Conference is being held at the University of Arkansas Winthrop Rockefeller Institute (formerly Winrock facilities) atop beautiful Petit Jean Mountain. Galaxy Conference is an annual professional development activity for Extension employees and will be held on March 10-12.

– Kris Elliot

BLUE LETTER

Melissa H. Potter, WOWN
Secretary, Family and
Consumer Science, effective
January 22, 2010.

Robert H. Rhodes, County
Extension Agent - Staff
Chair, Ozark District,
effective January 15, 2010.

Willa L. Williams, Program
Associate - 4-H STEM, 4-H
and Youth Development,
effective January 29, 2010.

Grants and Contracts

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Southern Regional Risk Management Center at the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	\$1,175,000	Dr. Ron Rainey	National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
Development of Commercial Broiler Industry Chapter of the Poultry and Upland Gamebird Field Manual for Members of the NAHERC	\$ 22,000	Dr. Susan Watkins	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S.-China Partnership for Strengthening Research, Education and Extension In-Season Production and Marketing	\$ 6,538	Dr. Jim Robbins	Mississippi State University
Research and Educational Support for Organic Dairy Farming in the South	\$ 95,993	Dr. Kelly Loftin	North Carolina State University
TOTAL DECEMBER 2009 AWARDS	\$1,299,531		