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Scott recognized for distinguished service to rice research, education

A national body of rice researchers has awarded the Distinguished Service Award to Bob Scott, senior associate vice president – extension for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

In his nominating letter, Jeff Edwards, department chair for Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences, said Scott “has been a strong supporter of the rice industry throughout his career and is highly deserving of this honor.”

Scott has been with the Division of Agriculture for more than two decades. After completing his Ph.D. in weed science at Mississippi State University in 1997 and working in the private sector for five years, Scott worked as an extension weed specialist for the Division of Agriculture from 2002-2018, the final five years of which he also served as director of both the Lonoke Extension Center and the Newport Extension Center. From 2018-2020, Scott served as director of the Rice Research and Extension Center in Stuttgart. In 2020, he was named senior associate vice president for agriculture – extension.

Scott received the award during the opening hours of the Rice Technical Working Group’s first meeting in three years — and its first meeting in Arkansas, the nation’s No. 1 rice-producing state — in more than a decade. The meeting brought together more than 300 researchers and rice



Dr. Bob Scott was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the Rice Technical Working Group during the group's biannual conference.

industry professionals from several states and countries. According to its website, the group meets every other year to share research, plan, exchange information and more.

Scott said the award was unexpected, but welcome.

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Join Us!

Don't miss a chance to see some of your favorite familiar faces at the largest annual gathering of CES retirees! The **Cooperative Extension Retiree Luncheon** is March 30, 2023 at the Benton Event Center.

10AM - Registration & Visiting **11AM** - Program & Scholarship Presentation **12PM** - Lunch & Visiting

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Delay pruning woody ornamental plants damaged by winter temperatures

Woody ornamental plants that suffered damage from this winter's single-digit temperatures and wind chills shouldn't be pruned until spring growth begins, said Randy Forst, extension consumer horticulture educator.

"February is the month that we usually prune our woody ornamentals," Forst said. "This year we will have to make an exception to that rule. Usually, woody ornamentals have time to gradually acclimate to winter temperatures, but that did not happen this past winter."

Woody ornamental plants include gardenias, camellias, shade-loving hydrangeas, and witch hazel family members, the loropetalums and distyliums. Forst said the sapwood, or the young wood of the plant, and the cambium, the layer of the plant that produces new bark, suffered the most damage from the winter temperatures.

Symptoms of winter damage injury can appear as tip and branch dieback – or the progressive death of twigs or branches, starting at the tips – bark splitting, sun-scalding, leaf browning or defoliation.

"Winter damage can also be attributed to secondary issues, such as the branches leafing out normally and then suddenly dying for no obvious reason," Forst said. "After the damaged plants break dormancy in the spring, you will have a better understanding of what needs to be pruned and how low to go."

Read more tips [here](#). ■



Many woody ornamental plants in Arkansas — such as the gardenia pictured — suffered damage that may be difficult to spot until new growth begins in the spring. Gardeners should wait to prune these plants until damage is more evident.

Message from the director



Plans are complete for our retiree luncheon on March 30 at the Benton Event Center (same spot as last year). I am excited about the opportunity to attend my second one of these and see old friends and many new retirees. As most of you know, we are flying without a net this year, as our Director

of Stakeholder Relations position has yet to be filled. A lot of responsibilities have been delegated. Our new Executive Assistant for the Development Office is Khaliah Coleman, and she has hit the ground running and is doing a great job covering many of those responsibilities. We have a great program in store — we will have some fun, learn a little and visit a lot. I look forward to seeing many of you there. As a result of your generosity, we will also announce four scholarships for current employees at the luncheon. I am proud to be a part of an organization whose retirees think enough about their former profession to invest in it in this way. Thank you all for supporting our current employees.

Spring is a very busy time at the Cooperative Extension Service, as most of you know! With COVID seemingly

a distant memory, we find ourselves back in full swing with in-person meetings. I know that many of you are looking forward to Master Gardener activities, Extension Homemakers, and other activities getting going for the year. I am very happy to say that our 4-H numbers are almost back to pre-pandemic numbers, and we are excited to be "Back in Business!" Hope to see some of you out there taking advantage of all the programs Extension has to offer in your county.

It is my pleasure to announce that Dr. Debbie Nistler will be joining my administrative team as our new Assistant Vice President - 4-H and Youth Development. Debbie is coming to us with more than 25 years of experience working in 4-H. She will join our staff on May 1, and we will try and get an opportunity for you all to meet her at some upcoming events, I am sure. This position will focus solely on 4-H programs and activities and will no longer be a combined position with Family & Consumer Sciences. A search for an Assistant VP for FCS will begin very soon.

Again, thank you all for your continued support of Arkansas Extension, see you at the luncheon! ■

Vaught inducted into the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame



Carla Vaught (far right) accepts J.D. Vaught's award on his behalf.

Jessie "J.D." Vaught of Horatio, Arkansas, a pioneer in contract livestock production in the state, was thrilled to learn a few months ago that he would be inducted into the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame. He passed away in late 2022, but not without knowing that he and his life's work would be celebrated.

On March 3, he was posthumously inducted into the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame during a ceremony at the Little Rock Convention Center. His daughter Carla Vaught, a longtime extension agent with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, accepted the award on his behalf.

"He was an agricultural risk taker, as all the good ones are," Carla Vaught said of her father.

The Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame began in 1987 to promote awareness of agriculture's role in the state's culture and economy and honor those who helped local communities and the state prosper. This year's five inductees increase the organization's number of honorees to 181.

To learn more about J.D. Vaught and this year's other inductees, [read the full article here](#). ■

Arkansas 4-H members visit Capitol to see government in action

Arkansas lawmakers were seeing green Tuesday, Feb. 28 when Arkansas 4-H members showed up en masse at the Capitol for a day of learning about the state government and meeting their legislators.

Nearly 500 Arkansas 4-H members, agents, leaders and volunteers from 52 of the state's 75 counties participated. There was widespread applause after the reading of resolutions in the House and Senate, recognizing the positive impact of the Arkansas 4-H program on youth and proclaiming Feb. 28 as 4-H Day.

The gathering is usually held every other year, when the Legislature is in session. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the 2021 event was canceled.

"This is the first time in four years that we've been able to bring 4-Hers to the Capitol, and we're excited our youth have this opportunity to meet with their legislators and learn more about state government," Bob Scott, director of the Cooperative Extension Service, said.

On Tuesday, 4-H members learned about the role of the state's constitutional officers and heard from many of them, including Lt. Gov. Leslie Rutledge, Attorney General Tim Griffin, Treasurer Mark Lowery, Secretary of State John Thurston and Commissioner of State Lands Tommy Land.



Hundreds of 4-H members from more than 50 counties across Arkansas visited the Arkansas Capitol Building in Little Rock.

Throughout the day, the youth attended sessions in the House, Senate and Arkansas Supreme Court, where they saw government in action. They also visited the Treasurer's Office, where they posed for pictures while holding \$600,000 in cash inside the vault.

Read more [here](#). ■

April Birthdays

Yvonne B. Mizell - April 1

Linda L. King - April 1

Annette Coor - April 1

Saundra Blocker - April 1

Kenneth R. Williams - April 2

Nancy Winterbauer Olofson - April 3

Susan Sanders - April 4

Janice Wadkins - April 5

Easter H. Tucker - April 5

Ione B. Daniel - April 6

Ann E. Gray - April 8

Stan L. Chapman - April 9

Louise S. Walker - April 10

John R. Payne - April 11

Melvin L. Daniel - April 12

Rich Maples - April 12

Diane Clement - April 16

Mary Ruth Miner Fallin - April 17

Rebecca L. Reynolds - April 19

Janet Carson - April 19

Tommie J. Wyatt - April 22

Phil Tacker Jr. - April 22

Claude M. Bonner - April 25

Mary Poling - April 26

Diane F. Jones - April 29

Janis Reginelli - April 29

Joyce Mendenhall passes

Joyce Mendenhall, 75 of Fayetteville passed away February 25, 2023. She retired from the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service in 2021. Joyce was proud to be a Lifetime Master Gardener. She served that organization as president and received the titles of Washington County and Arkansas State Master Gardener of the Year. A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, April 22, at 1 p.m. at the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, Fayetteville.

James Hood passes

James (Jim) J. Hood, Jr., age 85, passed away on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 in Bryant, Arkansas. He worked as a county agent for Howard County and was awarded the National Outstanding Service Award for County Agents in 1986. He retired in 1994 after 31 years of service. He was a longtime supporter of the local 4-H club and the agricultural community.

MAKE A DONATION TO THIS YEAR'S SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

Invest in the future of Extension's greatest assets: its employees.

Honorary or memorial donations should be forwarded to the Development Office, ATTN: Khaliah Coleman, 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.

Distinguished award, cont.

"I was surprised and honored by this award," Scott said. "I have been away from RTWG for a couple of years and it was good to see everyone again and receive this honor. When it comes down to it, rice is really a specialty crop, due to its limited acres compared to other crops in the United States, so rice research and extension is a small world. It's always nice to be honored by your peers."

Jarrold Hardke, extension rice agronomist for the Division of Agriculture, presented Scott with the award Tuesday morning. Hardke, who serves as secretary for the Rice Technical Working Group, said he and Scott have worked together since 2012, when Hardke first began work at the Division of Agriculture.

Scott later led the search committee which ultimately hired Hardke for the position of extension rice agronomist.

According to the Rice Technical Working Group's website, the Distinguished Service Award may be presented to "individuals who have given distinguished long-term service to the rice industry in areas of research, education, international agriculture, administration, and industry rice technology."

"Bob has worked in the field, in research, and worked in industry with BASF," Hardke said. "He checks all the boxes." ■