

# BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

No. 3714 • October 2011

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

You probably caught the recent national news about how U.S. health care costs increased by 9 percent in 2010, with no sign of declining in the future.

Our Family and Consumer Sciences section is equipped with research-proven tools that can help Arkansans hold down those health care costs and improve the quality of life. For example, participants in the 2009 *Walk Across Arkansas* racked up more than 314,000 miles with a potential health care savings of more than \$631,000.

Similar successes are being reported from the *Strong Women* exercise program, with the majority of participants reporting better muscle strength, endurance and balance, all of which reduce the probability of a fall and broken bones. We will look for the same in the *Strong Men* version of the program.

Our healthy eating programs demonstrate preparation of healthy meals, which, along with exercise, reduce weight and improve health. By teaching people to cook and eat healthy, we can help them reduce their blood pressure and cholesterol, potentially lowering their medical bills and improving quality of life.

In the coming weeks, we will be rolling out a strategic marketing plan to enable county employees to promote FCS and these life- and money-saving tools. I want to thank you in advance for your willingness to join in a concerted effort at letting Arkansans know we have the solutions to one of this nation's most pressing challenges.

One last note, please join me in congratulating the people recognized during the faculty meeting with Extension Excellence Awards. We also recognized Employees of the Quarter and handed out pins for Length of Service. Keep reading to learn more about these awards, and please join me in congratulating these professionals.

– Tony Windham

## Arkansas extension podcast channel

The Division of Agriculture is working to capture its share of YouTube's three billion views a day. As of Sept. 28, the three-year-old Arkansas Extension Podcast Channel on YouTube has received more than 148,000 views and counts 88 subscribers.

"Since January, our daily viewer average has shot up from 80 to more than 300," said Kerry Rodtnick, extension videographer.

When it comes down to viewers per video, Becky McPeake's video on songbirds is king, with more than 32,000 total views. Jim Robbins' video on pruning crapemyrtles is second at 17,293 views and Lisa Washburn's video on SMART Goals is No. 3 with 11,371. Rounding out the top five are two Steve Vann videos: "Landscape Enemies: Zoysia Patch," 8,804 views, and "Landscape Enemies: Rose Black Spot," 5,144 views.

You can see our podcasts by clicking the podcasts on the bottom of our [www.uaex.edu](http://www.uaex.edu) front page, or visit our YouTube channel at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/ARextension>. ■



**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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DR. TONY WINDHAM  
Associate Vice President  
for Agriculture-Extension

## Division of Agriculture members participated in the Southern Region Water Conference

The Southern Region Water Conference, held Sept. 12-16 in Athens, Georgia, featured presentations, posters and workshops for nutrient management, urban water management, water conservation and watershed modeling.

Mike Daniels, Arkansas' water quality coordinator for the Southern Region Water Workgroup, served as the chairman of the Awards Committee and presented 11 awards recognizing colleagues for outstanding leadership and achievements.



**Pearl Daniel during the poster session in front of the Arkansas Discovery Farm posters.**

Dharmendra Saraswat served as a co-organizer of the conference and as co-team leader for the Southern Region Watershed Assessment and Modeling (SRWAM) team. He also led workshops on Google Earth and cloud technology for using water-related data where he launched a mobile phone version of the Google Earth Workshop that can be accessed from the web site, [www.hdwap.com/uada](http://www.hdwap.com/uada), using 'google' for both login and password.

Mike Daniels, Dharmendra Saraswat, Karl VanDevender, Brian Haggard and Pearl Daniel presented six posters during the poster session, while Brian Haggard, Karl VanDevender, Morteza Mozaffari and Dharmendra Saraswat made oral presentations. ■

## Faulkner County 4-H holds open house

Approximately 125 visitors attended the Faulkner County 4-H open house held at the county office Sept. 8, with 43 potential 4-H'ers and 10 possible adult volunteers signed up to receive additional information and follow-up contact from 4-H youth, volunteers and staff.

People who attended the open house were treated to more than 25 exhibits created by 4-H'ers and volunteers. The exhibits informed visitors about 4-H membership requirements, project selection, 4-H project journals, how to select a 4-H club, 4-H center programs and state 4-H camping opportunities.



Participants had an opportunity to hear from 4-H'ers and adult leaders the benefits of becoming a 4-H'er or adult volunteer.

The open house was the brainchild of the 2011 county 4-H expansion and review planning committee, which, based upon September's attendance, plans to hold open house again in 2012. ■

**Save the Date!**



*Division Awards Luncheon*  
JANUARY 6, 2012 • 11:30 a.m. • Crowne Plaza Hotel • Little Rock

# 2011 Excellence Awards

Real-world financial education for high school seniors and a watershed modeling program were among the honorees at the 2011 Excellence Awards given to faculty and staff of the Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

“Each year, we recognize the individuals, teams and programs that set the standard for exceptional extension work,” said Tony Windham, associate vice president for agriculture-extension for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

Here are this year’s winners:



**County Team Award** – Boone County, a team made up of Nita Cooper, Mike McClintock, Trudy McManus, Denyse Hensley and Kathy Rawlinsong. The Boone County

Extension team has worked hard to develop available resources and build programs that attract and serve public interest.

## Diversity Award –

“Women and Working Lands” project team, made up of Laura Connerly, Carroll Guffey and Tamara Walkingstick.

According to the most recent Census of



Agriculture, women are running more farms and timber operations and producing a greater value of agricultural products than ever. To address this audience, the team conducted research that will allow development of educational programs that meet the needs of women in agriculture.



**Early Career-Classified** – Vicki Brakefield from the Montgomery County Extension Office earned the award for early career-classified employee for excellence in her work as administrative specialist.



**Early Career-County Agent** – Shea Wilson from Prairie County earned the award for excellence in her work as county agent. Her major program emphasis is health and nutrition, but she works with two dozen 4-H and Extension Homemakers programs.

**Early Career-Non-Classified** – Dharmendra Saraswat, extension engineer, earned the award for his outstanding work on mobile platforms, geographic information systems and remote sensing, as well as mentoring Ph.D. and master’s students and his involvement in multi-state collaborations.



## Innovation Award –

The innovation award went to Tom Riley, director of the Public Policy Center of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, and Dharmendra Saraswat,

extension engineer, for their watershed modeling project. The Arkansas Watershed Prioritization Tool was created to make watershed data more accessible to scientists, administrators and others involved in developing 2011-2016 Arkansas’ nonpoint source pollution management plan.

## Issue Team of Excellence Award –

The winner is the multi-county “Ready, Set, Graduate” program developed and implemented by Nita Cooper, Boone County extension staff chair; Susan Holman, Franklin County extension agent; Trudy McManus, Boone County extension agent; and



## 2011 Excellence Awards (cont.)

Renee Myers, Marion County interim staff chair. The “Ready, Set, Graduate” team pulled together a one-day program for high school seniors designed as a crash course in basic financial management. The role-playing included practical scenarios such as negotiating a car purchase and then obtaining a loan.

**Unit Team Award** – This award went to the Community and Economic Development Department’s marketing program. The team is comprised of Richard Evans, Bobby Hall, Debbie Henry, Jane Kriigel, Kimberly Magee, Stacey McCullough, Wayne Miller, John Payne,

Mark Peterson, Willie Price, Tom Riley, Jan Rogers, Aly Signorelli, Delbert Taylor, Dot Temple, Deborah Tootle, LaDonna Turpin and Joe Waldrum.



The Community and Economic Development faculty and staff decided to make its department a more visible part of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, with an eye to putting CED in a better position to serve Arkansas. ■

## Saving energy in the barn

It costs a lot to heat, ventilate and light the 17,000 poultry “houses” or barns in Arkansas.

Energy is the second highest expense behind the cost of the mortgage on the poultry house, yet energy costs have increased so rapidly that they threaten to erase any profits a poultry production house might realize.

Last year the Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service, through a grant from the USDA Rural Development Agency, began working on energy efficiency studies and analysis to assist producers in lowering their energy costs. The grant supports on-site energy audits of the poultry houses in Arkansas and statewide educational programming.

Dr. Yi Liang, biological and agricultural engineering, is spearheading the evaluation or audit of energy use in houses.

The team, under Dr. Liang’s direction, evaluates various building features, such as lighting, insulation and ventilation fans. With a visual inspection and thermal camera, the team can determine if barns have air leaks or deteriorated insulation that might cause excessive heat loss or drafty spots near the birds.

By pulling together cost estimates for potential improvements, with estimated fuel savings for each improvement, a cost and cost-recovery for upgrading is calculated for each house. The producer may use the information to decide whether or not to invest in energy reduction upgrades. The ultimate goal is to find cost-effective ways to reduce energy consumption and costs while maintaining optimum production. ■



**Top: Smoke tests are used to detect leakages in a poultry house.**

**Bottom: Fan’s numeration system to evaluate ventilation flow rates and fan efficiency.**

**What’s new in publications? Find out at:**

[http://www.uaex.edu/depts/Administration/blue\\_letter/Monthly\\_Publications\\_Report.htm](http://www.uaex.edu/depts/Administration/blue_letter/Monthly_Publications_Report.htm)

# Employees of the Quarter – April-June 2011

## Delta District

**Fran Tomerlin, CEA - 4-H - Agriculture, Chicot County.**

Fran is determined to provide assistance to the clients of Chicot County. She uses a variety of teaching methods and conducts programs effectively. Fran has raised more than \$150,000 for the horticulture and CD programs through grants from Heifer International. She is the lead agent for Delta Master Gardeners that includes Chicot, Ashley, Drew and Desha counties and does a great job working with city leaders on park and beautification projects. Fran continually strives to gain knowledge. She is involved in many Extension committees such as the 4-H STEM program.



advertising for Extension. If Extension had to pay for this advertising, the cost would be about \$485,000. Mary is highly competitive and takes great pleasure in beating news reporters in covering events and issues so that news sources can see Extension as a valuable and timely organization. It has been quoted from a local newspaper reporter, "Extension beat me to the story again." Mary has shown initiative and teamwork in highlighting the activities and accomplishments of our faculty by ensuring their accomplishments are in print and placed with the television media. Mary is an inspiration to us all.



## Ozark District

**Jane Maginot, Program Associate-Urban Stormwater Education, Benton County.**

Recently, Jane took the initiative to create a monthly stormwater education e-newsletter for regional teachers as well as a monthly LakeSmart paper newsletter for Beaver Lake shoreline residents. She distributes these newsletters to more than 3,300 clientele every month. Jane is part of the team that compiled and won the Association of County Agricultural Agents' Communications Award for the "Learning Module/Notebook" at the state, Southern Region and national levels for the Beaver Lake LakeSmart Environmental Self-Assessment Guide. Although not working for us during the initial pilot project and testing of the module, Jane was instrumental in the redesign and publication of the final guide. Jane always does her part and beyond, volunteering to pitch in and help wherever needed. Her light-hearted spirit makes her a joy to work with, and she is very approachable when working with the public.



**Genean Riddick, Administrative Assistant, Agriculture and Natural Resources.**

Genean has reorganized the ANR office to assure signing of documents within a 24-hour period. She has provided new framework

for the Soybean Promotion Board proposals and reports. She laid groundwork so that in the future we will be able to use online submission of proposals and reports for the soybean and wheat commodity board systems and has pursued training to assist her in completing these processes. During this quarter, she created a simple system for keeping up with the associate director and his meeting commitments more reliably. Genean has helped hundreds of persons with her humor and professionalism. In a relatively short time, she has brought order to chaos in the ANR office.

## State Office

**Mary Hightower, Assistant Director, Communication and Marketing.**

Mary has spent numerous hours in the last quarter placing news clips in statewide newspapers filling over 24,000 column inches of newspaper space, which was free



**Dr. Chuck Wilson, Director, Rice Research and Extension Center.**

Dr. Wilson has worked extremely hard and has proved to be a reliable and resourceful employee. He is a great team player and knows when to delegate and when to simply dive in

to get something done. This quarter, he spent countless hours of hard work planning the 2011 Rice Expo. He worked with hundreds of people to attend to the hundreds, if not thousands, of details to make sure the event went without a hitch. Chuck's ability to multitask enabled him to put out fires, do on-the-spot TV and radio interviews and still keep the event on track. The event was held in over 100-degree weather, and still he reached his attendance goal of more than 1,000 participants. ■



# Meet the *new* employees

## **Dennis R. Bailey**

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair  
Jefferson County



### • **What's your background?**

I was raised on a small farm in Smithville, Oklahoma, and been associated with 4-H since I was about 10. I have two degrees from Oklahoma State University (BS-AnSci and MS-AgEd) and have been a certified crop advisor. I worked in the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service for over 30 years, serving the last 23 in McCurtain County Oklahoma near DeQueen, Arkansas. My areas of success have been in Community Development and Agriculture.

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

I believe after being in Extension and then a state legislator, I can add a lot to our ability to promote one of the absolute best ideas in American history, which is the CES. My many experiences in Extension have been very rewarding, and I believe they can be expanded. It has been a goal of mine to work in another state and learn new issues. Having been in private agriculture production gives me a good understanding of where producers are coming from when they visit our office as well.

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

I have three kids in professional careers and a great wife, Karen, who has kept me in line for 30 years! I like offices to have a professional look and programs to be run in first-class style.

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

I want to develop a working knowledge of the Ag/Community Development sector in Jefferson County and the state, then develop/implement an appropriate POW to meet the needs of those areas. Also, I want to make sure all staff members have the support and encouragement to excel in all the program areas.

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

I think it all goes back to those early days of 4-H, expanding the horizons of a kid from a very rural area in the timberlands of southeast Oklahoma. Those first county agents were always wanting us to do something new, and I think that rubbed off on many kids over the years. In 31 or so years as a county agent, I have never touched half of what Extension has to offer our people. I am going to try to make a greater effort in that regard.

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

I enjoy hunting deer, turkey, elk, and I fish a little. We like to travel and cruise in the Alaskan or New England areas. I am also a decent cook and like to cook for large groups on occasion. ■

## **Dianna L. Bowen**

County Extension Agent - Family  
and Consumer Sciences  
Lonoke County



### • **What's your background?**

I grew up in northeast Arkansas and attended Hoxie schools. I did my undergraduate studies at the University of Central Arkansas many years ago and completed my master's at UCA about three years ago.

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

I have a master's degree in family and consumer science. I also have 18 years of experience teaching in the public school setting in FCS.

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

I am a family person. I have a wonderful husband and four terrific children who are the center of my life.

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

I would like to become efficient at using the programs that Extension has to offer to the community. I would also like to educate the people in Lonoke County to the various programs available through Extension.

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

I worked for Extension previously as a program assistant and enjoyed that position. I have been impressed

with what Extension does for the community for many years and have wanted to be a part of that work.

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

I am very active in my church and enjoy sewing and crafts as well as all types of cooking. ■

**Elaine C. Frost**  
Employment Assistant  
Human Resources



- **What's your background?**

I grew up in rural northern Mississippi and loved living in the country. I married after high school and was a “stay-at-home mom” until my youngest child started 7th grade. My employment started with Dillard's in human resources, and after five years I joined the human resources team at Alltel Communications. During my 15 years employment with Alltel, I supported several departments within human resources.

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

I have experience with payroll functions, open enrollment, event planning, benefits and employment. During the last five years at Alltel, I facilitated our new hire orientation for all new employees at the corporate office.

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

The most important would be that I love being part of a successful team and strive to be the best team player I can be for those I work with. I love and cherish my six grands!

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

To cross-train in all areas of Extension's Human Resources Department so I may assist Extension employees when one of our team is not available.

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

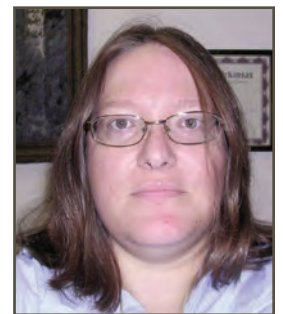
I saw the position in *Democrat-Gazette* and knew I wanted to work in human resources for Extension,

because when I grew up in rural Mississippi, I was involved in 4-H and was familiar with Extension's 4-H program.

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

My handy husband has laid winding paths throughout our shady backyard. I enjoy creating different landscaped areas as well as “garden rooms.” We spend a lot of time enjoying the koi pond and sitting in different shaded areas. Cooking is an art form to me, and I enjoy creating recipes. Our six grandchildren are very special, and we do everything possible to stay involved in their lives. ■

**Lydia Hughes**  
4-H Program Assistant  
Sebastian County – Barling



- **What is your background?**

I live in West Fork, Arkansas. I graduated from Fayetteville High School in 2000 and from the University of Arkansas in 2010. I have a bachelor's in AFLS and am working on a master's in the same area. I am married and became a new mom in June 2010.

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

I have a bachelor's of agriculture, food and life sciences, specializing in animal sciences from the University of Arkansas. I was a program assistant for the D. E. King Equine Program with Dale Bumpers and have seven years of horse training experience.

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

I am very easy to get along with and full of interesting and unique ideas.

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

My goal is to increase my reputation within Extension by proving myself as dependable and responsible and showing my skills by making a positive impact with 4-H.

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

I have a great respect for agriculture and those who work in agriculture. Many of my college professors and colleagues had connections with Extension that they spoke highly of. I decided the best way to use the skills I obtained during college and make a positive impact within society was to secure employment with my local Extension Service.

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

I'm big on family, both my immediate and extended. I like to travel, hunt and fish, cook, read and garden. I also like rodeo, craft festivals, camping, canoeing and miniature golf. ■

**Beverly Roy**

EFNEP Program Assistant  
Pulaski County

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

A love of cooking and helping families.

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

Bring the knowledge of EFNEP to a lot of people and graduate many families.

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

Spending time with my family and reading. ■

## Information Technology update

### IT Call Center

Three technical support specialists and one intern support more than 650 Extension personnel and almost a 1,000 computers. The Call Center model was adopted some years ago to address the challenges of lower budgets while providing support for offices around the state as well as the Little Rock State Office (LRSO) complex.

#### What do they do?

The technical support team responds to calls for assistance, virus infections, new computer setup, minor computer repairs, support mobile device e-mail setup and many other special tasks that arise. They also provide audiovisual support for the video conferencing classroom, auditorium and various conference rooms on the LRSO campus.

#### How come no one answers when I call?

We typically have more requests coming in than our staff can answer live. Your voice messages and e-mails are routed to an automated 'ticketing system' which queues

the requests in the order in which they are received. As soon as one support request is completed, the next item in the queue is addressed. For August 2011, the average response time between receiving a request for support and contacting the person making the request was 27 minutes. The more detail you provide in your message, the faster our call center can resolve your problem.

#### What tools do they use?

We can connect to your computer remotely (once you grant permission) which allows us to see what you see and even take temporary control to aid in resolving issues. We also have programs we can run to search your computer for hard-to-detect malicious software.

#### How do I reach the call center team?

**Local Call:** 501-671-2255

**Toll Free:** 866-779-3375 or

**e-mail them at:** [callcenter@uaex.edu](mailto:callcenter@uaex.edu)

# BENEFITS CORNER

**Open Enrollment** – November 1-30; additional information will be provided at a later date.

**Flu Shot Clinic** – October 28th from 9-noon; set up in main break area behind first floor receptionist desk at the state office

**Doctor's Office vs. ER Visits** – Is it really an emergency? If so, you shouldn't hesitate to go to the ER. However, if your condition isn't urgent, check with your doctor first. With a personal physician, you can build a relationship and develop medical treatments based on your needs. Knowing your family health history, your physician can plan appropriate health care measures plus be available for follow-up care to make sure that your treatment is effective. Some cost comparison are listed below:

Health Issue	ER Average Cost	PCP Average Cost
Allergies	\$345	\$ 97
Earache	\$400	\$110
Sore Throat	\$525	\$ 94

Because we all pay for the rising cost of health care through increased premiums, co-pays and deductibles, we all have a stake in controlling health care cost.

## Grants and contracts for Month Ending August 31, 2011

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Development of Comprehensive Watershed Modeling for 12-Digit HUC's in Selected Priority Watersheds in Arkansas-Phase II	\$ 170,393.00	Dharmendra Saraswat	AR Natural Resources Commission
Arkansas Extension IPM Coordination Program	218,815.00	Gus Lorenz	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
Cotton Seed Bug/Tropical Spiderwort Survey	10,043.00	Gus Lorenz	USDA, APHIS, PPQ
The Southern Region Water Resource Project	2,500.00	Karl VanDevender	Texas Agri. Extension Service
Rain Garden for Demonstration and Outreach	15,000.00	Michael Daniels	Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
The Southern Region Water Resource Project	39,634.00	Michael Daniels	Texas Agri. Extension Service
Grow for the Green Yield Inspection	9,000.00	Rick Cartwright	Arkansas Soybean Association
Share Our Strength Cooking Matters	10,000.00	Rosemary Rodibaugh	Share Our Strength
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$475,385.00</b>		

# Personnel changes

## Please welcome the following:

### **Todd D. Atwood**

Payroll Service Specialist, Financial Services, effective September 26, 2011.

### **Dennis R. Bailey**

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Delta District, September 1, 2011.

### **Stanley W. Baker**

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Arkansas County - Dewitt, effective October 3, 2011.

### **Leigh A. Bullington**

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Cross County, effective August 29, 2011.

### **Guqueta S. David**

Payroll and Position Control Manager, Financial Services, September 16, 2011.

### **Sarah C. David**

Program Associate - SNAP-ED, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective September 16, 2011.

### **Karla N. Emerson**

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Izard County, effective October 3, 2011.

### **Camellia H. Fell**

Program Technician - AgrAbility, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective August 16, 2011.

### **Szymanski A. Fields**

Program Associate, Bio and Agricultural Engineering, effective September 28, 2011.

### **Lydia E. Hughes**

4-H Program Assistant, Sebastian County, effective September 1, 2011.

### **Carolyn D. Russell**

Institutional Service Assistant, Facility Maintenance, effective September 12, 2011.

### **Angela M. Welborn**

Program Assistant 4-H, Clay County - Piggott, effective September 16, 2011.

## Extension says goodbye to:

### **Mark E. Barnhard**

Network Administrator, Office of Information Technology, effective, September 6, 2011.

### **NaShanda N. Brown**

Program Assistant, Jefferson County, effective August 28, 2011.

### **Ruth A. Etchieson**

4-H Center Program Facilitator, 4-H and Youth Development, effective August 31, 2011.

### **JoAnn Faulkner**

Administrative Specialist, Crittenden County, effective August 22, 2011.

### **Christopher I. Vincent**

Program Technician - Horticulture, Horticulture, effective August 31, 2011.