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Retiree Spotlight

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Beef Cattle and Field Manager Job Keep Martin Busy

Keith Martin had just been fixing a hydraulic leak on his tractor when he took a break to chat about his time working at Extension and what he's been up to since retiring in February 2013.

Martin remained in Searcy when he retired and lives on a 20-acre farm where he raises beef cattle and keeps up with all the chores of country life.

But that's not the extent of his workday.

Three weeks after retiring from Extension, he took a job as a field manager for American Vegetable Soybean & Edamame Inc. The company ships all over the United States, and its various soybean products are sold in several large retail stores.

Martin makes sure the growers have all the information they need, including help with insect or weed problems and irrigation issues. His goal is to help them produce the best crop possible.

"It's a little bit like being a county agent," he noted.

Martin started working for Extension in January 1983 in Mississippi County just after graduating with a master's degree from the University of Arkansas. He served as the Extension pest management agent. While a student, he had been a full-time research assistant on campus.

Martin was in Blytheville for about six years before being promoted to staff chair in Clarendon. After 18 months he went back to Mississippi County as staff chairman in 1991 and remained there



Elaina and Keith Martin

until 2002. That's when the opportunity to become an agriculture agent in White County came available, so Martin and his family moved to Searcy.

"I had been doing more administrative stuff and I wanted to get back to doing what I loved," Martin explained.

Martin liked Searcy so much he stayed. His wife of 39 years, Elaina, still teaches kindergarten, so he decided he shouldn't officially retire either.

Martin doesn't have much time to hunt or fish, but he enjoys both of those when he can. "Papa" also enjoys visiting with his grandkids, a grandson named Hank and two granddaughters, Elliott and Evan.

Martin stays in touch with Extension friends from Mississippi, Monroe and White counties. Or, as he calls it, "harasses" them.

To reconnect with Keith Martin, contact him at 501-827-7381, 1005 Georgia Ridge Road, Searcy, Ark. 72143.

– Shannon Magsam

Annette Coor Loves Children and 4-H



Annette Coor with grandson, Zach.

Ask Annette Coor what she's been up to since retiring and the list she rattles off includes the name "Zach" quite a bit.

Zach is one of her grandsons who's in his first year of high school.

"I think the reason I retired was to chauffeur him," she joked.

But she's quick to note that she loves every minute of it. Zach is in 4-H and is a county ambassador, so there are lots of meetings and events to attend. Coor is an active 4-H volunteer, working with students, judging at fairs and helping out whenever she can.

This month she assisted with entering items into the Washington County Fair – including a variety of Zach's ceramics and photographs – and has plans to

be a judge at several other fairs in Arkansas and Oklahoma in September.

Coor was first involved in 4-H as a child while living in Oklahoma. When she moved to Washington County in 1964 as a teenager, she followed other pursuits. She became immersed in 4-H again when she was the mom of two young sons. A local staff chair who knew she was a seamstress asked her to help with a 4-H club, teaching kids to sew. Coor took a position as 4-H program assistant in Washington County in 1978. She was able to work from home much of the time, except for the times she traveled to teach 4-H students about everything from food to gardening to Arkansas history.

She remained in Washington County her entire Extension career. She retired in August of 2013.

Coor, who's single, said she loves kids, which is why she's a 4-H volunteer.

She's also active in her church and in the local Extension Homemaker's Club, where the focus is on needlework, community service and fellowship. Right now, Coor is working on an appliqué quilt adorned with butterflies.

Coor has five grandchildren: Zach, Bethani, Johnathyn, Emily and Jason. They call her Memaw.

One of the grandchildren is at the University of Arkansas and three are homeschooled, so they don't need her driving services as much.

One word to sum up retirement?

"Busy," said Coor.

To reconnect with Annette Coor, contact her at 479-957-3838, 2403 Dogwood Place, Springdale, Ark. 72762.

– Shannon Magsam

October Birthdays

Portia Short, Oct. 1

Pat Hayden, Oct. 2

Larry Pryor, Oct. 2

Stan Carter, Oct. 3

Frank Jones, Oct. 3

Gerald Klingaman, Oct. 3

Patsy McDougald, Oct. 3

Craig Andersen, Oct. 4

Jimmie Bowling, Oct. 5

Lazaro English, Oct. 5

Judy Riley, Oct. 5

Jim Lipsey, Oct. 7

Suzanne Wiley, Oct. 8

Carreather Perry, Oct. 9

Billie Coleman, Oct. 10

Glen Ford, Oct. 10

Lorene McGuire, Oct. 10

Beth Roberts, Oct. 10

Judith Urich, Oct. 11

Lloyd Westbrook, Oct. 11

Armenthia Willis, Oct. 12

Sue Coates, Oct. 13

Jack Boles, Oct. 13

James Hood, Jr., Oct. 14

Carroll Prewett, Oct. 15

Frank Roth II, Oct. 16

Gail Torok, Oct. 17

Mary Parker, Oct. 18

Hugh Plumlee, Oct. 19

Mable Tate, Oct. 19

Mary Shaver, Oct. 20

James Clower, Oct. 21

Tom Riley, Oct. 22

Wanda Snyder, Oct. 23

Mark Bryles, Oct. 23

Jean Frisby, Oct. 24

Janice Gooch, Oct. 27

Janella Pugh, Oct. 31

Cordy Ramer, Jr. Receives Medals for WWII Service

Friends and family gathered in Rison on Sept. 2 to witness as U.S. Rep. Bruce Westerman presented Cordy Ramer, Jr. with six medals he earned for his service as a bombardier in World War II.

Ramer served 30 years with the Cooperative Extension Service, starting as assistant county agent in Lonoke County in 1954 and retiring as staff chair in Dallas County in 1983.

During the war, Ramer flew 29 combat missions, logging more than 175 flying hours before being shot down over enemy territory and taken by the Germans as a prisoner of war. He spent nine months in a German prison camp.

According to the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, Ramer's son John worked with Westerman's office to ensure his father received the medals due him but never received because of missing paperwork.

Westerman said, "On behalf of a thankful nation, I presented Lt. Ramer with the commendations he earned, where I was able to personally say, 'Thank you.'"



Cordy Ramer, Jr. with U.S. Rep. Bruce Westerman.

From the Editorial Board

Two recent grants will assist the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service in its mission to provide information and programs to help clientele make healthy life choices for themselves and their families.

Next month, Extension's Family and Consumer Sciences specialists and agents will be taking the first steps in a two-year, **\$624,978 grant from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** to reduce obesity in four communities where 40 percent or more of the adults are obese. While the communities have yet to be selected, the counties have been: Chicot, Craighead, Monroe and Jefferson.

The initiative has three parts: direct education to enable better food choices and increased physical activity; a policy component to improve access to healthier foods; and a community-wide piece to increase access to places like parks and trails or other public facilities for physical activity.

Anne Sortor, associate extension director - Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development, said the grant, which is also playing out in seven other states, is really a departure for the CDC. It marks the first time the CDC has looked to the Extension Service as a lead partner, instead of its more traditional allies, such as public health departments or colleges of public health.

Extension's efforts to encourage physical activity and healthy eating choices among at-risk youth and their families has received a **\$55,000 boost from the Walmart Foundation**.

"We're pleased to have the continued support of the Walmart Foundation in our mission to help our neighbors in Arkansas enjoy a better quality of life by helping them make healthy life choices," said Sortor. "This kind of support enables us to reach more of our people with innovations such as the Arkansas-developed 4-H Yoga for Kids program."

The grant is part of a \$2 million donation being made by the Walmart Foundation to the Walmart 4-H Youth Voice: Youth Choice program. The donation is part of the foundation's support of the nationwide 4-H Healthy Living programs. Decisions on which states receive funding comes from the National 4-H Council. This is the third year Arkansas has received grant money from this program, said project director Lisa Washburn, assistant professor - health.

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