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BLUE LETTER

October 2018
No. 3798



Our diverse impacts

October in the promised land represents autumn and continued weather challenges in a state blessed with it seems 16 or more seasons. But weather is a serious business, as evidenced by Hurricane Michael, what made a huge mess in the panhandle of Florida, southeastern Alabama, Southern Georgia and parts of the Carolinas.

There was direct impact on extension personnel and programs in this region, and if there is a help effort set up, I will let you know. Our extension counterparts there are working night and day to help everybody they possibly can, typical extension people – makes one proud in the face of such loss. Please keep all these folks in your thoughts.

This Blue Letter is very content-rich and illustrates the diverse impact by Division personnel. Moving Manila Forward, Tech Tips, Crop Harvest, Nutrition Ed at Harps, 4-H Livestock Judging, Master Gardeners, Entomology, Produce Safety, Local Foods, APAC Celebrates PTAC, Banner 9, Wellness and Tobacco Cessation, Ag Education to Youth, Crops for Kids, Babysitting Training, LeadAR in Washington, D.C.; Featured People, and of course Grants and Events. What is not to like? We seem to be everywhere

and into everything. I hope you will read and enjoy this issue and be as proud as I am to work with the best people on earth (that is you).

Speaking of best people on earth, I attended the 30th Anniversary of our Master Gardener Program led by the one and only Janet Carson on Saturday. With me were about 1200 interested and dedicated souls committed to the Master Gardener Program, one of the biggest, brightest and best in the land. The event was held at Moss Mountain Farm somewhere kind of north and west of Little Rock in the country but I confess I got lost a couple of times (normal for me). Even with a bit of rainy weather after lunch, this event was carried off in a highly organized, professional and positive manner and I think I just described the exceptional leadership of Janet all these years. Simply phenomenal.

Health benefits open enrollment will be here in November, and you need to be thinking about this
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FROM THE DIRECTOR

INSIDE SCOOP

2. Moving Manila Forward
3. Grocery stores turned classrooms
4. 4-Hers at AKSARBEN

6. Food news
8. Your benefits
12. Extension people and more!

CED: Moving Manila Forward

Nelson, Cochran speak at launch event



Rex Nelson, senior editor, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, speaking at the Moving Manila Forward launch. From left: Santi Lalis, special guest from Manila, Philippines; Rex Nelson; Andrew Fleeman, Moving Manila Forward chairman; and Mark Cochran, vice president-Agriculture for the U of A System.

"I have been very impressed with what I have seen here in Manila," stated Rex Nelson, senior editor and columnist at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. "Other communities are hungry for success stories, and this is a good one."



Nelson was speaking at the Sept. 18 launch of Moving Manila Forward Blueprint and Action Plan, the culmination of a strategic planning process through Breakthrough Solutions, a Community and Economic Development program of the Cooperative Extension Service.

It started when the Manila Pilots Association sought assistance from Mississippi County Extension Agent Staff Chair Ray Benson to improve the airport and the community, and has led to major accomplishments, including creating a ministerial alliance, over 3,000 people coming to downtown events, a shrimp fly-in from the Gulf, movie nights at the airport, forming a farmers market, attracting new businesses downtown, launching a website, and receiving a \$450,000 economic development grant.

Mark Cochran, vice president-agriculture for the University of Arkansas System, also spoke at the event, and stressed the strong ties of the community to agriculture and the role that the Division of Agriculture has played in developing the area.

Congratulations to Moving Manila Forward on this milestone, and to county Extension agents Ray Benson and Pam Pruett for their tremendous support. We look forward to great things happening in Manila! ■

Top Tech Tips

Get top tech tips: apps, software, hardware, email, and more! Connect on Hump Day Hacks and let us help you solve your tech troubles on the fourth Wednesday of every month, starting at 9 a.m.



Upcoming Sessions: Wednesday, Oct. 24
Wednesday, Nov. 28
Submit your topic ideas:
<http://bit.ly/hump-day-hacks-request> ■

Inbox weather

Get weather updates from the National Weather Service straight to your inbox. Email Mary Hightower to be included on the distribution list:
mhightower@uaex.edu. ■



Running ahead of the rain



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Harvesting rice breeder head rows at the Rice Research and Extension Center on Sept. 21 before an incoming rain. Harvested seeds of the experimental medium-grain line 17AR1124 will be used to grow foundation seed in 2019 for potential release. In the picture, Tony Beaty (driver) and Richard Weaver. Both work at the RREC's medium-grain breeding program under Xueyan Sha.

Learning in aisle 1 ■ FCS agents turn grocery stores into nutrition education hot spots

FCS agents in Crawford County, Faulkner County, Garland County, and Lonoke County assisted the Department of Human Services and Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention by providing nutrition education during the Double Up Food Bucks Incentive Days at local Harps Grocery Stores.

Nutrition education was provided through the SNAP-Ed program in the four counties. Agents focused on providing helpful information for SNAP recipients about eating healthy on a budget.

Double Up Food Bucks is a grant-funded program that provides SNAP recipients with double dollars to use toward select fresh fruits and vegetables in participating grocery stores and farmer's markets. SNAP recipients who participated in nutrition education in the store were able to get an extra \$10 to spend that day.

Dianna Bowen, FCS agent in Lonoke County, said the Double Up Food Bucks program "is great for people with SNAP benefits to stretch their fresh produce dollars." ■



From l to r: Shellie O'Quinn, Greenbrier Event Center director; Katrina Betancourt, Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention president; Greenbrier Mayor Sammy Jo Hartwick; Jeremy Adams, Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention Program manager; Melanie Malone, Faulkner County staff chair/FCS agent; Dena DeValle, Greenbrier Chamber.

4-H competes at AKSARBEN livestock judging

White and Polk counties represented Arkansas at the AKSARB Judging Contest in Grand Island, Nebraska, on Sept. 30. Twenty across the nation competed. Contestants placed 12 classes of cattle, swine, sheep, and goats, answered questions on two classes, and gave four sets of reasons. Arkansas came home with some ribbons from the contest.

Kyntlie W. of Polk County placed 9th overall in swine. Ross W. of White County was 2nd High Individual Overall and placed 4th overall in swine. White County placed 4th overall in swine as a team. ■



Members of the Polk County livestock judging team included (L-R) Kelcy F., Reagan B., Kalli S., Landrie T., Jacie W., Kyntlie W., Lindy P., Josey J., and Rendi W.



Members of the White County livestock judging team included (L-R) Slade O., Ross W., Noralee T., Katie B., and Carson W.



Ross W. of White County was the 2nd High Point Overall Individual.



Kyntlie W. of Polk County placed 9th overall in swine.



**UPCOMING
TECH
TUESDAYS**

Nov. 13: Slide Show Videos (Kim Rowe)

Dec. 11: Email Etiquette (Amy Cole, Mary Hightower)

Second Tuesday of every month, starting at 9 a.m. To view the recordings, visit <https://uaex.edu/techtuesdays> ■

Plant-Nurture-Grow

PNG Leadership Conference 2018

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The Arkansas Master Gardener Program hosted the annual PNG (Plant-Nurture-Grow) Leadership Conference Sept. 18-19 at the Arkansas 4-H Center. One-hundred ninety-two Master Gardeners and county extension agents were in attendance representing 32 counties.

Topics for learning include Bridging the Generation Gap, Using Zoom Technology, Agreeing Disagreeably and Money Management. In addition to five concurrent educational sessions, three round-robin sessions rounded out the day with short sessions of 10 hot topics that are important to a growing MG Program. Fifty-seven speakers were on hand for the two-day event. Dr. Mark Cochran did an outstanding job with an informative welcome followed by a Q and A session. Both sides went away understanding more about the overall program within the University System and the Master Gardener program.

Teaching leadership and program management skills is what sets the Arkansas MG program above many others. Teaching horticulture is the carrot that gets volunteers in, but being able to manage them and retain them takes more effort. We strongly encourage all counties with a Master Gardener volunteer program to attend this annual conference—both volunteers and agents. The 2019 conference will be held Friday and Saturday, Aug. 23-24, 2019, at the Arkansas 4-H Center. ■



Roundtable talks spark new ideas.

Entos meet in Miss.

Midsouth Entomologists Working Group recently met at West Point, Mississippi, to discuss recent developments in insect pest management. Entomologists from Arkansas, LSU, MSU, University of Texas, Texas A&M, and USDA-ARS Stoneville met to share experiences and data on control of economic pests of cotton, rice, soybean, grain sorghum, corn and wheat. The group does a number of regional trials which are used to develop thresholds and control recommendations for insect pests for the Midsouth. Arkansas attendees included Gus Lorenz, Nick Bateman, Glenn Studebaker, Ben Thrash, Courtney Spinks, Nicki Taillon and Kevin McPherson. ■



FOOD NEWS



Produce Safety: The Value of Attending a Training

“The one thing that stuck in my mind was how easily produce can be contaminated by handling.”

-Phil Horton, Arkansas County agent

Outbreaks of foodborne illnesses from produce continue to happen. To reduce the likelihood of a contamination event occurring in Arkansas, we have to understand and communicate that prevention begins on the farm. Pike County Staff Chair Terrell Davis said that our training also provides guidance on equipment, worker requirements and budgeting for growers planning to enter or transition into the commercial produce industry as well as best practices for hobby farms sharing in their abundance.

“Many times they will share their produce with neighbors and friends,” Davis said. “I would hate for their kindness to spread a foodborne illness.”

To date, our department has trained 172 people including 19 extension staff chairs and agents. Two upcoming trainings are scheduled for El Dorado on Oct. 30, and in West Memphis on Nov. 7. All expenses will be covered for agents who need training. Contact Angela Gardner, agardner@uaex.edu or (501) 671-2180, for additional information. ■

Sharegrounds grant

The Local, Regional and Safe Foods Team is thrilled to receive a USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Local Foods Promotion Program grant. Amanda Philyaw Perez and Renee Threlfall will direct the Share Grounds Rural Kitchen Incubator and Aggregation Center Development Project in partnership with Woodruff, Searcy, and Cleveland counties.

Angela Gardner will serve as the program manager and Leigh Ann Bullington, Skip Armes and Les Walz, as well as many county partners, will work with the team to get their county fairgrounds open for business over this three-year project.

The project aims to increase access to and consumption of local foods through aggregation, distribution, and value-added product development. Outcomes will include establishing three facilities that offer access to aggregation, processing, and storage of local food and food products; providing education and technical assistance to source locally grown food from farmers and to create or expand food business operations into value-added product development; offering education and technical assistance for food safety; and connecting these businesses to existing supply chains.

The U of A System Division of Agriculture was awarded \$487,717 and will provide \$164,097 in match for a total budget of \$651,814 for the three-year project. ■

New publications:

(You know you want to look.)
uaex.edu/publications/new.aspx



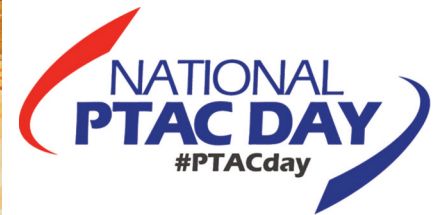
APAC staff, clients celebrate national PTAC Day

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APAC staff Debra Garcia, Alyssa Huber, APAC client Kevin Johnson, Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, APAC client Bridgette Perkins, APAC Program Manager Melanie Berman and Stacey McCullough, assistant director-CED, receiving the Arkansas Governor's Proclamation for 2018 National Procurement Technical Assistance Center Day.



PTAC Day is a national campaign designed to celebrate the contracting success of thousands of small businesses who have benefitted from training and technical assistance delivered by their local PTACs. The first annual PTAC Day took place Sept. 26. Arkansas was proud to be a part of the celebration. Governor Asa Hutchinson issued a state proclamation

for us. The Arkansas Procurement Assistance Center, better known as APAC, staff hosted 50 small businesses at the Little Rock Air Force Base Education Center for a training on "How to Work with the LRAFB." We are so proud of our small business clients who received \$122 million in government contracts last year! ■

Banner 9

The Cooperative Extension Service is commencing the upgrade to Banner 9!

This new Banner release delivers a number of important enhancements, including a modern user interface and enhanced navigation across the HR and finance functions. It will also give us greater flexibility as we'll be able to run Banner on any browser and on tablets.

With any system upgrade, we know that people often grow concerned over what will change, and we have been working to understand and anticipate those changes. In preparation of this upgrade we're preparing training materials such as user guides and short how-to videos on common tasks such as requisitions, leave and time entry and approvals. In addition, at the end of October we are planning several Zoom sessions to go over these tasks. Please be on the lookout for information regarding this upgrade in the near future.

Our plans are to go live on Oct. 21, so stay tuned! ■

Your benefits

Qualification Process for Wellness Incentive

Why November is *really, really* important.

To qualify for the 2019 wellness incentive, you must complete two simple steps:

1. **Complete an annual wellness exam conducted by a physician.** You must visit an in-network provider for an annual wellness visit between Nov. 1, 2017 and Nov. 1, 2018.

A qualified annual wellness visit includes any office visit with an in-network primary care provider or a specialist. A qualified annual wellness visit does NOT include visits to dermatologists, allergists, podiatrists, ophthalmologists or optometrists. There is no form to complete. The annual office visit will be tracked by UMR.

2. If you are enrolled in UMR, you must **complete the Tobacco/Nicotine Pledge and Notice.** You will pay a monthly \$50 surcharge if you:

- Do not complete the Tobacco/Nicotine Pledge and Notice or
- Do not agree to enroll in a tobacco cessation

program or

- Elect to continue to use tobacco/nicotine.

The Tobacco/Nicotine Pledge and Notice will be made available for completion **ONLY** during the open enrollment period in November 2018.

Upcoming Events:

- Employee Assistance Program Webinar – Oct. 19 at 1:30 p.m.
- UMR Webinar – Oct. 29 at 2 p.m.
- Standard Life Insurance Webinar – Nov. 6, time pending
- Open Enrollment Period – Nov. 1 – 30, 2018

Be sure to keep your address updated in Banner! ■



Cartwright: Our diverse impacts

(continued from pg. 1)

going forward. Health care costs continue to increase in the region and nationally for the most part, along with insurance premiums. Although not clear yet, I suspect another increase next July despite our best efforts to control costs. Please take care of your health and participate in any wellness efforts offered and keep in mind the 2019 Wellness Incentive, the tobacco pledge and notice, and the tobacco cessation program. Contact our Human Resources office for additional information. This will be increasingly important to you and your family, please stay informed.

Finally, Dr. Deacue Fields has agreed to attend our Faculty/Staff Conference in early December and give us a short update on where Bumpers College is going, and how Cooperative Extension can play a role in recruiting Arkansas students for the future, as well as other thoughts. We will have other updates and perhaps a surprise or two at this event so please attend in person or by Zoom. I promise a productive and positive time for all.

Have a great October. ■

Looking for a photo?



Did you know we have a library of more than 20,000 photos you can use?
Visit: <http://bit.ly/CESFlickr>

Ag outreach to youth

Two approaches to foster understanding

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1 Soybean Science Challenge participates in the Environmental and Agricultural Sustainability Field Trip at Fayetteville

Diedre Young, Soybean Science Challenge coordinator, and Lynn Wilson, professional assistant, took part in the Environmental and Agricultural Sustainability Field Trip at Fayetteville on Sept. 25. The field trip was an opportunity for teachers and students to learn about different areas of agriculture and how the Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences Department Altheimer Lab incorporates sustainability in its research. More than 150 students and six teachers from Arkansas attended. Young and Daniel Rogers, soybean breeding and genetics program tech in Crop, Soil and Environment Sciences, talked about ongoing soybean research and the diversity of careers in agriculture. They also presented information about soybean growth and development and the economic impact of soybeans in Arkansas. Young emphasized how the Soybean Science Challenge materials and resources contribute to agriculture education and can be a valuable asset to teachers and students.

The sessions were also videotaped and will be posted on YouTube for classroom and research use. The Challenge is a partnership between the Arkansas



SSC Coordinator Diedre Young talks to Rogers High School students at the EAS Field Trip.

Soybean Promotion Board and the Cooperative Extension Service.

For more information, contact Dr. Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uaex.edu or Diedre Young dyoung@uaex.edu. ■



Jacky and Trey Reaper, White County corn producers, and White County Extension Agent Jan Yingling explain the process of producing field corn to 6th graders at Pangburn Middle School.

2 LIVE! at the farm

White County Cooperative Extension Service Agent Jan Yingling and Staff Chair Brian Haller hosted a “Crops for Kids” educational program in September. The students learned about soil and plant science last May in the classroom, as 5th-
(Continued next page)

Oh, baby!

Teaching Babysitting Basics in Lawrence County



FCS Agent, Katrina Causey, shows Cheyenne S. the proper way to hold a baby.

Katrina Causey, Lawrence County extension FCS agent, recently collaborated with Lawrence Memorial Hospital to present Babysitting Basics workshops for area youth. The classes were held at the Ralph Joseph Education Building on the hospital campus in Walnut Ridge.

Katrina introduced the participants to the roles and responsibilities of a babysitter and taught them how to handle emergencies and illnesses. They learned the basics of bathing, diapering and feeding infants, along with playtime suggestions for older children. Katrina instructed the group on how to earn income from babysitting as well as business basics, safety precautions, and nutrition.

The students also learned the basics of CPR and practiced emergency procedures using patient simulation taught by hospital staff Rosalind Casillas, RN; Debbie Tucker, RN; and Lory Williams, RN.

The program is very popular and is presented annually by the Lawrence County Cooperative Extension Service and Lawrence Memorial Hospital as part of ongoing efforts to educate and serve the community. Upon completion of the class, students received a participation certificate, cookbook, CPR certification card, and a babysitting handbook. ■



Participant Shelby J. performing CPR

2 LIVE! at the farm

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graders, with hands-on activities taught by Jan. The now-6th-grade Pangburn Middle School students were bused to Jacky Reaper's farm in Albion to observe a corn harvesting operation firsthand. Jacky and his son, Trey, then explained the process of growing corn, caring for the soil and corn plants for optimal yields, and the equipment used to harvest the crop. The Reaper family donated one acre of their corn crop to the classroom.

The students will learn about the economics of producing corn in December and determine if the acre of corn was profitable. They will then be allowed to decide as a class which charitable organization they would like to donate their profit. This program has been conducted in White County for many years and is an excellent way to educate the youth about many aspects of farming and economics. A similar program is conducted with a rice producer in the Bald Knob school district. ■



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION

University of Arkansas System

Get with the
System

When referring to the entity that is the parent to both the Cooperative Extension Service and the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, be sure to use **University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture**.

This is our official name. ■

CAPITOL IDEA

LeadAR National Study Tour in D.C.

LeadAR Class 18 members learned how policy is developed from the people who make it happen in Washington D.C.

During their September National Study Tour, the class met with top-level government, agency and community leaders who discussed current issues and how LeadAR members can address them.

The visit provided a mix of formal meetings and informative tours. The group toured the Pentagon, FBI Headquarters, Library of Congress and many national monuments. Sen. John Boozman showed them the U.S. Capitol Building.

Members of the class who are military veterans and family of veterans laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Arlington National Cemetery on Sept. 11.

The class heard updates on national issues from the U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, American Farm Bureau, National Association of Counties and the Embassy of France.

Arkansas Farm Bureau, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, Farm Credit MidSouth, AgHeritage Farm Credit Services, Farm Credit of Western Arkansas, Entergy, Dassault Falcon Jet, and Dr. Joe and Brenda Waldrum sponsored the LeadAR National Study Tour. LeadAR educates emerging leaders on public issues and develops their expertise in addressing critical problems facing Arkansas. ■

BELOW: LeadAR Class 18 visits the French Embassy in Washington.



Extension people



Extension folks got some high-profile mentions in October.

Darlene Madden, Jackson County administrative specialist, was on the cover of the October edition of “Eye On” magazine. She is featured in a four-page spread, which tells of her close connections to the people of Jackson County. Take a look at www.eyemag.com.

“AY” magazine included Cotton Agronomist Bill Robertson in a feature on Men in Pink Ties. This is a new initiative by the Arkansas affiliate of the Susan G. Komen foundation. The “Pink Tie Guys” are a group of doctors, survivors and supporters of Komen Arkansas. See the feature story here:

<http://aymag.com/men-pink-ties/>. ■

Personnel Changes

Welcome aboard:

Garrett Felts - Program associate - Entomology, Stuttgart

Jennifer Mendenhall - Administrative specialist, Jefferson County

Mindy Beard - Administrative specialist, Faulkner County

Andrea Price - Administrative specialist, Community and Economic Development, Little Rock

Andrew Sayger - County extension agent-agriculture, Monroe County

David Steele - Administrative specialist, Family and Consumer Science, Little Rock

Ed Mabry - Program associate - Rural Development, Community and Economic Development, Batesville

Kim Jackson - Administrative specialist, Rice Research and Extension Center, Stuttgart

Farewell to:

Brittany Singleton - Program associate, Crop Soils and Environmental Sciences

Jerica Roberts - Program assistant, 4-H, Franklin County

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

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

Grants and contracts

Project Title	Award Amount	PI	Granting Agency
Cotton Research Irrigation Verification and Sustainability Program	10,000	Bill Robertson	Cotton Inc.
2017 Arkansas Extension Implementation Program	179,669	Glenn Studebaker	NIFA
Development of a User-friendly, Rapid Scouting Procedure for the Invasive Sugarcane Aphid, <i>Melanaphis sacchari</i> , in Sorghum	4,987	Gus Lorenz	Oklahoma State
Beef Quality Assurance	5,250	Heidi Ward	Arkansas Beef Council
Food Animal Medicine Workshop Series: Utilizing Extension to Provide Continuing Education for the Expansion of Veterinary Services in Shortage Situations	94,385	Heidi Ward	NIFA
Initiating Community Stewardship Through Watershed Discovery	5,500	John Pennington	Arkansas Community Foundation
Demonstrate different approaches to improve water quality, conserve irrigation water and increase soil health for cropland and/or pastureland through innovative technology, outreach and/or education	658,684	Julie Robinson	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Educating Producers and Industry on Implementation of the FSMA	121,032	Vic Ford	Arkansas Agriculture Department
Total Awards for September 2018	\$1,079,507		

Upcoming events

Through October 21 - Arkansas State Fair

Oct. 15 - FAYETTEVILLE - Workshop: "Keep It Local! Creating and Marketing Value-Added Foods"

Oct. 18 - DANVILLE - "Walk in the Woods" forestry management

Oct. 25 - Workshop: "Keep It Local! Creating and Marketing Value-Added Foods"

Nov. 6 - LITTLE ROCK - Check In and Tune Up for New Hires

Nov. 9 - Conversations with Cartwright

Nov. 22 - Holiday -Thanksgiving

Dec. 3 - LITTLE ROCK - State Faculty Conference

Jan. 11 - LITTLE ROCK - Agriculture Awards Luncheon

