

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

No. 3715 • November 2011

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Arkansas Extension welcomed 39 new employees during our October 13 “Check In and Tune Up for New Hires” one-day workshop held at the state office in Little Rock.

I want to express thanks to Rich Poling and the Program and Staff Development faculty and staff for organizing and running the event, which was filled with valuable information for new employees.

Thank you to the faculty and staff who met with the new employees during peer-to-peer breakout sessions, who gave presentations in subject matter sessions, who set up and staffed displays for the “Info Expo” portion of the workshop and who dropped by to visit with new employees between breakout sessions and during lunch. Special thanks go to Bobby Johnson and the folks from Facilities, Maintenance and Warehouse, who cooked and served a great lunch for everyone that day.

We hope each new employee felt welcomed and came away from the day with a better understanding of the scope and significance of the role Extension plays in the lives of Arkansans statewide and the roles their positions play in making Extension successful. Comments from workshop participants included:

- ◆ “I learned how Extension works and all of the programs that it offers.”
- ◆ “Everyone was friendly and made me feel very welcomed into Extension and made me feel I was important.”
- ◆ “I have made some new contacts to go to when I have questions or need help.”

To our new employees, let me say that you have joined an organization that has had a positive influence on the quality of life in Arkansas since the turn of the 20th century and has a promising future. You are continuing the Cooperative Extension Service’s legacy of providing Arkansans with information enabling them to enrich their own lives and the lives of their loved ones.

Welcome to Extension! We hope you will enjoy a rewarding career with the Cooperative Extension Service. We will be there to help you achieve that goal.

– Tony Windham



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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Save the Date!

DIVISION AWARDS LUNCHEON

January 6, 2012 • 11:30 a.m. • Crowne Plaza Hotel • Little Rock

DR. TONY WINDHAM
Associate Vice President
for Agriculture-Extension

StrongWomen founder visits Arkansas

More than 115 StrongWomen and Men gathered October 15th for the first ever Arkansas StrongWomen Rally in Hot Springs at the Arlington Hotel. Dr. Miriam Nelson, Tufts University researcher and founder of the StrongWomen Program, along with Eleanor Heidkamp-Young, program manager, visited Arkansas on their nine-week StrongWomen Across America Tour.

Rally attendees participated in an exercise session led by the Tufts team, followed by a presentation by Dr. Nelson on the role of the social and physical environment on personal habits and in the nation's obesity crisis.

Earlier in the week the team spent several days in Camden, one of nine stops on the nationwide tour. Working with Candace Carrie, staff chair in Ouachita County, the visit focused on equipping the Camden Change Club to positively impact the food and physical activity environment.

Dr. Nelson said of the StrongWomen Rally, "You can't imagine what a thrill it was to see so many Strong Women from throughout Arkansas exercising, learning, and connecting with each other! It was a true highlight of the trip."

Arkansas has the largest StrongWomen Program in the nation, with StrongWomen and Men participants in 37 counties. ■



Extension to sponsor 10 income tax schools

Professional tax preparers, farmers, small business owners and anyone else interested in income tax preparation can attend one of our two-day Income Tax Schools.

The schools begin October 31 and continue until December 6. Classes are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day. The schools cover small business and farm tax issues.

The instructors are tax experts with extensive experience with the Internal Revenue Service. Representatives from the IRS and State of Arkansas will also conduct sessions.

The program meets the guidelines for 16 hours of continuing professional education. Registration costs are \$220 per person except Batesville, at which lunch will be served, changing the cost to \$235.

For more information, contact Aly Signorelli or Kim Magee at (501) 671-2072. ■

Tax School Locations	Dates
Harrison (North Arkansas College)	Oct. 31-Nov. 1
Fayetteville (Pauline Whitaker Center)	Nov. 3-4
Fort Smith (Kay Rodgers Park)	Nov. 7-8
Batesville (UA Livestock & Forestry Center)	Nov. 10-11
Monticello (UAM University Center)	Nov. 14-15
West Memphis (Bethel BME Church)	Nov. 17-18
Texarkana (Rural Electric Cooperative)	Nov. 21-22
Hot Springs (Clarion)	Nov. 28-29
Jonesboro (ASU Delta Center for Economic Development)	Dec. 1-2
Little Rock (UA Cooperative Extension Service)	Dec. 5-6

Deadline for CES retiree scholarship set

Begin preparing your application for the Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship now. Two letters of reference must accompany the application due to Amy Hedges, assistant to the associate vice president, no later than noon on Friday, January 27, 2012.

The scholarship fund was created to improve the knowledge and skill sets of current Extension employees. Employees who are attending professional development conferences or are pursuing academic degrees are encouraged to apply for this scholarship. The application form and award criteria are available at http://www.uaex.edu/giving/endowments/retiree_scholarship.htm. ■

Meet the *new* employees

Stan Baker

County Extension Agent - Agriculture
Arkansas County - DeWitt



• **What's your background?**

I grew up on a rice farm in Lee County near Moro, Arkansas. I have a BS in Ag Business from the UofA at Fayetteville, 1978. I have spent most of my career in the private sector with various farm supply dealerships in Arkansas.

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

Throughout my career working with farm supply dealerships, I have worked with farmers in ways that are very similar to an agricultural Extension agent. I worked closely with our farmer customers with most all aspects of crop production from soil sampling to marketing. I have some experience with precision ag including grid sampling, variable rate application of fertilizer and lime, GPS and yield monitors. I also have extensive experience with center pivot irrigation equipment.

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

I enjoy being part of a team and always want to make sure I do my part.

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

I have many goals, but one of utmost importance to me is to earn the trust of the people of Arkansas County and for them to have confidence in our knowledge and willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty as we strive to help them succeed.

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

I have worked with and around Extension personnel most of my career and have always had a high degree of respect for Extension. When the company I worked for was sold and I was left looking for a job, my cousin, Ron Baker, told me about the position in Arkansas County being open. Ron gave me a very positive portrayal of what it is like to be an agricultural Extension agent and that

along with my own experiences dealing with Extension caused me to believe that I would enjoy the work. I applied and fortunately was offered the position. What do I value about Extension? Undoubtedly, it is the quality of the people in the organization and the pride and fun of being part of a great team.

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

I have been an avid Razorback fan and season ticket holder for over 30 years, love to go to the games, tailgate, and visit with old friends and fraternity brothers (I am an AGR). Most recently my interest has been focused on converting one of the fields on our family farm to a management intensive, rotational grazing operation with stocker calves. ■

Guqueta David

Payroll Manager
Financial Services - LRSO



• **What's your background?**

I am originally from Mountain Pine, Arkansas. I received my bachelor's degree in Finance at the University of Central Arkansas.

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

I have over 17 years of accounting experience.

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

I like solving puzzles. I have a great family that consists of my husband Kent of 36 years, two wonderful daughters and one nice son-in-law.

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

Just learning Banner would be awesome!

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

The extension service is a place where what you do matters. I value the wide spectrum of services and opportunities offered to folks by Extension.

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

Spending time with family, reading and fishing. I also enjoy bargain shopping. ■

Sarah David

SNAP-Ed Financial Manager
Family and Consumer Sciences -
LRSO



- **What is your background?**

I grew up in Little Rock. My undergraduate degree is from Centenary College in Political Science and Economics. I have an MBA and a Masters of Management. I have worked in higher education previously, and my most recent job was managing federal grants.

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

I have managed large, complex federal grants with another state agency, which will be very beneficial in managing the finances for the SNAP-Ed program.

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

I just celebrated my first wedding anniversary this October!

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?**

I want to help the counties reach as many people as possible through SNAP-Ed.

- **What brought you to Extension? What is it about Extension that you value?**

My family is from Lonoke and all have been farmers, so I have long known about Extension. I spent many summers at the family farm picking corn and purple hull peas. I have seen what an impact Extension can have on the residents of the counties and want to support that mission.

- **What are your interests or hobbies outside work?**

My favorite thing to do is cook! I also love to work in my yard and travel. ■

Heather Day

County Extension Agent -
Family and Consumer Sciences
Desha County



- **What's your background?**

I was born and raised in Lake Village, Arkansas, graduating from

St. Joseph High School in Greenville, Mississippi. I received my bachelor's degree in Health Education from the University of Arkansas at Monticello. My previous work was as a health educator for UAMS/Delta-AHEC in Lake Village, Arkansas.

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

In my previous role as a health educator, I was responsible for the development and administration of health programs throughout the area. I promoted health discussions and programs in schools, industries and community agencies. These experiences allowed me the opportunity to work with a wide range of individuals, from health care professionals to students to senior citizens. I believe these experiences will benefit me greatly in my new role.

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

I have two girls, Annabella and Madalyn, who are the most important pieces of my life. I love working with people and am very excited about my new role with the Extension Service.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?**

Although I do intend to develop and introduce new health programs in the near future, my main emphasis this first year will be to become as knowledgeable as I can concerning the existing programs in the area.

- **What brought you to Extension? What is it about Extension that you value?**

I have lived my entire life in southeast Arkansas and have a deep commitment to the area; therefore, I deeply value Extension's commitment to making our community a better place to live. This and the emphasis Extension puts on family played a large part in attracting me to this position.

- **What are your interests or hobbies outside work?**

I enjoy spending time with my two girls. One of our favorite activities is barrel racing, so we spend a lot of time taking care of our horses and traveling throughout the area attending competitions. ■

Karla Emerson

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences
Izard County



- **What is your background?**

I was in 4-H from 5-19 years old. I attended College of the Ozarks in Point Lookout, Missouri, where I majored in family and consumer sciences with a child development minor. I worked at the state 4-H office for three summers during school. I worked at the Child and Youth Pediatric Clinic for a year after graduation before coming to work here in Izard County.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?**

I would like to get the kids in the 4-H program involved in more activities and get them ready to apply for teen star, ambassador, etc., when they get older.

- **What brought you to Extension? What is it about Extension that you value?**

Growing up involved in 4-H, I was always around the extension staff in my home county. They were always so helpful and wonderful. They always made sure we knew about all the opportunities, contests and scholarships available. It really made a difference in my life, and now I want that opportunity to do the same for somebody else.

- **What are your interests or hobbies outside work?**

I play the piano, mainly country and gospel music. I love to be outdoors and enjoy fishing and hunting. I love to scrapbook and cook good home-cooked meals! ■

Krystal Johnson

4-H Program Assistant
Phillips County



- **What is your background?**

I grew up in the Phillips County area. I graduated from Central High School, West Helena, in 2004, and I obtained my Associate of Arts degree in Education from the Phillips County Community College of the University of Arkansas. I worked in the Helena-West Helena School District for five years, where I gained knowledge of how

to manage a classroom setting. I have served as a youth supervisor at my local church for as long as I can remember.

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

I am a hard worker, and I love working in a positive environment.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?**

I would love to see the 4-H Program in “full force” here in the Phillips County area. I will do everything I possibly can to make that happen.

- **What brought you to Extension? What is it about Extension that you value?**

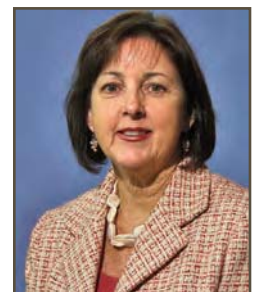
In my search for a new job, I was told about this position. I decided to look it up, and the motto of Arkansas 4-H alone let me know that I needed to be here. It has always been my desire to see the youth of this community become the best that they can be regardless of their background.

- **What are your interests or hobbies outside work?**

I love spending time with my two handsome boys. ■

Brenda Throckmorton

Grants and Contract Analyst
Office of Sponsored Programs



- **What is your background?**

I was born in Memphis, Tennessee, but as an Air Force “brat” lived in several different places including Japan and Turkey. I graduated high school in Ankara, Turkey, and received my B.A. degree from McMurry University in Abilene, Texas. After graduation I moved to New York City, New York, and worked in municipal finance as a bond analyst while attending Pace University graduate school in the evenings, where I received a MBA in Finance. Since moving to Arkansas 11 years ago, my primary employment has been with nonprofits and the State. I was previously in CED working under a grant.

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

My prior experience with Extension, my strong financial and analytical background and a broad world view from living in various cultures.

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

Other than my daughter, a senior at Episcopal Collegiate High School, family and friends, my primary focus is on using my talents and skills to help others.

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

To become proficient in the grant award area and help CES obtain additional funding to further its programs.

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

I enjoyed my previous experience at Extension and am happy to be back. I believe the work being done here is extremely important in helping to improve communities and counties throughout the state.

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

I have a lot of interests including reading, walking/hiking, cycling, gardening and dancing. I also like to ski, scuba dive, sail, golf, travel and paint. ■



Eric Howard,

entomology program technician at the Southeast Research and Extension Center, was named first place winner of Oral Presentations, Student Competition, held October 24-25 at the Mississippi Entomological Association (MEA) annual meeting in Starkville. The

title of Eric's paper was "Effects of Simulated Three-cornered Alfalfa Hopper Injury on Soybean Yield."

Congratulations, Eric!

Information Technology update

Be Security Minded

Weekly we see news articles in various publications announcing the compromise of sensitive information around the world. Major breaches make headlines, but many smaller security breaches don't make the news. *SC Magazine* provides information to the information security professional to keep abreast of the latest threats. Here are some of the numbers published in the October 2011 edition:

- Spam accounts for just under 40% of global e-mail traffic.
- Approximately 11.4% of the e-mail that reaches your inbox is tagged as spam (after arrival).
- Phishing scams have increased by 7% in the past month.
- There were 840,322 malware attacks in the United States last month.

(Source: SC Magazine October 2011)

IT uses firewalls and other techniques to protect our systems, but you are the most important link in the security chain of protection.

If you suspect your computer may have been infected or suddenly begins to run much more slowly, contact the Call Center to have your computer checked.

Local Call: 501-671-2255
Toll Free: 866-779-3375
E-mail: callcenter@uaex.edu

BENEFITS CORNER

Open Enrollment is here! It runs from November 1-30. Please have all forms back to HR/benefits department by November 30.

Flexible Spending Account

- Requires an annual enrollment
- We are changing our flexible spending account vendor to QualChoice effective January 1.
- Debit cards will be issued to each subscriber for reimbursement from their FSA.

Grants and contracts

for Month Ending September 30, 2011

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Southern Regional Risk Management Center at the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service	\$1,168,912.00	Ron Rainey	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
Creating Virtual Nursery Trips to Improve On-Campus and Distance Education in Nursery Production	150,422.00	Jim Robbins	Auburn University
People's Garden School Pilot Program	126,057.00	Easter Tucker	Washington State University
4-H/Navy Youth Development Project	30,000.00	Maureen Rose	Kansas State University
Ongoing Planning Support Data Management and Review of the AR NPS Adaptive Management Plan 2011-2012	21,700.00	Tom Riley	Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
The Southern Region Water Resource Project	1,600.00	Brian Haggard	Texas Agricultural Extension Service
The Southern Region Water Resource Project	5,000.00	Dharmendra Saraswat	Texas Agricultural Extension Service
Thousand Cankers Disease Survey	20,000.00	Sherrie Smith	State Plant Board
The Promotion of Edamame and Other Specialty Soybeans in Arkansas	7,000.00	Lanny Ashlock	Soybean Promotion Board
Economic Impact Analysis of Cotton Production with Public Policy Objectives for Regional Economics	9,000.00	Archie Flanders	Cotton Foundation
Beef Quality Assurance	4,121.00	Tom Troxel	Arkansas Beef Council
Integrated Resource Management Tool to Mitigate the Carbon Footprint of Swine Produced in the U.S.	62,613.00	Karl Vandevender	Agriculture Experiment Station
Integrated Resource Management Tool to Mitigate the Carbon Footprint of Swine Produced in the U.S.	56,709.00	Samy Sadaka	Agriculture Experiment Station
TOTAL	\$1,663,134.00		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Burnita Hearne

Administrative Specialist, Crittenden County, effective October 24, 2011.

Krystal C. Johnson

4-H Program Assistant, Phillips County, effective October 3, 2011.

Roderick D. Rogers

4-H Program Assistant, Dallas County, effective October 3, 2011.

Brenda L. Throckmorton

Grants and Contract Analyst, Office of Sponsored Programs, effective October 3, 2011.

Extension says goodbye to:

Sheila G. Brandt

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Ozark District, effective September 30, 2011.

Christopher K. Colwell

Program Associate - Entomology, Entomology, effective September 30, 2011.

Tyson N. Privett

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Mississippi County, effective September 30, 2011.

Sarah M. Shaw

Program Assistant - 4-H, Desha County, effective October 7, 2011.

Suzanne R. Smith

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Searcy County, effective October 21, 2011.