



Keeping you connected

extension cord

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Liz Childs: Following the Family Tradition

Liz Childs comes from a family of women who love Extension, and she credits her start to those who came before her. Her grandmother and mother were Extension homemakers. Her mother also worked several years for Extension as a home economist.

Childs started her own career in 1984 working in communications at the state office in Little Rock.

"I worked there for 10 years, and then I started doing publications," Childs said. "We did it the old-fashioned way when I first started because there were no computers. We eventually started working with computers, and I started an online newsletter for Extension."

Childs even served a two-year stint as a county agent, but her heart was at the state office.

"After those two years, I went back to the state office and moved into community development," Childs said. "I did a lot of researching during that time, and I still love that to this day."

Her love of research was special, since that has a lot to do with Extension's mission.

"I love the mission of Extension," Childs said. "I liked that Extension was helping people and meeting with different agencies to get this done. I have a great respect for how Extension can reach people with education and research."

She said that some of her favorite memories are from her early years with Extension.

"I loved being with the people that I worked with," Childs said. "We were all really close to each other. We had a sense of togetherness and supported one another. We have maintained our friendships all these years."

While she thoroughly enjoyed her career with Extension, she has had a great time in retirement.

"People talked about how they wondered how they had time to work, and I experienced that when I retired," Childs said. "I am still involved with Extension as a homemaker, and I stay involved in my neighborhood and church."

One of her greatest joys since retiring is being able to rescue dogs.

"I am what some might call a foster failure," Childs said. "I tried to foster a dog, but I ended up loving her so much that I just adopted her. Now Lucy is with me wherever I go."

During the pandemic, Childs has looked to her neighbors for company and engagement.

"I live in a quiet, friendly neighborhood full of young families and couples," Childs said. "When I am out walking Lucy, they will talk with me as I pass. I was not isolated during the pandemic."

In fact, the neighborhood pulled together to offer everyone a safe Easter celebration, when it didn't seem possible at the time.

"We couldn't do a traditional Easter egg hunt when COVID



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first hit, so we did a parade instead,” Childs said. “We sent out flyers to get everyone involved by watching from their front porch. I helped hand out candy to the kids as we passed by, and it was a good time.”

Childs said that publications and communications is still one of her great passions.

“I am involved with the Arkansas Press Women and the

National Federation of Press Women,” Childs said. “I have helped judge entries for the communications contest.”

She remembers helping her mom in Extension as a kid, and she is proud to continue that work.

“I was honored to work for Extension, and I am grateful for the years I spent there,” Childs said. 

Cooperative Extension Service launches summer internship program for agents

The Cooperative Extension Service is looking to help the next generation of extension agents get a running start toward a new career that’s focused on helping others.

Extension is launching its first summer internship program in decades. The program will accept between six and nine applicants for the 2022 season, which will run from May 23 through the last week of July. The internship is paid, but housing is not provided.

Cooperative Extension’s three district directors — Carla Due, Kevin Lawson and Jerry Clemons — developed the program at the direction of Bob Scott, senior associate vice president for agriculture and extension for the Division of Agriculture.

Due, Ouachita district director, said that after contacting other universities with cooperative extension internship programs, she and her fellow district directors constructed a program they believe will best meet the needs of Arkansas residents, as well as extension itself.

they’re going to spend time in the 4-H program, and vice versa. And it will all culminate in that last week at the 4-H State O-Rama.”

Although O-Rama has been held at the Arkansas 4-H Center near Little Rock for the last two years, organizers plan to move the gathering back to the UA Fayetteville campus in 2022.

The Cooperative Extension Service employs agents in all 75 counties throughout Arkansas. Lawson, extension’s Ozark district director, said internship applicants will list their top three county preferences, so that they can work close to where they live, whether that be with a relative or in their own apartment.

Due said the work of interns will vary day to day, just as it does for extension agents.

“We want this program to open students’ eyes to the possibility of being a county extension agent,” she said. “To let them know what an extension agent does, and the rewards of being an extension agent. It’s not a sit-behind-a-desk type of job. It’s about helping people — whether one-on-one or in groups.”

Due said college students entering their senior year will be considered first among applicants, followed by juniors, sophomores and freshmen. She said there is not currently a closing date for applications, but that interested students should apply as soon as possible.

Both Lawson and Due said a benefit of the internship program to the Cooperative Extension Service is to help build an experienced pool of young workers with the knowledge, skills and interest in becoming an extension agent.

College students interested in applying to the internship program should contact the Division of Agriculture Human Resources Department at 501-671-2219 or 479-502-9820 or visit <https://uada.edu/jobs>. 



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For more information contact:

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email humanresources@uada.edu

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“We’re focused on making sure interns understand the total extension program throughout the state and individual counties, and not just their own academic discipline,” Due said. “Even if they’re an agent, for example, they’re going to spend time with the Family and Consumer Sciences agent, and


Message from the director

I want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. 2021 has been a much better year for the Cooperative Extension Service than last year, although we are still muddling through the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are cautiously doing more in-person meetings and hope that the current number of cases does not increase with new variants and as some complacency sets in as the vaccines begin to work.



Extension retirees have been productive this year, and fundraising for scholarships has gone well. Congratulations to Brian Helms and all of you for making these scholarships possible. I can think of no greater support than folks who come back to Extension after retirement and believe in the mission so much that they give their time, effort and money to help current employees further their education and further the mission and good things that we do.

Along those same lines, it was very rewarding for me to present our Extension Excellence Awards at our annual Employee Conference (formerly faculty conference) here at the Little Rock State Office and on Zoom this month. We made a bit of history by awarding our first Extension Employee of the Year award to an administrative specialist — Christa Littlefield from Franklin County. Christa has gone and regularly goes above and beyond the call of duty by working in counties with new or vacant administrative positions and more than fills in the gap for as long as she is needed.

We are getting set for a big year in 2022 in terms of hiring. We have many faculty, staff and county positions set to be filled — lots of new faces. I am also excited about our county agent internship program being led by Carla Due, District Director-Ouachita. This program is designed to give interested college students a look at what a career as a county agent has to offer. Like always, I go into the new year with high hopes. I hope you do too. 

Glorious fall: Where did those colors come from?

The images all over social media seem to indicate one thing, that Arkansans have been very impressed with this autumn's foliage show.

What makes one season more colorful than another? Kyle Cunningham, an extension forester, says a lot depends on the weather.

Dry spells and sunny days with cool nights can cause fall colors to be brilliant," he said. "This is the weather pattern we experienced in late summer and early fall."

According to the Nov. 11 report from U.S. Drought Monitor, more than half of Arkansas had a drought rating of some sort. Three months ago, only about 19 percent of the state had drought. By Nov. 11, that area grew to more than 61 percent.

The only time drought doesn't help is "when prolonged drought stresses trees too far and leaves fall prematurely," Cunningham said.

The colors change when the green chlorophyll pigments that harvest sunlight for photosynthesis degrade as the days get shorter and temperatures drop. This allows the leaves' other colors to show. These include xanthophylls, which are yellow; carotenoids, which are orange; and anthocyanins, which are red.

Cunningham said the yellow and orange pigments are


present during the growing season but are masked by the green chlorophyll.



"The anthocyanins occur as the chlorophyll breaks down and are developed by the tree to provide continued protection from excess sunlight so that the tree can continue to obtain and process nutrients and send them to the roots for storage," he said.

As the days get shorter and temperatures begin to drop, the chlorophyll in leaves begins to break down. When the chlorophyll is gone, other pigments present in the tree reflect different colors of light.

Can humans enhance autumn color?

Cunningham said that "fertilizing trees may assist in making them vibrant and potentially hold leaves longer, but, the major forces including weather patterns, tree species, and day length will always be the controls of fall color." 

January Birthdays

Kelly Gage - Jan. 1	Keith F. Martin - Jan. 9	Robert Seay - Jan. 17	Laura LaRue - Jan. 24
Betty Harrison - Jan. 3	Terrie Treadway - Jan. 9	Shirley Cleek - Jan. 18	Nina Sue Coffee - Jan. 25
Doris Thomas - Jan. 5	Steve Culp - Jan. 11	Doug Petty - Jan. 19	Jacquelyn McCray - Jan. 26
Earlene Brecheen - Jan. 6	VeEtta Simmons - Jan. 12	Jerry Williams - Jan. 20	Allen Davis - Jan. 26
John Turner - Jan. 6	Beth Phelps - Jan. 12	Becky Bridges - Jan. 21	LaVetta Perkins - Jan. 27
Sammy Cline - Jan. 7	Rick Thompson - Jan. 14	Cora Nash - Jan. 22	Shirlye Hopkins - Jan. 28
Alva Ray Siler - Jan. 8	Kimberly Wiedower - Jan. 14	Ramona Gordon - Jan. 23	Margy Cannon - Jan. 28
Mona Norris - Jan. 8	Bobby Malone - Jan. 17	Donna Rinke - Jan. 23	Gary Huitink - Jan. 29
Fann Woodward - Jan. 9	Shirley Bennett - Jan. 17	Barbara Ball - Jan. 24	Rebekah Beene - Jan. 29

Scholarship donations

The following gifts were recently received to support professional development opportunities for faculty and staff of the Cooperative Extension Service.

Margaret Alexander

In memory of Sue Keathley

Mike Klumpp

Charlie Parsons

Earl Wilson

Honorary or memorial donations should be forwarded to the Development Office, ATTN: Brian Helms, Cooperative Extension Service, 2301 South University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72204. If joint recognition is desired, please indicate. To ensure proper notification is sent, please also include in whose honor or memory the gift is made and the mailing address of the person to receive the notification.

Brian's Caramel Coconut Pie

- ¼ cup butter or margarine
- 1 (7-ounce) package flaked coconut
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- 2 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 (16-ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 2 baked 9" pastry shells
- 1 (12-ounce) jar caramel ice cream topping (will not use whole jar)
- Garnish: pecan halves

Melt butter in a large skillet. Add coconut and ½ cup pecans; cook until golden, stirring frequently. Set mixture aside and let cool slightly.

Combine cream cheese and sweetened condensed milk; beat at medium speed of an electric mixer until smooth. Fold in whipped topping.

Layer ¼ of cream cheese mixture in each pastry shell. Drizzle ¼ of caramel topping over each pie. Sprinkle ¼ coconut mixture evenly over each pie.

Repeat layers with remaining cream cheese mixture, caramel topping, and coconut mixture. Cover and freeze pies at least 8 hours.

Let frozen pies stand at room temperature 5 minutes before slicing. Garnish if desired.

Yield: two 9-inch pies

CC Schaller Passes

Chauncey Cox "Pete" Schaller, age 99, died in Fayetteville on July 3, 2020. Pete served as an extension horticulture specialist from 1973 to 1985 when he retired. He began as a garden and vegetable specialist in Little Rock and then changed to a fruit and pecan horticulture specialist working out of Fayetteville. Before coming to Arkansas Extension, he worked for the USDA Pecan Research Station in Louisiana. A memorial service was held on Nov. 20, 2021, at Westover Hills Presbyterian Church in Little Rock.

Don't let cyber criminals steal your holiday joy

Diana Morian, extension's information technology director, warns that cyber criminals are constantly upping their game and offers a few tips on indicators that a shopping site might not be all it pretends to be:

CONTACT — Is there contact information listed on the site? Does the email address look more like a personal address instead of a corporate one?

STICK WITH WHAT YOU KNOW — Bookmark trusted sites.

REALISTIC FAKES — Does the website look right, but the domain name doesn't? Many scammers will use the names of legitimate outfits in combination with other words to create a sense of realism.

DUE DILIGENCE — If you're not sure about a retail site, try searching for that URL and see if you find comments about "fraud" or "scam," or "fake."

READ THE REVIEWS — For sites that have third-party sellers, be sure to read the reviews to help gauge whether the seller is trustworthy.