

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

No. 3750 • October 2014

FROM THE DIRECTOR

When voters go to the polls on Nov. 4, they'll be asked to decide on issues that could mean significant changes for our elected officials, workers and communities as a whole.

Arkansas is one of just a handful of states that allows the public to refer initiatives, amendments and referenda for a vote, and 74 percent of our population is registered to vote.

And once again, the Public Policy Center has created voter education fact sheets that give our voters a neutral, easy-to-digest, easy-to-understand look at each of this election's five ballot issues, two of which were referred by the public. Each fact sheet also includes arguments for and against compiled from media reports, interviews and organization websites.

There are five ballot items voters will see:

- Issue No. 1 – An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules and distribution.
- Issue No. 2 – An amendment allowing more time to gather signatures on a state-wide initiative or referendum petition only if the petition as originally filed contained at least 75 percent of the valid signatures required.
- Issue No. 3 – An amendment regulating contributions to candidates for state or local office, barring gifts from lobbyists to certain state officials, providing for setting salaries of certain state officials, and setting term limits for members of the general assembly.
- Issue No. 4 – The Arkansas Alcoholic Beverage Amendment.
- Issue No. 5 – An Act to Increase the Arkansas Minimum Wage

About 20,000 of these fact sheets have been printed to help each county's voter education effort. In addition, they're available for download at <http://uaex.edu/business-communities/voter-education/state-ballot-issues.aspx>. The Public Policy Center has distributed a suite of educational tools such as PowerPoints.

Our Extension voter education initiative is a program that touches all Arkansans, and I want to strongly encourage county agents and others to spread the word about our ballot fact sheets. We hope our agents will use the tools and distribute the materials to help our neighbors make the most informed decisions possible.

– Tony Windham



**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION**

University of Arkansas System

University of Arkansas,
United States Department of
Agriculture, and County
Governments Cooperating

Inside:

- State faculty conference set for Dec. 8
- Drew County 4-H'ers learn about county government
- Virtual field trip brings soybean science to the classroom
- Save the date
- Benefits Corner
- Meet the New Employees
- Grants and Contracts
- Personnel Changes

EMPOWERING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO PROVIDE FOR LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF STATE AGENCIES' ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

ISSUE NUMBER 1
Initiated and Referred by the Arkansas General Assembly – 2014

POPULAR NAME: An amendment empowering the General Assembly to provide for legislative committee review and approval of state agencies' administrative rules.

BALLOT TITLE: An amendment to the Arkansas Constitution providing that administrative rules promulgated by state agencies shall not become effective until reviewed and approved by a legislative committee of the General Assembly.

What is being proposed?
Issue 1 would change the Arkansas Constitution to allow state senators and representatives to review and approve legislative committees the right to review and approve state agency administrative rules before they become effective.

Why is this issue on the ballot?
Arkansas senators and representatives vote to provide a committee of legislators the legal authority to approve state agency rules. Arkansas Legislative Council members currently review state agency rules but Arkansas Supreme Court and Attorney General opinions have said legislators do not have the legal authority to approve rules before they go into effect. But they are allowed to review them for informational purposes. According to Arkansas legal opinions and scholars, voting to approve or disapprove state agency rules would violate the state Constitution's requirement for separation of powers among the state legislative branch, executive branch and judicial branch. However, legislators believe the current practice gives the executive branch, or state agency heads, more power than what the state Constitution allows.

How do this issue make it to the ballot?
Arkansas legislators voted to put Issue 1 on the 2014 general election ballot. State legislators have the right to include up to three constitutional amendments on the general election ballot. Constitutional amendments require the approval of a majority of voters in a statewide election.

General Questions
What is the General Assembly?
The term "General Assembly" refers to the legislative branch of Arkansas government, and the 75 state senators and 100 state representatives.

What are "administrative rules"?
An approved administrative rule is a directive administrative rule. However, common state law known as the Arkansas Administrative Procedure Act allows a state or an agency to promulgate general applicability and hence

FORC102

U of A
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

The Public Policy Center (PPC) is a component of the University of Arkansas System of Agriculture.
<http://www.uaex.edu/ppc/>



DR. TONY WINDHAM
Associate Vice President for
Agriculture - Extension and
Director, Cooperative Extension Service

State faculty conference set for Dec. 8

Please mark your calendars for the State Faculty Conference to be held on Monday, Dec. 8, 2014, in the auditorium of the State Extension Office. It will be held from 10 a.m. to noon with lunch served afterwards.

We will recognize Extension Excellence Awards, Length of Service Awards, Lynn R. Russell Endowed Award for Professional Excellence, Mildred and Liz Childs CES Professional Development Award as well as address other topics. ■

Drew County 4-H'ers learn about county government

The Drew County 4-H Citizenship/Leadership Committee recently toured the offices of elected officials at the Drew County Courthouse to acquire information for their Citizenship project. They will teach what they learned about county government at local schools and Boys & Girls Clubs.

The 4-H Citizenship/Leadership Booth won second place at the Drew County Fair. ■

Virtual field trip brings soybean science to the classroom

More than 300 students from 16 schools across the state had a unique lesson on Sept. 30, as the Cooperative Extension Service brought a science field trip into their classrooms.

Broadcast live from the Bono, Arkansas, farm of Shannon Davis, students from 16 different counties learned firsthand about how nematodes affect soybeans. This Soybean Science Challenge event was produced by Extension and funded by the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board.

Davis, a fifth-generation farmer and ASPB member, talked about the life of a farmer and what's involved in growing soybeans. Extension Nematologist Terry Kirkpatrick gave an engaging presentation, showing how these roundworms survive in many different environments, such as oceans, rain forests, pets and humans.

Students were able to ask live questions through Zoom's chat feature.

Along with Kirkpatrick and Davis, Extension Staff Chairs Randy Chlapecka and Ray Benson answered questions on camera and Soybean Agronomist Jeremy Ross and County Extension Agent Dave Freeze answered through the chat window.

Blake Bennett, Soybean Science Challenge videographer, provided videos to promote VFT and the Soybean Science Challenge.

The on-site crew consisted of Kerry Rodtnick on video, Julie Robinson on PowerPoint, Karen Ballard, host, and Angie Freel, assistant. At LRSO, Haley Jernigan facilitated, Mary Poling coordinated Zoom functions, Lynn Wilson served as event coordinator and Sam Boyster and Andy Plunkett were technical coordinators. Mary Hightower handled media and social media.

The recorded program will be sent to the more than 1,000 science teachers on the Arkansas Science Teachers ListServe, along with a discussion guide and answer key. ■



The graphic features the U of A logo (University of Arkansas System) in the top left corner. The main text is centered and reads: "Save the Date" in a large, bold, yellow font, followed by a yellow ribbon icon. Below that, "Division of Agriculture Awards Luncheon" is written in a white, cursive font. At the bottom, the date "Friday, January 9, 2015" and location "Embassy Suites • Rogers, Arkansas" are listed in a yellow, sans-serif font.

What's new in publications? Find out at:

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

BENEFITS CORNER

Sneak a Peek!

Good news. Open enrollment, lower premiums, improved plan designs! **During the month of November**, employees will have the opportunity for open enrollment into the health, dental, life, disability and critical illness benefits programs. For the first time in several years, employees will be able to add life insurance and other coverage without going through the evidence of insurability process. At the same time, plan designs have expanded and some monthly premium expenses have been **decreased**. Health premiums **will not increase** for the 2015 plan year.

Please review and make any needed updates to your spouse and dependent coverage **during the open enrollment period**. To comply with federal health care reform requirements, beginning in 2015 the University **will be required** to gather social security numbers for spouses and dependents who participate in the University's health plan.

Material related to open enrollment will be mailed to your home address the latter part of October by Human Resources and various vendors. **It is your responsibility to make sure your home address is updated in Banner Self Service.**

Flu shots will be available October 14 from 9 to 11 a.m. at LRSO Room 107. Additional information will be provided by email. ■

Meet the *new* employees!



Torrie Caston
County Extension Agent - Family
and Consumer Sciences/4-H
Van Buren County

- **What's your background?**

I was raised on a farm in Onia, Arkansas, where we grew blue - berries, blackberries and had numerous head of cattle. I am a recent graduate of the University of Central Arkansas where I received my B.S. in nutrition. I am currently working on my master's degree in family and consumer science with an interest in nutrition from UCA.

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

My knowledge in the field of nutrition will be very beneficial to Van Buren County due to their interest in diabetic learning and overall health.

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

During my first year in Extension, I would like to meet the club members, club leaders and the county stakeholders who allow our programs to thrive.

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

The part that I was most drawn to about Extension was the way it would allow me to help others and work within the community.

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

Outside of work I enjoy a variety of activities like fishing and being with friends and family. ■



Jennifer L. Conner
County Extension Agent -
Family and Consumer Sciences
Chicot County

- **What's your background?**

I am a Chicot County native. I obtained my master of applied psychology degree from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock with an emphasis in experiential methodology and research design and completed

my master of public health degree in biostatistics at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Public Health (COPH). I also received my doctorate of public health in leadership from the UAMS COPH.

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

I have extensive experience in behavioral research, clinical health services research, grant administration, community-based public health programming and policy evaluation. I've worked to bring together academic institutions, hospitals, schools, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, municipalities and nonprofits to investigate and evaluate a broad range of health-related topics. I have also examined healthcare system topics such as access to quality care, safety net benefits and incentive-based insurance premium programming.

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

I am passionate about empowering people and, as a trained facilitator, I enjoy active listening and learning to discern what actions are really needed to remove barriers and promote success.

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

Strengthening our 4-H programs and starting a few new FCS programs.

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

I've collaborated with Extension for many years on various projects and I've always appreciated their community/education focus. Extension values people and meets them where they are with just the information/programs they need. Extension is the exemplar of "community-based" not "community-placed," an approach that is very important when engaging with community members.

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

I love running, cycling, hiking, camping, kayaking . . . basically anything that can be done outside, I enjoy it. My husband and I set crazy fitness/adventure goals (think Amazing Race) and travel around the world to conquer them. We also enjoy the company of our sweet, adorable doggies (Molly and Baylee)! ■

Chelsea Maguffee

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences
Sharp County

- **What's your background?**

I'm from Salem, Arkansas. I graduated from Salem High School and just recently moved back. After high school, I moved to Jonesboro to attend ASU and graduated in May 2014 with a bachelor's degree in health promotion.

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

Since I just graduated from college, I hope to bring new ideas and information to Extension. I have worked at St. Bernard's Medical Center in the community education program, so I hope that experience will help me in planning new programs in Sharp County.

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

Outside of work I coach a fourth grade girls' basketball team.

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

I would like to bring new ideas into the county and carry out programs that haven't been done here before.

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

When I was in school, I was in 4-H and helped in different Extension programs in Fulton County. When I got older, I loved the different programs and knew that I wanted a job where I would be able to work with different people and do different activities.

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

I like to play and watch sports, and I like to hunt and fish. ■

Chanta Pulliam

4-H Program Assistant
Jefferson County

- **What's your background?**

I have a B.S. degree in business finance from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.

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

I was a teacher for 12 years at St. Peter's Catholic School. I've always enjoyed working with students and seeing the excitement on their faces when they learn something new.

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

I enjoy traveling, and I love encouraging people and helping them feel good about themselves.

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

I would love to get more community clubs started. We have so much to offer our youth, and I want to get as many youth involved as I can.

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

When our school closed, I wasn't sure if I wanted to continue to teach but I knew I wanted to continue to work with students. This position gives me the opportunity to do just that.

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

I love fitness. I enjoy running, reading and working out with friends. ■



Mary Beth Sanders
County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences
Columbia County

- **What's your background?**

I have grown up in the 4-H system in Cross County (Hickory Ridge, Arkansas) with my mom, a high school family and consumer science teacher. I attended the

University of Central Arkansas in Conway where I was a resident assistant for four years and earned my degree in family and consumer science with unofficial minors in nutrition and communication disorders.

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

As a resident assistant, we were required to put on a certain number of programs each month that related to the needs of our residents. Little did I know then how much it was preparing me for the Extension agent position that I now have. I am excited about meeting different leaders in the community and planning programs to better fit the needs of citizens of all ages.

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

I am very goal oriented and plan on beginning my graduate degree sometime in the near future to work towards some of my long-term career goals.

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

In my first year with Extension, I hope to put on a variety of programs and find which area I enjoy the most, as well as forming relationships with my fellow agents and community leaders to set a firm foundation for my future success.

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

Whenever I was asked what I wanted to do when I graduated, I always said that I wanted to help "everyday people" in very practical ways. I don't know of a better fit than Extension for me to do just that. I value the resources that the Extension Service provides to us as agents so I can present information to different groups in order to change their lives for the better. I also like that I am not only a presenter but also a trainer of local volunteers who facilitates their leadership skills and provides them opportunities to grow and excel in their goals.

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

Outside of work I enjoy going to antique sales and flea markets to find treasures I can bring back to life. I enjoy painting with acrylics on canvas and have sold a few of my pieces. I love dogs and have two of my own: one chow/lab mix named Charlie and a small sheltie/shih tzu mix named Jess. I am excited to begin this new chapter of my life here in Magnolia and with Extension, and I look forward to working alongside you! ■



Celeste Scarborough
County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences
Little River County

- **What's your background?**

I have a bachelor of arts degree in biology and a bachelor of science degree in nutrition along with a master of science degree in family and consumer sciences.

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

I am a registered dietitian who loves to teach people about nutrition and diabetes. I have been a clinical dietitian and outpatient dietitian in a hospital setting for the last three years.

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

I am looking forward to this new journey while meeting all the Extension employees and more people in

my county. I really want to make an impact on the people in my county.

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

I would like to learn all about the different Extension programs. I also want to build a strong network within my county.

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

I wanted to get involved with Extension because I wanted to reach more people within my own county. I value the emphasis on education for the people within the community.

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

I enjoy cooking, spending time with family and friends and exploring nature during my free time. ■



Cherrie Sweeney
EFNEP Program Assistant
Union County

• **What's your background?**

I was raised in El Dorado. I have been a substitute teacher for the past ten years. I have participated in 4-H first as a mother and then as a volunteer leader for the past six years.

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

I really do not feel that I have any special knowledge, skills or experiences to share. However, I do hope that I come across as genuinely concerned and caring to the people of Union County.

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

I never meet a stranger. I love learning and helping others to learn.

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

I would love to educate as many people as possible about diabetes and teach them that small changes do make a difference.

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

4-H is how I got introduced to the Extension Office and the great people who work here in Union County. The office staff has such a great sense of giving back to this community that I thought it would be a wonderful place to work.

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

If I am not here, my family and I are usually camping, hunting and fishing. With all that comes a lot of cooking, my other love in life. ■

Grants and Contracts

for Month Ending September 30, 2014

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Determining the Impact of Common Pesticide Applications when Applied to Southern Row Crops on Managed Honey Bee Health	\$ 50,000	Gus Lorenz	USDA, ARS MSA
Trelona Compressed Termite Bait	22,720	John Hopkins	BASF Corporation
Extension Wellness Ambassador Program Expansion	145,515	Lisa Washburn	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
Energizing Arkansas	11,177	Stacey McCullough	Arkansas Energy Office
Evaluation of the Chlorine Dioxide Based Drinking Water Sanitizer, Dutrion, on Broiler Chicken Performance	28,387	Susan Watkins	VAST-Value Added Science & Technologies
ADVANCE Development of Integrated Management Practices for Sclerotinia Blight of Peanut in Arkansas	5,945	Travis Faske	National Peanut Board
USDA Strike Force Project Assistance	3,546	Wayne Miller	Natural Resources Conservation Service
TOTAL SEPTEMBER 2014 AWARDS	\$267,290.00		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Torrie A. Caston

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Van Buren County, effective September 15, 2014.

Jennifer L. Conner

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Chicot County, effective August 18, 2014.

Amy F. Crawford

Program Assistant - EFNEP, Union County, effective September 8, 2014.

Eric F. DeVries

Program Assistant - Arkansas Outdoor School Coordinator, 4-H and Youth Development, effective September 8, 2014.

Dieuvalda Lamartiniere

Administrative Specialist, Animal Science, effective September 2, 2014.

Chelsea E. Maguffee

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Sharp County, effective September 15, 2014.

Chanta S. Pulliam

4-H Program Assistant, Jefferson County, effective August 25, 2014.

Mary Beth Sanders

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Columbia County, effective September 8, 2014.

Celeste A. Scarborough

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Little River County, effective September 2, 2014.

Cherrie L. Sweeney

Program Assistant - EFNEP, Union County, effective September 8, 2014.

Felicha Thompson

EFNEP Program Assistant, Desha County, effective August 18, 2014.

Extension says goodbye to:

Robert E. Blake

Director - 4-H Center, Vines 4-H Center, effective September 5, 2014.

Sharon L. Colvin

Administrative Support Supervisor, Columbia County, effective September 15, 2014.

Ana J. Hollis

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Arkansas County - DeWitt, effective September 15, 2014.

Jason R. Meier

Weed Science Program Associate, Southeast Research and Extension Center, effective September 5, 2014.

J. Renee Perkins

Accounts Payable Manager, Financial Services, effective September 30, 2014.

Douglas B. Petty

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Miller County, effective September 2, 2014.

Maureen L. Rose

Program Associate - 4-H, 4-H and Youth Development, effective September 30, 2014.

Carolyn D. Russell

Institutional Services Assistant, Facility Management, effective September 19, 2014.

Elizabeth A. Sutton

County Extension Agent - Water Conservation, Pulaski County, effective September 17, 2014.

Bridgette M. Youngblood

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, EFNEP, Pulaski County, effective September 1, 2014.