

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

No. 3720 • April 2012

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Galaxy committee, chaired by Rich Poling, is to be commended for organizing and launching this year's Galaxy, "Triple 'R' on the Rocks," attended by 197 Extension employees, March 28-30. The conference was held at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain.

At the opening address, I reminded attendees of the progress that we've made in the last year or so. Several key positions have been filled, such as the two associate directors, chief financial officer, director of financial services and director of sponsored programs. The Office of Sponsored Programs was started and is up and running. A highlight of their success is the increase in grant activity by \$1 million. A web site committee was established to improve the Extension web site, and progress is being made at a much faster rate than originally anticipated. The renovation of the warehouse/print shop building is nearing completion.

In this same time frame, we have filled 54 vacancies: 12 4-H program assistants, 6 EFNEP program assistants, 12 administrative support staff and 24 county Extension agents. With this influx of new personnel, we are working to improve our onboarding and mentoring programs for new employees.

One thing I noted about the Galaxy agenda was the relevancy of the topics to the issues that we face as an organization. Finally, we all must have a part in being visible, accountable and relevant to our clients and stakeholders.

Thank you for all that you do to make Extension great.

— 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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Retirees attend Galaxy Conference!



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

EHC Awarded 2011 Community Service Award

Little River County Extension Homemakers Council was recognized at the annual Little River County Chamber of Commerce Banquet and received the 2011 Community Service Award in recognition for the many ways the clubs and members serve the community.

EHC members assisted with the county mass flu clinics, providing lunch for the workers; volunteered as fair superintendents and workers; judged at 4-H county competitions; and helped out in local community events.

The county EHC council members sponsor a scholarship for a graduating high school senior in both schools in the county. EHC donates items to the DHS Food Bank and the Domestic Violence Center. EHC makes and delivers items to residents of nursing homes.

Club members made more than 100 cancer hats to donate to treatment centers, knitted over 150 toboggans to donate to UAMS Cancer Center and made over 100 teaching dolls to donate to Arkansas Children's Hospital in 2011.



Accepting the Little River County Chamber of Commerce Community Service Award are (left to right) Jettie Williams, president of Willing Workers EHC; Becky Reynolds, county Extension agent-family and consumer sciences; Lawana Hacker, president of Arden EHC; Helen Green, president of Advance EHC and County Council; Angela Adkison, president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Little River County Extension homemakers live up to the EHC mission – to empower individuals and families to improve their quality of living through continuing education leadership development and community service. ■

2012 Retiree Scholarship Recipients Recognized

During the Retiree Luncheon held at Galaxy, Extension's retirees awarded scholarships to two Extension employees: Trina Jackson and Brad Runsick. Jackson, administrative specialist II, Family and Consumer Sciences at the Little Rock State Office, is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in health science at UALR. Runsick, county Extension agent - agriculture in Fulton County, is pursuing a Master of Science with U of A, Fayetteville, focusing on plant pathology.

The Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship is awarded annually to support Extension employees with three or more years of service who want to advance their capabilities by pursuing higher education or attending conferences. Since 2009, five employees have received an award from this endowed scholarship: three county staff and two state office staff.

For the first time, two scholarships were awarded this year. A fundraising initiative, Advance 25K, was launched in 2011 to increase the endowment's corpus to \$25,000,



Trina Jackson



Brad Runsick

which will provide sufficient funds to continue awarding two scholarships annually.

For more information, contact the Development Office at 501-671-2156 or Merritt Royal, Director of Development, mjroyal@uark.edu.

Please join us in congratulating Trina and Brad! ■

Instructional Design Boot Camp Recruits Announced

The Cooperative Extension Service Instructional Design Boot Camp is an intensive “basic training” for delivery of high-quality online education. Participants will enhance electronic communication skills for educational program development and delivery through knowledge acquisition and experiential activities. This hands-on curriculum will provide learners with key technical skills training for teaching via a virtual classroom.

The Instructional Technology Boot Camp is a significant institutional investment in employee development for the creation and use of emerging educational technologies. Participants must successfully complete each required class and submit required educational products to progress through the three phases of the program. Participants will receive a range of resources to support the ongoing development and delivery of high-quality online educational resources to internal and external clientele.

Participants will be engaged in multiple training venues from April-June 2012, culminating in a Digital Media Academy on the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville campus, with multiple short courses including:

- Using new media to manage and share educational resources (blogs, Flickr, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.)
- Electronic technology and social media program integration

Following a formal application process, the 2012 Boot Camp recruits have been selected. The 26 participants include:

Brian Helms (4-H)	Katie Holland (FCS)
Stacey McCullough (CED)	Dirk Philipp (ANR)
Erica Harris (CEA-4-H)	Laura Connerly (FCS)
Susan Holman (CEA-FCS)	Jon Barry (ANR)
Amy Simpson (CEA-4-H/Agri)	Lindsey Sexton (FCS)
Ashley Winberry (FCS)	Julie Treat (ANR)
John Pennington (CEA-Agri)	Judy Robison (FS)
James Marshall (FCS)	Tamara Walkingstick (ANR)
Katie Teague (CEA-Agri)	Jill Lambert (HR)
Kathryn Aughtry (FCS)	Anita Kelly (ANR/UAPB)
Jane Maginot (ANR)	Andy Plunkett (IT)
Katie Cullum (CES-FCS)	Mark Peterson (CED)
Carter Dunn (ANR)	Samy Sadaka (BAE)

- Videography and creating short videos for YouTube
- PowerPoint with Camtasia integration
- Photography skills and editing

A U of A Extension Instructional Media Festival and Awards ceremony will be held in Fayetteville on Friday, June 29, as the culmination of this significant employee development process. ■

Use MarketMaker™ to Promote Your Agricultural Products

MarketMaker™, launched March 2010, is a free interactive web program where food producers, distributors, buyers and sellers may register their products and services, accessed online by potential customers.

This April, MarketMaker™ will launch a campaign called “Connecting the Dots” to further the goal of MarketMaker™.

The U of A Division of Agriculture will invite 4-H and FFA clubs or chapters to compete in designing and producing an online electronic brochure promoting a farm or farmers’ market.

To enter, a 4-H'er or 4-H club may partner with a farm or a farmers’ market in their county. The finished electronic brochure will be e-mailed to the Division and judged by a panel of marketing experts.



The goal of “Connecting the Dots” is to expand an understanding of Arkansas agriculture across the state and connect young people to farmers.

Look for this program to launch early April, with winners to be announced mid June. More details will follow for this exciting promotional and educational campaign!

To get more information on MarketMaker™, go to <http://ar.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/> or (<http://national.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/>).

If you have questions or comments, feel free to contact Terra Daniels or Ron Rainey at (501) 671-2344 or e-mail marketmaker@uaex.edu. ■

Employees of the Quarter

October - December 2011

DELTA DISTRICT

Chris Elkins, *County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Greene County*. Chris has conducted numerous educational demonstrations and verification programs including cotton, wheat, rice and corn verifications. He has conducted the bollworm trapping, soybean seed survey, exotic pest survey and assisted with corn variety test plots. Chris organized and developed a new 4-H Master Gardener Club. He is always looking for new ideas and ways to improve our educational efforts in Greene County. Chris is very polite and extremely willing to learn and assist all staff in their areas of work.



Burnita Hearne, *Administrative Specialist II, Crittenden County*. Burnita has been on staff for a short time but is an excellent team player who takes pride in her work. She has organized the county's filing system, updated the display boards, updated mailing lists and reorganized the copier room. Burnita is always looking for ways to make the office more efficient, neat and organized to meet the needs of staff as well as clientele. She works well with people and in a very professional manner.

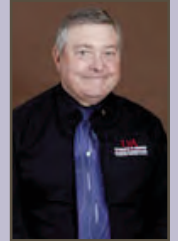


Katrina Avant, *EFNEP Program Assistant, Crittenden County*. Katrina is a hard worker with an outgoing personality and positive attitude. Within the first four months on the job, she created a social media page to reach hard-to-reach clientele that resulted in enrolling new families. She uses texting to remind clientele of her group meetings and is always willing to try new techniques to attract and enroll new groups. She has graduated 34 families this quarter and has a case load of 87 families – eleven of whom are new enrollees and 47 are transfer families. Katrina is a wonderful team player and always willing to go the extra mile.



OUACHITA DISTRICT

Robin Bridges, *County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Union County*. Since coming to the Union County office in February 2010, Robin has revived and continues many of the educational programs for Union County. He has continued the tradition of Pasture Tour with about 60 participating this year. He serves as 4-H agent for the Junior Livestock Program where \$79,000 was raised in the auction for the 4-H'ers and FFA youth. He was part of the grant writing team securing the EFNEP Kids Count grant where all the county staff is involved with documenting what the children are served and pictures of what they ate. Future work will include the construction of raised bed gardens, with food prepared by the cafeteria from the gardens for the children to eat and compare with what was initially prepared by the cafeteria. Robin has a great work ethic, is a great motivator and loves to laugh. He is a great addition to the Union County Extension office staff, and we appreciate him very much.



Kelly Thomason, *Administrative Support Supervisor, Calhoun County*. Kelly has a very positive attitude. She excels when it comes to researching information for both agriculture and family and consumer science-based questions in an agent's absence and delivers timely information to anyone that requests it. She works diligently with county agents to ensure that they stay "in-the-know" of Extension events, deadlines and county events. Kelly worked with the Calhoun County Extension Homemakers Council (EHC) during the finalization of the county fair to finish all aspects of the fair from quilt shows to horticulture exhibits. She has worked with the EHC assisting in their fall council meeting, district fair, state fair, holiday tasting event, etc. She is also highly involved in Chi Epsilon Sigma. Kelly is extremely knowledgeable of how Extension operates, of Extension policy and county priorities and takes initiative to ensure that a job is done correctly. Kelly is a hard worker and is an asset to the Calhoun County Extension office.



OZARK DISTRICT

Jeanie Zerr, County Extension

Agent - 4-H, Johnson County. Jeanie

Zerr has been very involved in implementing 4-H STEM projects in Johnson County. She conducted the National Science Experiment, embryology, BodyWalk and Rocketry. She has also conducted training for teachers and other agents on using microscopes, edible aquifers and pond water critters. Jeanie is very creative and is quick to adapt programs to fit her audience and embrace new ideas. Jeanie is a valuable asset to the Johnson County Extension education team.



STATE OFFICE

Noelle Hayes, Administrative Support Supervisor, Animal Science.

Noelle has been instrumental in helping Animal Science establish standards for usernames and passwords for the department's web sites and network drives and restore administration rights to these various accounts. She set up a centralized Facebook presence where all Animal Science Facebook pages can be administered. Noelle works on collecting information and maintaining an Animal Science blog through WordPress and has been a team player helping anyone to troubleshoot a problem. Noelle was able to help IT personnel troubleshoot and remap everyone's computers to the Animal Science network drive so that computers could be backed up as soon as possible instead of leaving the task solely to IT. She is reliable and takes initiative to plan ahead and organize events and activities ahead of time. She is professional, proficient and talented.



Nathan Kemper, Trade Adjustment Assistance Coordinator, Southern Risk Management Education Center.

Nathan Kemper coordinates the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program serving more than 6,000 applicants and 12 university collaborators within the region. He has a dedicated, selfless, consistent delivery of a high level of customer service to all program participants and consultants. He provides detailed feedback after evaluating the quality of submitted business plans (more than 1,100 plans to date). He developed a tool to track applicant assignments within a GIS system that made tracking and assigning consultants a relatively easy task. Several of the tools developed by Nathan were used by the national program for commodities outside of our region. Nathan has provided a committed, caring face for SRMEC interacting with program applicants, university collaborators and national program leadership.



Mark Russell, Assistant Professor, Animal Science.

Mark has moved the state horse program to new levels with web-based educational materials and informative publications. Mark has been a member of the 4-H marketing committee and was integral to the development of a new, innovative marketing campaign unveiled in November 2011 at the state 4-H in-service. Mark has demonstrated across Extension disciplines that he is a team player. He has delivered poultry chain chicks, worked the State Fair, presented sessions on volunteerism, evaluated 4-H survey data, etc. Mark looks beyond the immediate to anticipate emerging needs. His proactive approach has helped him develop credibility with agents and faculty alike. His youth activities center on the planning and implementation of the district horse shows, the state horse show and the Southern Regional Horse Show.



Meet the *new* employees!



Polly Greenbaum

Fiscal Support Specialist
Credit Union

- **What's your background?**

I worked at E.F. Hutton/Smith Barney for 15+ years as a registered sales assistant. After I became a mom, I was fortunate to be able to

stay home with my children. I was a volunteer at Robinson Elementary while my children attended. After they went to middle school, it wasn't cool for me to be around, so I went back to work part-time for my synagogue doing administrative work.

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

I'm a bit of a computer geek and always love learning something new.

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

I'm married with two children. My oldest goes off to college this year (woohoo!).

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

There's so much I don't know about Extension. I look forward to learning about the different programs that make up Extension.

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

Most of the people I've met at Extension so far have been employed here many years. To me, that says a lot about Extension and the work environment. I knew when I got back into the job market full-time, I wanted a long-term place of employment. I'm excited about the classes that are offered to employees to help improve their job skills.

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

I love riding my bicycle and I'm addicted to genealogy (1940 census will be released soon). ■

Del Johnson

Benefits Manager
Human Resources

- **What's your background?**

My background is human resources - benefit administration.

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

I am bringing 20+ years of benefits experience from Alltel and two years experience from Stephens Insurance.

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

I am easygoing and a team player.

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

I would like to become a knowledgeable and valuable part of the Extension team.

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

A current employee who was a prior co-worker of mine from Alltel brought me to Extension. The positive feel and reputation Extension has within the community is one of the things I value about this organization.

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

I like walking, jogging and exercising. ■



Patricia Johnson

Administrative Specialist
Human Resources

- **What's your background?**

I was in the United States Marine Corps as an administrative clerk. Also, at my last place of employment, Conestoga Woods Specialties Corporation, I was an administrative clerk in shipping and human resources before they closed the Arkansas location.



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

I have been working since I was 10 years old, and I have learned a lot about being a team player and working with different personalities.

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

I want my colleagues to know that I am a team player and welcome challenges, especially learning new things.

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

Training in all areas of human resources so that I may better assist my co-workers is an accomplishment I would like to complete my first year.

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

I saw the position in the *Democrat-Gazette*. I was a member of 4-H when I was a teenager and knew that Extension has an excellent reputation.

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

I love spending time with my family – going to church, reading and walking to stay healthy. ■



Diana Morian
Network Administrator
Information Technology

- **What's your background?**

I have lived in central Arkansas my whole life. I obtained my master's degree in industrial technology education from the

University of Central Arkansas. The majority of my education was focused on computers and networking. After a few years of teaching, I moved into the field of networking and administration and have never looked back. I am still able to fulfill my desires for teaching by teaching computer software skills to our users.

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

I am bringing to Extension two years of teaching at the high school level and 16+ years of computer software

support and network administration. Also, I'm bringing extensive training in networking and information technology security.

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

I believe in getting the job done and doing it right. I have a laid back personality, and I am very easy to get along with. My door is always open!

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

I would like to transition our Novell file servers to MS Windows servers, using Active Directory, resolve data storage issues in our county offices, complete the transition to the new high speed ARE-ON network and address and solve some IT security issues.

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

Actually, I am returning to Extension after 10 years at USDA-Agriculture Research Services. Extension has always felt like home to me, so it is nice to have come back home! Extension's diversity in education and research has always been something that I was proud to be a part of.

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

I love spending time with my husband, children and grandchildren. When we aren't with the kids, my husband and I are usually doing remodel projects around the house and spending time in our wood shop. ■

Deborah A. Nall
Program Assistant
Columbia County



- **What's your background?**

I have a B.S. in education, am widely traveled and have had varied vocations that have given me unique insights in every job experience.

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

I grew up on a farm in an agricultural community in Virginia. My family traveled annually to discover new and

different surroundings, and I lived abroad to experience the same as a single young person. I was privileged to develop, introduce and network a successful educational recycling program throughout every school in the given county where I was previously employed. My ability to adapt to new and different surroundings is one of my greatest assets.

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

I am amiable and forward thinking. I am married and have a newlywed daughter.

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

I would like to be able to fully embrace the 4-H program and be able to say that I have done it justice in my role as a program assistant.

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

I learned about Extension through various contacts who knew of my background and knew of the opening and felt it would be a good “fit.” Having worked before alongside Extension agents in county government in another state, I knew the work to be invaluable to the educational system and to the community.

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

My interests are more in the artistic/creative bent. I co-pastor alongside my husband.

Laverna (Verna) Waddell

Payroll Service Specialist
Financial Services



- **What's your background?**

I have more than 19 years of payroll and accounting experience from First Commercial Bank (Regions) and Gerry Waddell, CPA.

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

I will bring skills in processing payroll for more than 3,000 employees, reconciling time sheets, calculating bankruptcies, garnishments, child supports, etc. I have experience with monthly accounting for small business clients, including payroll processing, tax reports, general ledger entry and bank account reconciliation.

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

I will be celebrating my 30-year wedding anniversary this year, and we have a daughter that will be graduating high school in May and then starting to college in the fall at UCA.

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

I would like to bring all of my experience to this job and be very productive and dependable.

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

It was opening of the payroll position, the benefits package and the retirement plan that brought me to Extension.

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

My life revolves around my one and only daughter, and I like shopping and crafts.

Computer Performance: What's inside the box?

This month, let's look at hard disk storage. The hard disk drive inside your computer is where your programs and data are stored. Your computer reads and writes to this disk constantly. And just like your paper file drawers in your desk, it's much faster for your computer to find information on your hard disk if it's neat and orderly.

To determine how much space you have on your hard drive left click on your Window's "start" button and then find "My Computer." Left click on "My Computer" and the hard disk drive letters will appear on your screen. Our main hard disk drive is usually titled "Local Disk (C:)." If the free space is below 20 percent, your computer performance will suffer.

Right click on "Local Disk (C:)" and select "Properties." A window will open with several tabs. The "General" tab has a "Disk Cleanup" button. This will list

suggested files that can be deleted such as temporary files, recycle bin, etc., to free up storage space.

Next, let's look at disk fragmentation. Click on the "Tools" tab and then select "Defragment Now." This process will collect information from your hard drive and order it neatly on your disk drive for faster retrieval. If you haven't defragged your disk recently (in months), click on "Defragment." Running this process at the end of the day is advised since it may require an extended amount of time to complete. ■

Questions or assistance? Contact the IT Call Center:

Local Call: 501-671-2255

Toll Free: 866-779-3375

E-mail: callcenter@uaex.edu

Grants and contracts for Month Ending February 29, 2012

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
Development of an Invasive Species Response Outreach Pilot Project	\$ 95,000.00	Jon Barry	Arkansas State Plant Board
Flag the Technology	160,000.00	Bob Scott	Soybean Promotion Board
Flag the Technology GPS/GIS support	39,000.00	Dharmendra Saraswat	Soybean Promotion Board
Comparison of Horticultural Deer Repellents	33,725.00	Becky McPeake	Alotian Club, LLC
2012 Monsanto 4-H Volunteer Initiative Program	2,000.00	Noah Washburn	National 4-H Council
Managing Glyphosate-Resistant Palmer Amaranth in Cotton	20,000.00	Ken Smith	Cotton Incorporated
Evaluation of Cotton Yield Loss Caused by Two-Spotted Spider Mites AR 11	6,600.00	Scott Akin	Cotton Incorporated
TOTAL	\$ 356,325.00		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

John W. Boyd

Visiting Assistant Professor, Crop, Soil & Environmental Sciences, effective March 15, 2012.

Ranata M. Donald

4-H Program Assistant, Desha County, effective March 26, 2012.

Tracy L. Fall

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Cleburne County, effective March 16, 2012.

Polly A. Greenbaum

Fiscal Support Specialist, Credit Union, effective March 1, 2012.

Preston H. Hipp

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Stone County, effective March 16, 2012.

Reginald James

Institutional Service Assistant, Facility Maintenance, effective March 12, 2012.

Del E. Johnson

Benefits Manager, Human Resources, effective March 12, 2012.

Patricia A. Johnson

Administrative Specialist, Human Resources, effective February 29, 2012.

Jason R. Meier

Weed Science Program Associate, Southeast Research & Extension Center, effective March 27, 2012.

Diana A. Morian

Network Administrator, Office of Information Technology, effective March 1, 2012.

JoAnn M. Vann

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Clark County, effective March 16, 2012.

Scarlett D. Vasquez

Administrative Specialist, Crop, Soil & Environmental Sciences, effective March 20, 2012.

Extension says goodbye to:

Amy G. Carroll

Program Associate - Plant Pathology, Plant Pathology, effective February 29, 2012.

Danielle M. Halliburton

EFNEP Program Assistant, Crittenden County, effective February 17, 2012.

Amy N. Hawks

Institutional Services Assistant, Arkansas 4-H Center, effective February 21, 2012.

Catherine B. Koch

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Washington County, effective February 1, 2012.

Stewart K. Runsick

Area Agronomist - Rice, Crop, Soil & Environmental Sciences, effective March 23, 2012.