



Keeping you connected

extension cord

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U of A
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Mitch Crow: Falling in Love with Extension

Mitch Crow started working with Extension in 1985 in Monroe County as a county extension agent for agriculture. The Missouri native was not all that familiar with Extension before graduating from Arkansas State University with his bachelor's and master's degrees. It was not until a connection reached out to him about a job opening that he thought about working for Extension.

"Rebecca Mulhollen told me about an opening, so I applied," Crow said. "I interviewed and Wallace Cummings hired me to be the row crop agent there."

This was close to Crow's roots.

"I grew up on a cotton farm, and I got to work with cotton farmers a lot," Crow said. "That's always been my favorite crop to be around."

While he was familiar with cotton, that was not the case for other row crops.

"There was cotton and rice in Monroe County back then, and I had never been around rice at that point," Crow said. "I got my feet wet at that time in my career."

Another opportunity came along in 2001.

"I got the opportunity to apply for the staff chair position for St. Francis County, and I got the job," Crow said. "I worked there until 2015."

Crow said his favorite part about Extension was getting to do a little bit of everything.

"Everyday is different," Crow said. "I got to work in row crops, but I also dealt with 4-H at times. I learned a lot about horticulture and really enjoyed that."

Crow was passionate about helping homeowners with their gardens, and that carried over into his personal life after retirement.

"I've got blueberries, blackberries and a fig tree," Crow said. "My goal is to have some plants that I can grow to get some things to eat."

He is a Master Gardener, and he meets once a month with the local group.

"We have several projects throughout the city – at the courthouse, library, post office and the chamber of commerce," Crow said. "I am primarily in charge of the one at the courthouse, and I am the designated chemical sprayer to take care of some of the weeds in our projects."

He's also been active with a church group that travels. In 2016 the small group took a cross-country trip to Alaska with various stops along the way.

"We rented a van and drove from Donovan, Missouri, to Seattle, Washington, and we stopped to see a lot of the national parks along the way," Crow said. "Then we got on a cruise in Seattle to Alaska. During that cruise, we stopped in various cities in Alaska and Canada."

Their trip included some exploring on the way back to Missouri.



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"We went to Mount St. Helen in Washington and down to the Redwood National Forest," Crow said. "We also stopped in Death Valley, Las Vegas and at the Grand Canyon. Our last stop was Amarillo to go to the Big Texan Steakhouse."

Crow's 30-year Extension career was not necessarily planned, but he ended up loving every second of it.

"At the time, I didn't really know what I was getting myself into, but I grew to love the job the longer I worked at Extension," Crow said. "It kind of grows on you in a way. That's what I always wanted to do, but I never realized it when I was just starting out." 

Cooperative Extension Service breaks ground on new Jackson County center

Construction of the long-awaited Jackson County Extension Center is finally beginning.

Officials with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service and Jackson County broke ground Oct. 28 at the site just southeast of Newport where the 4,800-square-foot center will be built. Construction is expected to be complete by late summer or fall 2022. Tom Barber, who has worked with Extension since 2007 as a weed scientist in Crop, Soil and Environmental Science, has served as the center's director since 2018.

"This project has been a long time in the making," said Dr. Bob Scott, director of the Cooperative Extension Service. "It's a big deal for us to have this center in Jackson County, and it's an important project for Jackson County."

Once complete, the center will provide office space for Jackson County extension staff including agents who work in agriculture, family and consumer sciences and 4-H. The center will also have a multiuse room that can accommodate groups of about 60 people.

Planning for the center has been underway for some time but was significantly delayed during the pandemic.

"We have a 245-day plan that allows us a little room should we have supply chain issues," said Graham Peterson, extension's director of facilities management. "That's a real issue that everyone is having right now."

About 60 people attended the groundbreaking, including University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture personnel, state Rep. Dwight Tosh, Jackson County Judge Jeff Phillips, Jackson County Quorum Court member Tommy Young, Newport Mayor David Stewart and Amagon Mayor Daniel Riley.


The new building, being built at 649 Jackson Road 917, just off U.S. 67/167 near Newport, will be adjacent to the exist-



From left: Ken Amburgy, SCM architects; Newport Mayor David Stewart; Randy Chlapecka, retired Extension staff chair; Bob Scott, director of Cooperative Extension Service; Jackson County Quorum Court member Tommy Young; Tom Barber, Jackson County Extension Center director; Matthew Davis, Jackson County extension agent-agriculture; Dr. Vic Ford, associate vice president for agriculture and natural resources, UADA; Jackson County Judge Jeff Phillips and State Rep. Dwight Tosh.

ing building, which will remain in use. The site has been referred to it as simply the "Newport center" based on its location but has been officially renamed the Jackson County Extension Center to more accurately reflect its mission to serve residents countywide.

SCM Architects designed the \$1.4 million center, which is a pre-engineered metal building that will have a façade of local stone. Site work will begin soon.

"This is exciting news for us because the work that will be done here is important for our farmers," County Judge Jeff Phillips said. "We're blessed to have it here." 

New National 4-H Hall of Fame inductees: Darlene Millard and Mike Klumpp

Extension retirees Darlene Millard and Mike Klumpp were recently inducted into the National 4-H Hall of Fame for their lifetime achievements and contributions to 4-H.


Millard, of Bryant, a member of the 2019 class, and Klumpp, of Oklahoma, a member of the 2020 class, were inducted in October during ceremonies in Washington, DC. Both classes were recognized at recent in-person ceremonies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The National 4-H Hall of Fame recognizes and celebrates people who have made a significant impact on 4-H and its millions of members.

Millard has been involved with 4-H for more than 60 years, including 13 years as a 4-H member, one year as a 4-H program assistant, five years as county extension agent, 19 years as a 4-H specialist, and seven years as the assistant director for 4-H youth development.

She established the Arkansas 4-H Governor's Award, the highest award an Arkansas 4-H member can receive. The first Arkansas 4-H Governors' Award was presented to the finalist by Governor Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham-Clinton in 1983. Millard currently serves as vice president of the Arkansas 4-H Foundation and serves on the Arkansas 4-H Alumni Association Board.

Klumpp also serves on the Arkansas 4-H Foundation. He began his 34-year extension career in 1976 in Oklahoma as a 4-H extension agent. In 1985, he joined the University of Arkansas 4-H faculty as the first educational program director for the C. A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center, where he developed several educational programs. In 1990, he moved to Oklahoma to work as a state 4-H specialist but returned in 1993 to the Arkansas 4-H Center where he was engaged in outdoor education, leadership and camping. One of his passions has been All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) safety, and he managed the national 4-H ATV Safety Program.

Klumpp has served as president of both Arkansas and Oklahoma 4-H agent associations. After retiring in 2011, he and his family moved to Edmond, Oklahoma, where he continues to volunteer with 4-H and other organizations in both Arkansas and Oklahoma. 



Message from the director


I was very pleased to attend and be a part of our "Check in and Tune Up" for new employees at the C.A. Vines 4-H Center this month. It was in-person with no Zoom option! We welcomed more than 50 new employees to the Division. Some of these folks had never met their co-workers in person. It was a good event. I hate to single folks out because events like these are a genuine group effort, but many thanks to Diane Mashburn and our Community, Professional and Economic Development department.

Zoom and other forms of communication have been critical to us during the pandemic, but for me, Extension has always been a second family. I think bonds get built with free discussion in the hallways, at lunch and during breaks at conferences like this, and that is what is difficult to recreate online. I'm so pleased these new folks had a chance to build relationships in-person.

We also held our Support Staff Conference, which was a hybrid in-person and Zoom event. This is one group that I can tell you all of administration was happy to get involved in and conduct our update portion of the program. We recognize that this group really keeps the trains running on time, and we could not function without them. I was unable to attend the entire conference, but I heard it all went very well. We even had some retiree participation as we asked former

chief operating officer Sam Boyster to host a fun game show called "Division Family Feud." This year's conference boasted the highest attendance on record for this event! Big shout out to Dr. Karen Ballard, the planning committee and everyone involved. During this conference, Dr. Ballard announced she will retire in early 2022, so we will soon get to welcome her into Extension retirees.

Finally, I want to mention that we have broken ground on a new Jackson County Extension Center — only our second "Extension Center" in the state. For those of you not familiar with this facility, it is home to the Jackson County Extension Service and is located just off highways 67 and 14 near Newport. The site includes an older shop and office building and about 500 acres of farmland used by extension and research agriculture faculty. The new building is much needed and will provide meeting space for Jackson and surrounding counties. The other extension center is near Lonoke and is made up of shops, offices, and greenhouses, but no farmland. The Lonoke County Extension office is part of that center as well.

I am looking forward to the holiday season and time with family as I hope you are. Have a good month! 



December Birthdays

Becky Mulhollen - Dec. 1	Shirley Lewis - Dec. 11	Cindy Gayle Golden - Dec. 19	Liz McKay - Dec. 26
Dena Malone - Dec. 2	Jerry Foley - Dec. 11	Maureen Rose - Dec. 21	Sandra Smith - Dec. 27
Paul Martin - Dec. 3	Claude Clement Jr. - Dec. 12	Suzanne Hirrel - Dec. 21	Judy Bloesch - Dec. 27
Linda Thompson - Dec. 6	Ann Behnke - Dec. 12	Gayla Ann Taylor - Dec. 22	Jeff Welch - Dec. 28
Barbara King - Dec. 8	Millie Henson - Dec. 13	Audrey Hairston - Dec. 24	Denise Roulhac - Dec. 28
Toy Siler - Dec. 8	Jerry Markham - Dec. 14	Avonne Petty - Dec. 24	Betty Jean Brannan - Dec. 29
Albert Squires - Dec. 9	Dick Kluender - Dec. 14	Cheryl Maxwell - Dec. 24	Tom Leslie - Dec. 29
Richard DeSpain - Dec. 9	Donna Graham - Dec. 14	Merle Gross - Dec. 24	Judy Robison - Dec. 29
Susan Watkins - Dec. 9	Brenda J. Yusko - Dec. 18	Bobby Coats Jr. - Dec. 24	Saundria Ash - Dec. 29
Margaret Alexander - Dec. 10	Beverly Sims - Dec. 18	Dennis R. Gardisser - Dec. 24	Anna Landrum - Dec. 31
Darlene Horne - Dec. 10	Mary G. Askew - Dec. 19	Margaret Goodson - Dec. 26	
Joyce Bowlin - Dec. 10	Mark Peterson - Dec. 19	Mitch Crow - Dec. 26	

Scholarship donations

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

Beverly Hines

Calvin Jones

In honor of Diane Jones

Darlene Millard

In memory of JoAnn Bowling

Lott Rolf III

In memory of Harvey Gordon

Frank Plafcan

In memory of Harvey Gordon, Dennis Millard and Larry Pitman

Portia Short

In memory of Sue Keathley

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.

Staying safe this holiday season

Dr. Bryan Mader, health specialist and assistant professor, shares the latest COVID safety guidelines for holiday gatherings:

- First and foremost, the best way to protect everyone at holiday gatherings is to ensure that **everyone is vaccinated**. Everyone aged 5 and older is now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine and many adults are now eligible for COVID-19 boosters.
- If you are not vaccinated, or if you will be around persons who are not vaccinated, wear a mask in indoor settings. Outdoors is safer than indoors.
- If you are sick or have symptoms, **don't host or attend** a gathering.



2022 Master Gardener calendars now available



The 2022 Arkansas Master Gardener Calendars are now available to order [by following this link](#). The calendar includes photographs submitted by Master Gardeners from across the State.

Pick up is in Little Rock. Calendar orders will not be mailed. Individual/small orders are available at the front reception desk at the Little Rock State Extension Office. The office is open Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.