



Keeping you connected

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Wally Goddard: A Man with a Mission

At the age of 41, Wally Goddard pivoted careers and began writing and delivering content that would provide information to help families.

Goddard attended Brigham Young University in Utah, where he received a bachelor's degree in physics and mathematics, and a master's degree in education. After teaching high school math and science classes for a dozen years, he returned to graduate school to complete a Ph.D. in Family and Human Development from Utah State University.

His decision to further his education was largely influenced by his growing family and his desire to become the best father he could be by learning and applying the best knowledge available. So, at the age of 41, Goddard began his second career — as an extension specialist.

Goddard worked as a family and child development specialist at Auburn University for six years before assisting Stephen Covey in writing *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families*. During his 14 years with the University of Arkansas System Cooperative Extension Service, Goddard worked as a family life specialist. He spent time creating programs, traveling around the state, attending conferences, and training people.

"I really enjoyed working in Extension where I could take what I'd learned from great research and apply it to the practical problems that people face," he said.

Shortly before Goddard retired, he was diagnosed with cancer. After having an operation, he made a slow recovery and is now flourishing.

"I have found that little by little we lose our strengths and capacities, but even what remains is pretty amazing. I am thankful to be able to think and work, move, take walks with Nancy and play with grandkids. I'm grateful for so many things," he said.

Goddard has written several books including *Discoveries: Essential Truths for Relationships* and *God's Trophies*. He is

motivated to write books because of the satisfaction that comes from helping people. As a task-oriented person, Goddard enjoys being busy and feeling productive. He also believes that there is a need for the information he shares in his writing.



"People don't have the tools they need to do well in relationships, and yet the knowledge is there. It's just not getting to the people who need it. So, I love what I get to do," he said. "It's hard work to write a book, but when you finish one and it's useful to people, that's a pretty big payoff."

In addition to writing, Goddard has also produced the podcast, *Dr. Wally: A Fresh View on Gospel Living*. With the help of a graduate student, he has produced nearly a dozen podcast episodes and plans to record more episodes in the future.

Throughout retirement, Goddard has enjoyed traveling with his family to Australia, New Zealand, England, Hawaii, Scotland and Ireland. Many of these locations were significant areas of family history. Goddard was able to share many stories with his children and grandchildren and wrote a children's book, *Ruthie*, for his grandchildren to preserve their memories of family travels and family history.

"We're grateful for our amazing experience in Arkansas. And we're now loving life with our children and grandchildren and enjoying our many projects," he said.

Goddard and his wife live in Logan, Utah. As Goddard reflects on his travels and careers, he is thankful for his life's work and the great people with whom he has worked. ■

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Drones in agriculture research propels multistate award

Unmanned aircraft flying over farms, forests and plant nurseries are not such an unusual sight these days. A lot of research has gone into making the drones more economically beneficial in agriculture, from taking inventory at plant nurseries to spotting early signs of crop stress.

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture's research and extension arms were among the institutions recently recognized for drone research and outreach with the [National Excellence in Multistate Research Award](#) from the Experiment Station Section of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities' Commission on Food, Environment, and Renewable Resources.

The award recognizes experiment station scientists who are conducting "exemplary research and outreach efforts across multiple states" for unmanned aircraft system applications in U.S. agriculture and natural resources. Scientists from 23 institutions across the nation share the award for their contributions to the project titled, "Research and Extension for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Applications in U.S. Agriculture and Natural Resources."



Jim Robbins

Jim Robbins, a recently retired horticulture professor and extension specialist with the Division of Agriculture, was among the authors of agricultural drone research projects recognized in the award. He took part in studies that measured the accuracy and efficiency of drone-based systems for inventory in nurseries using RFID (radio

frequency identification), as well as using cloud-based artificial intelligence software like IBM Watson Visual Recognition to identify early indicators of water stress in row crops.

Randy Raper, administrative adviser for the multistate drone research program, said collaboration between researchers across the country has been key to adapting the new technology to agricultural uses. Raper also serves as assistant vice president of facilities for Oklahoma State University and assistant director of OSU Ag Research.

"One thing we saw with this committee is that we have people very versed in different areas," Raper said. "We have people who are astute in flying the UAVs and then

others who are interested in sensors, and others who apply the research. Every institution can't have experts in every area, so collaboration has been very important to shepherding this technology."

He compares the emerging technologies and applications of UAVs to the RTK-GPS tractor guidance systems that emerged in the early 2000s and have now become universally adopted. Satellite imagery was also being used to analyze crop production before UAV systems gave advantages to researchers, he said.

"Satellite images can be problematic because of cloud coverage, and what we are looking at is time sensitive," Raper said. "UAVs and UAS technology allow you to have more control. You can collect the data and make rapid decisions on how you want to treat it. This naturally fits into the management we recognize."

Numerous researchers working together have enabled the committee to get the technology to where it is today, Raper said. Annual meetings between researchers across the country allowed for the exchange of ideas and experiences using the UAVs to open potential for further applications. For example, he said researchers in the Northwest experimented with using UAVs for spot pesticide application in orchards. This inspired researchers from other parts of the country to explore related applications in other crops.

Gary Thompson, executive director of the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, noted that this southern region multistate project has direct impacts for agricultural producers.

"Landscape-level management decisions are increasingly reliant on obtaining accurate and reliable data that can be analyzed in real-time," Thompson said. "Remote sensing with drones provides a versatile means of getting high-resolution information to agricultural managers. I am excited about the work of this group of researchers and congratulate them on this well-deserved recognition." ■



Collaborative research across many states within the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities has helped adapt drone technology as an agricultural tool.

Practicing gratitude provides health and wellness benefits year-round



During the rush of the holiday season, it can be helpful to slow down and appreciate elements of everyday life that are often overlooked. Brittney Schrick, extension assistant professor and family life specialist, said practicing gratitude has numerous benefits for mental, emotional and physical health.

“Gratitude is the act of feeling thankful for what you have,” Schrick said. “It doesn’t have to be a big thing. It can literally just be that you woke up this morning or that you have food on your table. And practicing gratitude has a lot of benefits. Anything that you can do where you’re focused on feeling gratitude and being thankful for what you have has been proven to benefit your body and your brain.”

One can practice gratitude in many ways, including through journaling or keeping a daily gratitude list, because “gratitude is a practice, much like yoga or any other sort of exercise,” Schrick said.

“It can help you focus on positive things, especially on days when that’s not where your brain is trying to go,” she said. “If you’re having a struggle, forcing yourself to think of something good can completely turn your brain around and your day around.”

Establishing a daily gratitude practice can also be a helpful teaching tool for children, Schrick said. As part of an established routine – at bedtime, bath time, or around the dinner table – ask your child, “What was something

good that happened today?” or, “What is something you’re grateful for today?” This can help children learn to be grateful and practice positive thinking.

An important element of practicing gratitude is sharing it with others, through daily acts of appreciation – such as thanking one’s barista or grocery store clerk – or by giving back to the community. Passing along kindness and compassion helps people make connections with the world around them.

“It makes you leave your own anxieties and your own internal conflicts behind and move toward someone else,” Schrick said. “The connection that service and returning kindness can bring is missing from a lot of other types of interaction. Loneliness and social isolation are so universally negative for our brains and our bodies that that’s part of the benefit of practicing gratitude. It can strengthen or create new connections between people, even if they’re just brief.”

This holiday season, consider including acts of service as part of the festivities. Schrick said she suggested calling local community organizations – such as food pantries or soup kitchens – to see when they need volunteers, as many organizations have an excess of volunteers during the weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas.

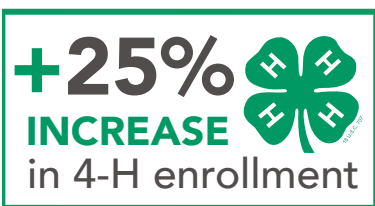
“It can also be great to visit people who might be alone for the holidays, but if you plan on going to a nursing home, call ahead, as they might have specific people whom they would love for you to come see, which they can arrange ahead of time,” Schrick said. “Reach out to local organizations that might already do this sort of thing instead of trying to come up with your own plan.” ■

Message from the director

This year I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know all the extension retirees who I had not previously met by attending the regional retiree luncheons. I commend Brian Helms and those who helped him put these events together. Frankly, these meetings felt more like family reunions at times than business meetings, and I guess in more than just a small way, they are. I say it a lot, but not many organizations can boast the kind of support that our retirees give back to their former employers. I have asked retirees to speak at events, speak to new recruits, give to scholarship funds, serve on advisory boards and to serve on search

committees. I am proud to say they do not turn down such requests very often.

In the coming year, we may call on you again for support as we go through the state budgeting process, learn to work with a new governor, as well as introduce Extension to one of the largest groups of new county judges we have seen in a while. All your connections out there in the communities where you live can help us by simply talking about all the positive impacts that Extension has on a regular basis throughout the state and in your counties. One great talking point that we are excited and relieved about is a return in numbers



January Birthdays

Kelly Gage - Jan. 1
Betty Harrison - Jan. 3
Doris Thomas - Jan. 5
Earlene Brecheen - Jan. 6
John Turner - Jan. 6
Alva Siler - Jan. 8
Mona Norris - Jan. 8
Keith Martin - Jan. 9
Terrie Treadway - Jan. 9

Steve Culp - Jan. 11
VeEtta Simmons - Jan. 12
Beth Phelps - Jan. 12
Ricky Thompson - Jan. 14
Kimberly Wiedower - Jan. 14
Bobby Malone - Jan. 17
Shirley Bennett - Jan. 17
Robert Seay - Jan. 17
Shirley Cleek - Jan. 18

Martha Sartor - Jan. 18
Doug Petty - Jan. 19
Jerry Williams - Jan. 20
Becky Bridges - Jan. 21
Cora Nash - Jan. 22
Ramona Gordon - Jan. 23
Donna Rinke - Jan. 23
Laura LaRue - Jan. 24
Nina Coffee - Jan. 25

Jacquelyn McCray - Jan. 26
Allen Davis - Jan. 26
LaVetta Perkins - Jan. 27
Shirlye Hopkins - Jan. 28
Margy Cannon - Jan. 28
Gary Huitink - Jan. 29
Rebekah Beene - Jan. 29

Extension's Ford receives Lifetime Achievement Award for forestry contributions



Victor L. Ford, associate vice president for agriculture and natural resources for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ouachita Society of American Foresters for his 40-year career in forestry.

The award, presented Nov. 10 at the society's banquet in Oklahoma, honors a person who has made considerable contributions to the forestry industry and to the Ouachita Society of American Foresters. The Ouachita Society of American Foresters includes foresters from Arkansas and Oklahoma and is part of the Society of American Foresters, the professional organization for foresters.

"It has been a labor of love over the past 40 years to give back to my profession," Ford said. "I came to Arkansas and attended meetings with foresters who managed the virgin pine forests. These pioneers gave me a sense of history and along with others in my career were treasured mentors. I hope that I can give that sense of

our place in history to the next generation of foresters."

Ford has been a member of the society since 1982. He was named Forestry Educator of the Year for the Ouachita Society of American Foresters in 2013 and named Fellow of the Society of American Foresters in 2014.

He has held numerous positions within the organization, serving as secretary, vice chair and chair of the Silviculture Working Group. He served on the Ethics Committee, which he chaired for two years, and he co-chaired the Certification Review Board, which oversees professional credentialing. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Society of American Foresters and is the first Arkansan to serve in this capacity.

Ford's career has always involved forestry — 20 years in private industry and another 20 with the Cooperative Extension Service. Before becoming associate vice president for agriculture and natural resources in the Division of Agriculture, Ford worked five years as an extension forester at the Southwest Research and Extension Center in Hope and later served as director of the center for eight years. ■

Message from the director, cont.

to our active 4-H enrollment list. We are up over 25% since the pandemic hit and hope to see that number continue to rise over the next two years.

This past year we hired more than 75 new full-time Extension employees, and we have more positions to fill! We hired more than 100 temporary workers — 11 of whom were part of our new internship program — so in the coming year we know that we have a lot of training to do. We look forward to expanding our in-

tern program this coming year and already have about twice the number of applicants as last year. Exciting changes are in store in the coming year. You are all invaluable sources of information for our new folks, and I hope that you all continue to remain active in the Extension retiree program.

I want to wish you all a Merry Christmas, or Happy Holidays, and a very prosperous, productive, and happy new year as well. See you in 2023! ■