

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Extending our reach

The Arkansas Procurement Assistance Center, or APAC, is expanding into one of the nation's fastest growing economies – northwest Arkansas. This month, Max Franks, program associate, will be joining officials from Northwest Arkansas Community College at a ribbon cutting for our first satellite office since moving to Little Rock from Malvern.

We see this alliance with NWACC as a means of extending the reach of our Community and Economic Development mission.

APAC, headquartered in CED, teaches Arkansans to navigate the process to obtain government contract work. Between July 2013 and June 2014, APAC has helped 672 clients and facilitated 674 contracts worth nearly \$24 million.

APAC started in 1988 as an offshoot of the Entrepreneurial Services Center operated by the University of Arkansas. In 1993, the university entered into an agreement with the Department of Defense to take part in the nationwide Procurement Technical Assistance Program. Under this agreement, APAC serves Arkansas businesses and dozens of public agencies.

APAC is just one of the channels the Cooperative Extension Service uses to help our neighbors and communities thrive, and we are excited to open a new chapter.

– Tony Windham

\$5 million Tyson gift lifts new Agriculture Research Center

The Tyson Family and Tyson Foods, Inc., have donated \$5 million to the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, a gift that will help build a first-of-its-kind agricultural research center in Arkansas.

The gift will be used for the new \$16.3 million Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Sciences, with construction scheduled to begin later this year on the Division's property in northern Fayetteville off of Highway 112 South – Garland Avenue.



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Representatives of the University of Arkansas System, Tyson Foods, WER Architects and Nabholz Construction unveil a sign marking the future location of the Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Sciences.

UofA

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 and
Director, Cooperative Extension Service

LeadAR begins new era

LeadAR begins a new era with Class 17. After 39 years, Dr. Joe Waldrum, professor – Leadership Development and interim head of Community and Economic Development (CED), announced his retirement plans for the summer of 2015.

Waldrum became the third director of LeadAR in 1993 following J. B. Williams and Tom Riley. Under Waldrum's leadership, LeadAR became one of Extension's longest running programs.

During this tenure, Waldrum has worn many hats, but he said, "the most fulfilling job I have had has been as director of the LeadAR program."

He will continue to direct Class 16 on their international study tour to the Baltic states in March and through their graduation in April. Waldrum will continue to assist with the fundraising efforts and serve on the LeadAR Advisory Council.

To prevent a leadership change during Class 17, Dr. Windham has asked Bobby Hall (Class 7), instructor in the Community and Economic Development section, to become the new director as of Feb. 1. Hall has worked for Extension since 1987, serving most of his career as a county agent in three counties. He came to CED in the state office as a program associate in 2008, specializing in leadership development and parliamentary procedure. ■

Emergency procedures revisions, drills ahead

Moving hundreds of people out of handful of exits during an emergency isn't just a problem for airlines – it's something Extension administration is concerned about for the Little Rock State Office.

Since last September, a committee has been revisiting and revising the crisis plan for the state office, including evacuation logistics for various scenarios. The first aid and self-defense sessions being held around the state are among the results of this planning.

Kyleen Prewett, who chairs the Emergency Procedures Committee, said LRSO employees should expect training in the next few weeks on new evacuation procedures – and of course – a fire drill.

"While we hope a disaster will never happen, we do need to be prepared," Prewett said. "One of the critical areas we needed to review was how we evacuate from the building in case of fire and other scenarios."

The committee is consulting with emergency management specialists from other agencies and is working closely with UALR public safety staff to design procedures that will ensure an efficient and safe exit of office personnel. ■

Mississippi County staff ensures Blytheville students tour Arkansas Farm to You

Arkansas Farm to You Coordinator Angie Stewart is like a USPS letter carrier – neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night keeps her from delivering the Farm to You exhibit to schools around the state. But exposure to thousands of elementary students took its toll one Monday in January when a virus left her too sick to work.

FCS Agent Pam Pruettt did not want to disappoint the Blytheville students by cancelling the exhibit, so she and the rest of the staff came up with a plan. Staff Chair Ray Benson contacted an Extension Council member and pilot who flew Ag Agent Jason Osborn to Little Rock to pick up the exhibit. Osborn made it back to the school around 8 p.m., where he and other county staff, volunteers and the school coordinator spent 2½ hours setting up the exhibit.

It was all worth it for the 471 youth who spent the next two days learning where their food comes from and how making healthy choices affects their bodies. One teacher remarked: "This exhibit is amazing. So many of our students don't have opportunities to participate in interactive exhibits like this. It's a wonderful experience for our students." ■

Tyson gift, cont.

The 60,000 square-foot building will feature high-tech agriculture research laboratories that will advance plant and animal sustainability, along with water quality research.

"This gift and this facility will advance Arkansas agriculture into the distant future and help our state compete in the very competitive global world of agriculture research for many generations to come," said Mark Cochran, the division's vice president for agriculture.

Springdale-based Tyson Foods, one of the world's largest producers of chicken, beef, pork, and prepared foods, has a decades-long history of supporting agriculture and sustainability research, particularly in its home state.

This is the largest individual gift Tyson Foods has ever given to a University of Arkansas System division or campus.

"My dad's involvement in and commitment to agriculture in Arkansas is legendary. To be able to formally recognize that with this building, in partnership with the UA System Division of Agriculture, is indeed an honor for our family and the company founded by my grandfather," said John Tyson. ■

Arkansas' top two youth volunteers selected in 20th annual national awards program

Heather Jackson was one of two Arkansas students selected as Arkansas' top high school youth volunteer in the 2015 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism. The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, now in its 20th year, is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Heather, 17, is the daughter of Jimmy and Renita Jackson and a member of the Caddo River Gems 4-H Club of Glenwood. She was nominated by Pike County 4-H for her efforts in educating people in her community on disaster preparedness through presentations, brochures, a day camp and home disaster packs.

Heather began her project in 2009 after leading a 4-H food and clothing drive for victims of a tornado that struck the nearby town of Mena. "I realized how few of them were prepared for the tornado's devastation," said Heather. "I decided then to learn as much as I could about disaster preparedness so I could teach others how to handle these emergencies."

After extensive research, Heather developed a series of illustrated talks and demonstrations that she has presented to more than 3,500 people at schools, 4-H events and numerous group gatherings. She also organized a 4-H day camp to teach young people about preparing for a disaster, produced a brochure on camping safety that is being distributed by the Corps of Engineers and designed an annual display at the county fair. In addition, Heather developed disaster packs for homes, which contain items that can aid families in a quick evacuation from a home or campsite.

"I feel disaster preparedness is important because emergencies can come in many forms and people can rebuild their lives much more easily if they are prepared," said Heather.

Colby Cortez, 12, of Benton, the middle school honoree, was nominated by Bethel Middle School in Alexander for an extensive gardening program he conducted for a local homeless shelter charity.

As state honorees, Heather and Colby will receive \$1,000, an engraved silver medallion and an all-expense-paid trip in early May to Washington, D.C., where they will join the top two honorees from each of the other states and the District of Columbia for four days of national recognition events. During the trip, 10 students will be named American's top youth volunteers of 2015. ■



2015 Galaxy Conference slated for March 31 - April 2

Mark your calendars!! This year's Galaxy Conference will be held March 31 - April 2 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petite Jean Mountain. The Galaxy Conference is a professional development conference hosted by our professional associations. The Arkansas Association of Extension 4-H Agents (AAE4-HA) is proud to host the 2015 conference.

The planning committee, which is made up of officers from all the associations, has been hard at work putting together an educational and fun conference, and we believe we have a great mix of educational workshops and posters for all employees to benefit from the conference.

A list of sessions and registration information can be found on the Galaxy Conference website: <http://www.uaex.edu/about-extension/professional-organizations/galaxy/conference.aspx>. We hope to see you there! ■

LeadAR Class 17 Begins

LeadAR Class 17 kicked off its first three-day seminar in Little Rock Feb. 5-7, which focused on learning about major issues facing Arkansas, including agriculture, education, the environment, the criminal justice system and legislative issues. LeadAR began in 1984 with a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and will be celebrating its 30-year anniversary this year. The program has graduated more than 473 adults since its inception. Class 17 includes 22 men and women representing 16 Arkansas counties and includes the following participants.

- Craig Allen, Craighead County, CEA - staff chair, Poinsett County, UACES
- Price Boney, Desha County, assistant vice president, Merchants & Farmers Bank
- Shannon Caldwell, Saline County, 4-H Center program director, UACES
- Lisa Chappell, Woodruff County, partner, Michael and Lisa Chappell Farm
- Tony Davis, Pulaski County, senior GIS analyst, Arkansas Geographic Information Office
- Brittney Dennis, Pulaski County, second grade teacher, Exalt Academy of Southwest Little Rock
- Donna Ferguson, Grant County, administrator for the Dallas County Health Unit, Arkansas Department of Health
- Brad Fortner, Benton County, manager, corporate secretary/COO/managing partner, Farmers Protective Mutual Insurance/Flying RF Farm Store
- Sarah French, Perry County, assistant to the chief operating officer/partner, Heifer International/Crescent Creek Farms
- Brad Harrison, Mississippi County, president/CEO, Mississippi County Electric Cooperative
- Heather Harvey, Carroll County, print shop assistant, Dymark Sign & Display
- Lee Lane, Logan County, owner, Reitz, Reitz, Johns
- Andrea Leding, Sebastian County, vice president, Farm Credit of Western Arkansas
- Matt McDonald, Independence County, assistant vice president - commercial lending, First Community Bank
- Randy Newman, Mississippi County, technology librarian, Mississippi County Library System
- Justin Reynolds, Saline County, South Central District director, Arkansas Farm Bureau

- Amelia Rich-Elam, Arkansas County, provider relations manager, Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care
- Jeremy Richey, Greene County, farmer, Richey Farms
- Jamie Scott, Pulaski County, director of Upward Bound, Arkansas Baptist College
- Adrienne Smith, Pulaski County, community outreach coordinator for the Southwestern Region, Arkansas Secretary of State's Office
- Gracia Stroud, Pulaski County, vocational teacher and JAG specialist, Pulaski County Special School District
- Avinash Thombre, Pulaski County, assistant professor - education management, UALR ■

Saraswat named Fellow of Indian Society of Agricultural Engineers

Dr. Dharmendra Saraswat, associate professor/ Extension engineer - geospatial, has been named a 2014 Fellow of Indian Society of Agricultural Engineers (ISAE). ISAE Fellow is the highest honor a member can receive. A total of 10 fellows were named for 2014, making up a group of 0.03 percent of the entire membership. Dr. Saraswat was chosen "in recognition of his distinguished services to ISAE and for his valuable contributions to the profession of agricultural engineering." Dr. Saraswat received a certificate and a plaque for the Fellow Award from Dr. V.M. Mayande, president, ISAE on Feb. 23, during the 49th annual convention of ISAE at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, India. ■



Dr. Saraswat (left) receives 2014 ISAE Fellow Award from Dr.V.M. Mayande, president, ISAE

What's new in publications? Find out at:

<http://www.uaex.edu/publications/new.aspx>

Reach out to your clients – use e-newsletters!

We are now offering an ‘intro’ feature to Constant Contact for everyone who has wanted to send out an e-newsletter but wasn’t sure where to begin. Primary points are below.

1. We have an Extension branded template.
If you prefer to have a custom template, let Amy Cole know and she can work with you on this.
2. Lists up to 500 registrants will be paid for by the IT department. Pricing in CC is based entirely upon list size. Once your list exceeds, 500 we will bill back to your county for the costs. The costs are not high, and we are a nonprofit/education program and receive a 30% discount.

Contacts	Price
0-500	\$20/ mo
501-2,500	\$35/ mo
2,501-5,000	\$55/ mo
5,001-10,000	\$85/ mo

3. The training for using CC is FREE and is almost 24-7.
4. Analytics and stats for each e-newsletter sent is available. Track clickthrough rates, open rates and unsubscribe/bounce rates.

If your team is already using Constant Contact, you can still have your e-newsletter sign-up list featured on our primary sign-up page on the website, <http://www.uaex.edu/register.aspx>.

The image shows a screenshot of a Constant Contact sign-up form titled "Sign up for one of our newsletters". The form includes fields for Email, First Name, Last Name, County (set to Arkansas), Ethnicity, and Race. Below these are two sections for selecting newsletter lists: "Current Newsletter List" and "Navigating Life's Journey List". The "Current Newsletter List" includes checkboxes for "Statewide Extension News", "Miller County", "Drew County News", and "4-H Science newsletter". The "Navigating Life's Journey List" includes checkboxes for "Personal Well-Being", "Couples", and "Parents". A "Submit" button is at the bottom. Two red callout boxes with arrows point to the form: one points to the "Current Newsletter List" section with the text "All counties and departments are welcome to use our new Constant Contact newsletter software feature! Once you add a list it will appear automatically on the website." The other points to the "Navigating Life's Journey List" section with the text "NJL uses Constant Contact separately from our primary account but we can pull in their list into the main sign up page." At the bottom of the form, there is a disclaimer: "We are collecting this information solely for the purpose of determining compliance with federal civil rights law, and your responses are voluntary." and a note: "* Denotes a Required Field".

AOS Summer Day Camp

Love science and technology? Adventure sports and wilderness skills? How about art or CSI techniques? For all those topics and more, there’s a summer day camp for you this year at the Arkansas 4-H Center.

The Arkansas Outdoor School summer day camps are for youth ages 7-15 years of age. AOS is part of Arkansas 4-H programs conducted at the Arkansas 4-H Center. The camps run from June 15 to Aug. 7. The camp day runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with extended hours available for busy parents. Camp prices range from \$190 to \$346. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis with limited space.

“The Arkansas Outdoor School wants to offer experiences that youth can’t get anywhere else,” said Mike Simmons, AOS Day Camp Coordinator.

This year’s sessions include CSI Camp, Wilderness Skills, Adventure Sports, Fun n’ Fitness, Science in Motion, Arts in Action, Creativity Camp and Duct Tape Camp. The camps will also feature perennial favorite activities such as swimming, canoeing, archery, rock climbing and hiking.

For more information, contact Mike Simmons at 501-821-6884 or msimmons@uaex.edu. Camp information may also be found at www.uaex.edu/daycamp.

BENEFITS CORNER

Important Flexible Spending Account information

You have until **March 15, 2015**, to incur expenses that will apply to your **2014** FSA plan.

CEDAR offers you a wealth of information

You can review your HR Personnel Records through CEDAR. Log into the CEDAR link at <http://cedar.uaex.edu>. Click on HR: Your Personnel Records. Click on Display Matches by Name.

Track your minutes!

Are you participating in Walk Across Arkansas? If so, in addition to recording the number of minutes walked throughout the day at www.uaex.edu, you may also track those same exercise minutes with the University's free health and wellness program, administered by OnLife Health, and reap the benefits both programs offer – a better you!

If you have questions regarding the **UA Wellness Program***, you may call Onlife customer service, 1-877-369-0285, or log in to the Onlife Health website, <https://www.onlifehealth.com/>. If you are a returning user, enter your username and password. If you are a new user, click GET STARTED and type in "UAS" as the key code. Follow the online instructions to create your username and password.

***You must be enrolled in the UMR Health Plan to participate in the UA Wellness Program.**

Please keep your home address updated in Banner Self Service.

Meet the *new* employees!



Ginger Ellison
Administrative Specialist
Montgomery County

- **What's your background?**

I have a degree from the U of A in agribusiness. Prior to starting my family, I worked for two poultry companies in sales, marketing and transportation. While raising

my children, I worked part-time in administrative assistant positions in the transportation industry.

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

My previous job experience has equipped me with the knowledge, skills and experience to work as support

staff as well as work independently on projects. My children and I were involved in 4-H, so I am familiar with the 4-H program and activities and know how beneficial they can be for our youth.

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

I am technically an "empty nester," and I look forward to this next phase of my life. I am excited about meeting others through my job and being able to explore hobbies and activities for this life phase.

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

I would like to learn all the tasks associated with my position and be able to perform them efficiently. I would

also like to become familiar with all of the programs and be able to assist in and promote our programs.

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

I had visited the Montgomery County office shortly after I moved to this area of the state, and the staff was extremely kind and helpful. I was seeking employment and was very excited when this position became available. I value the PURPOSE of Extension!

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

I enjoy reading and hope to eventually dust off the sewing machines. I am contemplating finding a basic woodworking class. It is a good time to start actually doing Pinterest projects rather than just pinning!! ■

Pam Pugh

Administrative Specialist
Poinsett County

• **What's your background?**

I spent the past 33 years in banking. Most of those years were in the commercial lending area.

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

Banking taught me the importance of customer service and attention to details. Every client wants to

feel like their need is just as important to me as it is to them. I believe my background will translate well to my new clients and to my new employer, and I hope that clients will always feel comfortable coming to the Poinsett County office for help.

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

I have one child, Jeff, who will graduate from UAMS College of Pharmacy on May 15.

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

During my first year, I want to learn everything I can about the services we offer the residents of Poinsett County.

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

I'm excited to be working in my hometown and only a two-mile drive from home. During the past 22 years, my round trip commute was about 44 miles.

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

I consider myself an amateur genealogist. I love doing research. ■

Grants and contracts

for the Two-Month Period Ended February 28, 2015

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
2014 Arkansas Extension Implementation Program	106,000	Glenn Studebaker	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
High School Financial Planning	1,200	Laura Connerly	National Endowment for Financial Education
Stevens Farm Edge of Field Water Quality Monitoring	31,043	Michael Daniels	C. B. Stevens Farms, Inc.
Water Conservation Education	42,400	Randy Forst	Central Arkansas Water
Interventions for obesity prevention targeting young children in at-risk environments: An integrated approach	32,226	Ron Rainey	Agriculture Experiment Station
AMS Grant Writing Workshops and Tech Asst	19,171	Stacey McCullough	Pennsylvania State University
Novel Strategies for Managing Blast Diseases on Rice and Wheat	25,000	Yeshi Wamishe	Agriculture Experiment Station
TOTAL NEW AWARDS FOR JAN. 1 - FEB. 28	\$257,039.50		

Personnel Changes

Please welcome the following:

Tara Clayton

Program Associate - Entomology, Entomology, effective January 26, 2015.

Ginger Ellison

Administrative Specialist, Montgomery County, effective February 2, 2015.

Sandra Kirk

Administrative Specialist, Hempstead County, effective February 3, 2015.

Janice Lewis

Fiscal Support Specialist, Financial Services, effective January 16, 2015.

Pamela Pugh

Administrative Specialist, Poinsett County, effective February 2, 2015.

Extension says goodbye to:

Jef Ferguson

Program Technician, 4-H and Youth Development, effective February 19, 2015.

Henry Green

Program Technician - Geospatial, Bio and Agricultural Engineering, effective February 5, 2015.

Belinda Miller

Administrative Support Supervisor, Hempstead County, effective February 2, 2015.

Wanda Snyder

Administrative Support Supervisor, Phillips County, effective February 13, 2015.

Eugene Terhune

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Woodruff County, effective February 2, 2015.