

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

No. 3719 • March 2012

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Telling the story of agriculture in Arkansas

As America becomes more urban, it is important that our congressional leaders and the White House have an understanding of the role we play in agriculture and the quality of life in rural America.

It was out of this need that CARET, the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching, was formed as a national grassroots organization in 1982.

CARET has representatives from the 50 states, the U.S. territories and the District of Columbia. The organization's mission is to advocate for greater national support and understanding of the land-grant university system's food and agricultural research, extension and teaching programs that enhance the quality of life for all people.

CARET also works with national agricultural organizations to tell agriculture's story while not taking a position on issues. Debbie Moreland and Dow Brantley represent the Division of Agriculture.

Debbie Moreland has been an advocate for agriculture and the Division of Agriculture for years. The Moreland farm is in the Arkansas River Valley in western Pulaski County near Roland. She has been active on several boards related to agriculture and rural life, and we are pleased that she has accepted the role of speaking on behalf of the Division of Agriculture to our congressmen.

Dow Brantley, a 1998 graduate of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, is a third-generation farmer in the Lonoke County community of England and has served on several boards including the Arkansas Rice Producers' Group which he chairs. His experience and willingness to lead in the agriculture community makes him an excellent advocate as well.

CARET met in Arlington, Va., Feb. 26-29, and Dr. Mark Cochran attended the conference. The U of A System Division of Agriculture hosted a breakfast for Arkansas' Congressional delegation on Feb. 28, providing an opportunity to communicate our mission and impact. It also provided an excellent venue to answer questions from our congressional delegation.

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

Thousands attend Flower and Garden Show supporting educational efforts

Thousands of people helped support horticultural education by attending the 2012 Arkansas Flower and Garden Show Feb. 24-26.

Proceeds from the show, now in its 21st year, support college scholarships in horticulture-related fields in Arkansas and fund "The Greening of Arkansas" grant program which provides community beautification grants to communities throughout Arkansas.

Landscape artists embraced this year's show theme, "Floral Notes," weaving sheet music, musical notation, and string, woodwind and brass instruments into beautiful

arrangements, even turning a euphonium into a fountain that welcomed visitors.

Extension had an enormous presence at the Arkansas Flower and Garden show. Family and consumer science agents performed cooking demonstrations and handed out samples. Other Extension faculty discussed animal science, water conservation and of course, all things horticulture.

Photos of the show may be found online at:

www.flickr.com/photos/uacescomm/sets/72157629080195574/. ■



Michael Looper, animal science department chair for the U of A, chats with a visitor to the 2012 Arkansas Flower and Garden Show.



Beth Phelps, Pulaski County Extension staff chair for the U of A System Division of Agriculture, is interviewed by KATV's Renee Shapiro before Saturday's opening at the Arkansas Flower and Garden Show.

Arkansas water sustainability

Arkansas Water Sustainability is a web site designed as a roadmap for resources, information and data on water quality and quantity throughout the state.

The web site is a one-stop site for water topics in Arkansas. Water topics featured include agriculture, urban and residential, watershed, policy, data, people, links and more. Sub-menus provide more definitive selections, such as irrigation and nutrient management, drinking water, stormwater, conservation and watershed involvement.

Each topic contains links to additional resources including publications and other web sites. Programs focused on water in Arkansas, such as the Arkansas Discovery Farms and the 40-Gallon Challenge, are also highlighted.

Arkansas Water Sustainability serves as a blog for Arkansas water-related news and information. Users can view the blog to stay up-to-date on deadlines for applications, new features added to the web site, upcoming events and more.

A screenshot of the Arkansas Water Sustainability website. The header features the U of A logo and the text "DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE RESEARCH & EXTENSION University of Arkansas System". Below this is a navigation bar with links: Home, About, Agriculture, Urban, Watershed, Policy, Water Data, 40 Gallon Challenge, People, Links. The main content area includes a section for "Upcoming Certified Crop Advisor Training Session" dated February 10, 2012, by pdaniel, with details about the session at the 34th Annual Rice Technical Working Group. There is also a "SEARCH WATER SUSTAINABILITY" box and a "FOLLOW WATER SUSTAINABILITY VIA EMAIL" section. The footer mentions "Arkansas and County Governments Cooperating" and "The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer."

Visit Arkansas Water Sustainability to find what you are looking for when it comes to water quality and quantity in Arkansas: <http://watersustainability.wordpress.com/>. ■

2012 Breakthrough Solutions SOAR Award presented to Chris Meux

The Breakthrough Solutions SOAR Award is given to communities, regions or individuals who best exemplify the collaborative, creative Breakthrough Solutions development process.

During the 2011-2012 Winter Breakthrough Solutions Conference Jan. 25, the SOAR Award was presented to Chris Meux, design specialist with UACES, for his exemplary service to the Breakthrough Solutions Program.

“A key element of Breakthrough Solutions is being able to communicate insights about the new opportunities in today’s economy to citizens and community leaders across the state,” stated Mark Peterson, professor of community and economic development.

“That is where Chris has played such a vital role. It was Chris Meux’s graphic design creativity that made the Breakthrough Solutions model and process come alive in a compelling and attractive way. A common response to Chris’s work is “Wow!” which is an indication of the quality of his work.” ■



Faulkner County 4-H musters troops to support military youth

The Faulkner County 4-H program responded in force to a request to assist with pre-deployment Yellow Ribbon Events on Jan. 28 and 29. Thirty-seven 4-H members and leaders assembled after school on Jan. 26 to stuff nearly 200 Hero Packs, prepare Give a Hug Dolls and string dog tags for children of the Arkansas National Guard’s 39th Infantry Brigade.

The Hero Packs are a core element of Operation: Military Kids, a 4-H partnership program with the U.S. Army that strives to provide support for children impacted by deployment. After the Hero Pack preparation, teen and adult volunteers trained for the weekend’s youth activities.

Eleven teens served both Saturday and Sunday, on duty from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Conway’s Agora Center. Teens interacted with military kids, playing games, helping them with computers and iPads and assisting the Arkansas National Guard youth coordinators with special activities for 6-12 year olds and 13-18 year olds. Each day, the teen leaders presented Hero Packs to children age 5-18.

The 39th Infantry Brigade was scheduled to deploy as many as 3,500 personnel to Afghanistan this year. On Jan. 27, there was an announcement that the large deployment had been cancelled, although the 39th remains deployment-ready.

There will be other deployments during 2012, so 4-H members in other counties may ask to become involved in supporting our youngest heroes.



For more information, contact Maureen Rose, mrose@uaex.edu, 501-671-2066. ■

2012 Entrepreneur Camps

Two simultaneous entrepreneur camps were held Feb. 10-12, 2012, at the Arkansas 4-H Center. The camps represent a collaborative effort between community and economic development, 4-H youth development and family and consumer sciences. This year's camps featured traditional camp activities along with educational sessions to teach youth about entrepreneurship and personal finance.

Participants at Basic Entrepreneur Camp (youth ages 9-13) developed a business plan, created a business venture, sold their products at market and determined their business profits. Advanced Camp Participants (ages 14-19) interviewed local entrepreneurs, explored the feasibility of a business concept they are interested in pursuing in real life and gave presentations about their business idea. All campers participated in the "Get Real, Here's the Deal" personal finance simulation.

Camping coordinator Shannon Caldwell and instructors Stacey McCullough, Laura Connerly and Bobby Hall were assisted by county agents Leadra Martin, Grant Beckwith and Chris Elkins. Kim Magee spoke to campers about her entrepreneurial experiences. ■



Campers buy and sell their products at market.



Campers participate in the "Get Real, Here's the Deal" personal finance simulations.



2012 Entrepreneur Camp participants.



Advanced campers develop presentations to pitch their business idea.

The Division of Agriculture Soils Working Group organized a series of workshops in collaboration with the Arkansas Plant Food Association.

The first event was held in Marianna, with the other organized in Jonesboro. These two events drew more than 150 people. Attendees included farmers, crop consultants, county agents, industry representatives and state and federal agencies among others. Some of the farmers and consultants drove 2-3 hours, underscoring the importance that fertility management has in crop production in the state. Plans are underway for next year's workshops as requested by several who attended! ■



Morteza Mozaffari (Soil Test Lab), Steven Green (ASU), Rick Norman (UA Fayetteville), Mike Daniels (UACES), Nathan Slaton (UA Fayetteville), Leo Espinoza (UACES). Not pictured Trent Roberts (UA Fayetteville).

Arkansas' first national 4-H Parliamentary Procedure Team

Arkansas 4-H had its first team in the National 4-H Parliamentary Procedure contest this year. They placed one point from second and not far from the first place team's score. The 92nd Western National Roundup was held in Denver, Col., Jan. 5-9, with representatives from 32 states and Canada.

Washington County's National 4-H Parliamentary Procedure Team members are Ryan Raible, Cabrina Raible, Maggie Fancher, Lauren Cheevers and Austin Hamm. The team was coached by Washington County agent Anna Goff. After placing first at State O-Rama, the team practiced for five months and with the help of several supporters raised over \$6,000 for the team's expenses with the national 4-H contest.

The team is now creating an educational video as a resource on conducting a 4-H business meeting. This is



with the assistance of Bobby Hall in Community and Economic Development. More will be shared when this project is completed. ■

The National Biodiesel Conference and Expo, 2012

Samy Sadaka, assistant professor and energy specialist, recently attended the National Biodiesel Conference and Expo 2012 and learned the production and use of biodiesel has grown significantly in a single year.

The production of biodiesel in the U.S. has jumped from approximately 315 million gallons in 2010 to 1.1 billion gallons in 2011, resulting in an economic infusion of approximately \$4 billion into the U.S. economy while helping to create more green-energy jobs and reducing America's dependence on foreign oil. ■

Save the Date!

March 28-30

2012 Galaxy Conference
Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean

Triple "R" on the Rocks
March 28-30, 2012 *Retreat | Relax | Renew*

Meet the *new* employees!



Lydia Guffey
Administrative Specialist
Cleburne County

- **What's your background?**

I have recently moved from Newport, where I had lived my entire life. I worked for two gynecologists for the last 20 years.

However, I grew up on a small farm, and my relatives still farm. We did have about 40 head of cows, but we sold all but four.

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

I have worked with various types of people and used all kinds of office equipment. I work well alone or with others, and I am self-motivated.

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

I want them to know that I am very honest and responsible.

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

I would like to feel comfortable with all aspects of the office and different clubs.

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

My husband and I moved to this area, and I would check the newspaper ads for job offerings. I saw an ad for the Cleburne County Extension office, and it gave the qualifications that were required. I felt that I had those qualifications and feel this is a good job with great benefits!

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

A leisurely day on the lake, spending quality time with my grandchildren, watching a great baseball game and getting my yard fixed up to plant flowers and shrubs are a few outside interests that I enjoy. ■



Naresh Pai
Post-Doctoral Associate
Bio and Ag Engineering
Fayetteville

- **What's your background?**

I grew up in Mumbai, India, and did my undergraduate in mechanical engineering. I came to the U.S. to pursue concurrent M.S. degrees in mechanical as well as bio and ag engineering at the University of Florida. Thereafter, I received a Ph.D. from the U of A, Fayetteville in bio and ag engineering in December 2011.

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

My graduate program has prepared me for understanding and modeling the complexities in watershed hydrology. I bring a broad range of skills in watershed modeling and geospatial technologies to evaluate impacts of various management practices on water quality. I am also interested in developing simple user-friendly computer-based tools to communicate water-related information.

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

I enjoy working in a team environment, and I am eager to learn about new technology.

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

In my first year with the Cooperative Extension Service, I would like to leverage my training in geographical information systems (GIS) and watershed modeling to provide science-based information about water management to our stakeholders.

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

My Ph.D. supervisor Dr. Dharmendra Saraswat has been informing me about the important role of Extension in Arkansas' agriculture. I value the linkage between research and extension in this organization to address problems that are relevant to Arkansas citizens.

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

I enjoy reading a good book, watching animated movies and cooking Indian food with my wife. ■



Erika Thomas
County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences
Perry County

- **What's your background?**

I grew up in Batesville, Arkansas. I obtained a B.S.E. degree in family and consumer sciences from the University of Central Arkansas in 2010. I have experience teaching to a variety of age groups.

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

I am team-oriented, but I also possess leadership skills. I'm highly motivated and determined to help others obtain a healthier lifestyle and enjoy a higher quality of life.

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

I will strive to make a difference in the residents of the

community and encourage them to go beyond their limitations and achieve their personal goals.

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

I want to do as much as I can to provide opportunities for the people in the community to learn life skills and reach their full potential through family and consumer science education. My goal is to make a positive impact on the community and inspire others to do the same.

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

I have a passion for educating others about the many important aspects of family and consumer sciences. Working for Extension will provide me with the opportunity to teach people skills they can carry with them for the rest of their lives.

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

I love spending time with my family. My favorite hobby is playing with my three-year-old son, Bentley. I also enjoy exercising, dancing and baking. ■

PURCHASING TIPS...

Goods and services purchased from state contracts

Certain goods and services are on state contract and do not require bidding regardless of the amount of purchase. However, the purchase request must be processed through the Cooperative Extension Service purchasing office except wireless phone requests which are routed through the IT department using the approved contract vendor. Examples of state contract items we purchase on a regular basis include:

- Computers, copiers, copy paper, envelopes
- iPads, lamps/ballast/bulbs, mail processing equipment
- Office supplies, print shop paper, paper towels
- Telephone instruments, tires, toilet paper, uniforms
- Vehicles, vehicle rentals and wireless phone

These are a few of the items we purchase on a regular basis, but there are many other goods and services on state contract. For a complete listing of state contracts, you can go to <http://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/Pages/default.aspx> and click on procurement and state contracts to see the entire listing.

For questions about state contracts and other purchasing matters, please contact your purchasing staff at 501-671-2328 or 501-671-2296.

Information Technology Update

E-mail phishing and other scams

E-mail fishing scams attempt to acquire information such as usernames, passwords and credit card details by posing as a trustworthy business or relying on personal relationships.

Looking at some of the more common and recurring scams reported to the Call Center, the following appear to be the most common:

IRS – Notification that your tax return has been rejected or has an error – The IRS web site states that they do not send e-mail notification when there are issues with an individual or business tax return.

ACH or NACHA – Electronics Payment Association – Rejected transaction or payment failed – The NACHA web site states: “NACHA does not send communications of any type to persons or organizations about individual ACH transactions that they originate or receive.”

FedEx or UPS shipments and online order confirmations – Don't remember ordering anything? Quite likely you're right. These e-mails focus on getting you to click on a link to track the status or provide more information.

An acquaintance request for aid because they're stranded while traveling – The acquaintance is traveling internationally and due to some circumstance, they've lost credit cards, cash and often passport. They need immediate assistance (money) in order to get airline tickets for return travel.

Not sure if a message is legitimate or a scam? Send it to the Call Center, and they'll confirm if it's safe. ■

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 January 31, 2012

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
MOA Water Conservation Education	\$ 43,005.00	Elisabeth Phelps	Central Arkansas Water
Nutrient Management Training Revisions	36,000.00	Michael Daniels	Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts
Nutrient Management Training Revisions	19,000.00	Michael Daniels	Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts
Soybean Research and Promotion Coordinator	73,430.00	Rick Cartwright	Soybean Promotion Board
Research Support Transfer from Tarleton State University	6,781.49	Travis Faske	Tarleton State University
Determining Relative Rainfastness of Insecticides Used for Control of Tarnished Plant Bugs in Cotton	18,495.00	Scott Akin	Cotton Incorporated
Evaluation of the Effects of Insecticide-Herbicide Interactions on Yield and Maturity of Arkansas Cotton	13,500.00	Scott Akin	Cotton Incorporated
Current Economic Status of Conservation and No-Till Cotton Production in the Southeastern United States	4,000.00	Kelly Bryant	Cotton Incorporated
The New Transgenics: Will They Be Cost Effective for Arkansas Cotton Growers?	24,364.00	Gus Lorenz	Cotton Incorporated
TOTAL	\$ 238,575.49		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Jack A. Clark

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Yell County-Danville, effective February 1, 2012.

Deborah A. Nail

Program Assistant - ANNCD, Columbia County, effective February 13, 2012.

Naresh A. Pai

Post Doctoral Associate, Bio and Agricultural Engineering - Extension, effective January 17, 2012.

Matthew D. Shekels

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Searcy County, effective February 1, 2012.

Laverna J. Waddell

Payroll Services Specialist, Financial Services, effective February 20, 2012.

Extension says goodbye to:

Camellia H. Fell

Program Technician-AgrAbility, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective February 10, 2012.

Jason W. Fortner

Program Associate - Entomology, effective February 13, 2012.

Dorothy P. Temple

Administrative Associate, LeadAR, effective January 31, 2012.

Danny O. Walker

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Columbia County, effective January 31, 2012.

Lisa M. Wynne

Program Assistant - EFNEP, St. Francis County, effective January 25, 2012.