



Keeping you connected

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U of A
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

No. 4

Vines Center takes home five Best of Biz awards

With 228 acres of meadow and forestland, a six-acre lake, a pool and ropes course, the Vines Center isn't your typical workplace. Even so, voters in the 2018 Arkansas Business best of Biz Awards named it as the Best Place for a Business Conference/Meeting, as well as four other first place honors.

The center also was awarded Best Team Building Center, Best Place for a Company Retreat, Best Place for a Special Event and Best Place for an Employee Outing.

The Vines Center has won Best Team Building Center nine times, but this is the first time it has won in the other four categories.

J.J. Pitman, director of the center, said it was a goal of his to get the center to place in other categories.

(See Best of Biz, page 4)



Participants from several businesses and organizations take part in the ExCEL Corporate Challenge at the 4-H Vines Center in Little Rock. The event included a series of team-building exercises.

Extension Retiree Scholarships awarded for 2019

Extension retiree scholarships of \$500 each were presented to Jodi Blackard, administrative coordinator for the Lonoke entomology group, and JoAnn Vann, Family and Consumer Science agent in Clark County, at the 2019 Retiree Luncheon on April 10 at the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center. Brian Helms, Extension director - stakeholder relations, and Stan Chapman, *Extension Cord* editorial board member, made the presentation.

Jodi Blackard is the departmental office manager for seven faculty members and 25 non-faculty employees including time and travel management, generating reports and purchasing for personnel in Lonoke, Fayetteville, Little Rock and Keiser. One of Jodi's colleagues made this comment about her:

"Jodi embodies the idea of 'the betterment of the employee and Extension.' Jodi truly cares about our mission to improve the lives of Arkansans."

Another colleague said, "Jodi is one of the most dedicated individuals I have ever had the pleasure of working with. She always makes sure that no matter what the job is, it gets done quickly and correctly."

(See Retiree Scholarships, page 4)



Jodi Blackard receives scholarship award from Stan Chapman.

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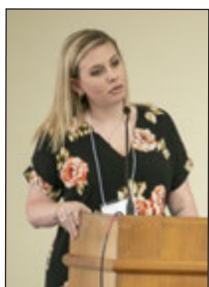
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2019 Retiree Reception and Luncheon held at 4-H Center



Rachael Price

Approximately 100 Extension retirees and guests were on hand Wednesday, April 10, at the C. A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center in Ferndale for the 2019 Retiree Luncheon and scholarship presentation.

The meeting began at 10:30 with a time for retirees, spouses and current Extension staff and faculty to reconnect with old friends and make new ones. The program for the luncheon included a remembrance of retirees who passed away in 2018, the presentation of two retiree scholarships, speakers and a door prize drawing.

Leslie Carter from UMR outlined health plan updates. Rachael Price, FCS program technician, talked about a new emphasis on statewide projects in the Extension Homemakers program following a strategic planning process carried out over the past year. Extension Homemakers has been in business for over 100 years helping to improve the lives of Arkansans and currently numbers 3,679 members in 320 clubs.

Matt Brown, assistant director of operations, spoke about the Workday record keeping system to be adopted by all University of Arkansas System campuses in the next few years. The goal is to get all branches of the UA System, including research stations, on the same page for finances, recruiting, human resources and other functions.

Dr. Vic Ford spoke about FieldWatch, a not-for-profit company that hosts registries that map locations of pesticide-sensitive crops and bee hives. The effort is meant to help farmers prevent damage to their neighbors. A partnership between FieldWatch and the Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service will also enable Arkansas producers to have access to two other FieldWatch products, Driftwatch™ and BeeCheck™.

Dr. Rick Cartwright expressed appreciation to retirees for the challenges they had endured in the past that helped make Extension what it is today in the 21st century. He said that much of Extension's success and improvement was due to the land-grant system and everyday lifting by Extension employees.

He stated that technology will radically change how we do business in the future, and that we should embrace good technology to do an even better job to foster a better life for our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. (e)



Iris Phifer



Velma and Mark Bryles



Mona Norris and Irene Carlock



Carla Vaught and Nita Cooper



Tom Troxel and Mike Klumpp



Brenda and Bruce Vick and Tom Riley

New retirees

These Extension employees have joined the ranks of retirees:

Saundra Blocker – Lee County

Saundra served as the administrative specialist III in Lee County. She began working for Extension in November of 1977 and she had 41 years of service.

Kathy Rawlingson – Boone County

Kathy served as the administrative specialist III in Boone County. She began working for Extension in March of 1989 and she had 30 years of service.

Jeri Vangilder – Pope County

Jeri began her career with Extension in March of 1977 in Jackson County, serving as a county extension agent - home economics. Her last appointment was county extension agent - family and consumer science in Pope County. Jeri had 42 years of service to Extension. (e)

Scholarship Donations

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

■ Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship

In Memory of Kay Dickens

Dorothy Hall

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

Dennis Holzhauser dies

Dennis Dewayne Holzhauser died March 31, 2019, in Little Rock.

Holzhauser was a computer programmer for Extension for 32 years, from 1982 until his retirement in 2014.

He grew up in Pennsylvania and received his B.A. from California University in California, Pennsylvania. He moved to Little Rock to attend the World Services for the Blind, where he met his wife Diana.

He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Diana Alexander Holzhauser and a brother, Gerald Holzhauser of New Castle, Pennsylvania.

Memorial donations may be made to The AETN Foundation, 350 South Donaghey Avenue, Conway, Arkansas 72034; Arkansas Chamber Singers, P.O. Box 21002, Little Rock, Arkansas 72221; or Friends of KLRE/KUAR, 5820 Asher Avenue, Suite 400, Little Rock, Arkansas 72204. (e)

To our Extension retirees

April is here along with the pollen storms; my sinuses are not happy.

However, I was happy last week at the Annual Retiree Conference at the 4-H Center. It was a good day, being able to visit with many of my heroes in Extension, and I only wished that more of our retirees could have attended. But, it was a large group and lots of “networking” was accomplished. Many thanks to Brian Helms, Amy Hedges, Jenifer Forrest and others for organizing this event.

I hope all of you appreciate the current state and management of the 4-H Center. It is one of the best in the nation, and continues its award-winning tradition with recent Best of Biz honors by *Arkansas Business*. This does not happen by accident but through the hard work of our staff and management, including the new managing director, the legendary Dr. Sara Brown. Just wait.

We greatly appreciate the retiree scholarships designed to help employees continue their “lifelong learning” and development. Stuff we all say we believe, but you all put your money where the mouth is, and nobody will appreciate this more than Jodi Blackard and JoAnn Vann – two great extension colleagues that exemplify the hard work and professional excellence of our retirees’ legacy. And we greatly appreciate all of the donations made by retirees for our scholarships about every day. THANKS.

We are saddened by the passing of Dennis Holzhauser and Dr. Irene Lee recently. We extend our condolences to their respective families.

Please have a safe and fantastic April and hold your loved ones close.

– Rick Cartwright (e)



Irene Lee dies

The Editorial Board has learned of the death of Dr. Irene K. Lee, 80, of Pine Bluff, who died Jan. 9, 2019.

Dr. Lee began her Extension career in late 1971 as a home management specialist stationed at Arkansas AM&N College (later UAPB) and retired as family and child development specialist, 1890 Program, in 2008 after 36 years of service.

Dr. Lee is survived by two sisters, Pearl Lake Johnson and Eller “Littlebit” Johnson; her daughter, Margaret Irene Lee; and three grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Jan. 19, 2019, at Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church with interment in Lott Burgy Cemetery in El Dorado. (e)


Best of Biz, cont.

“It feels great to finally be recognized outside of our normal circle,” Pitman said. The center, which will be celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2020, was built as a place for the Arkansas 4-H program to hold its activities. While other youth centers have more rustic accommodations, the Vines Center has motel-style accommodations and a state-of-the-art auditorium and on-site catering to host conferences and retreats.

Pitman said that the scenery and the amenities offered at the Vines Center helps them stand out in the competition.

“Our setting is gorgeous in the foothills of the Ouachita mountains, and we are just 10 miles west of Little Rock,” Pitman said. “You feel far out, but it’s still convenient.”

The annual Best of Biz competition recognizes top-notch facilities that have proven able to best meet the unique needs of businesses and business leaders in the state.

Finalists in the Best of Biz competition are chosen by a poll of thousands of Arkansas business professionals. Other businesses competing for these titles included Embassy Suites by Hilton, Little Rock Marriott, Cross Rhodes Consulting, VIP2, Mount Magazine State Park and the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute. 

May Birthdays

Dr. Paul E. Cooper, May 2	Ms. Teresa H. Booth, May 21
Mrs. Shirley Shelton West, May 5	Ms. Vicki June Brakefield, May 21
Mrs. Kim Hughes, May 7	Ms. Charlotte Freeman, May 22
Ms. Clarice Griffith, May 10	Mrs. Kathryn P. McElderry, May 23
Mr. Earl W. Wilson, May 10	Dr. Donald Ray Johnson, May 24
Mr. Kristopher Paul Rutherford, May 11	Ms. Faye Suitt, May 26
Ms. Carol Massey, May 12	Mr. James R. Peachey, May 28
Mr. Robert H. Rhodes, May 12	Mrs. Wanda Lou Barker, May 28
Mr. Clyde Stuart Jr., May 17	Mr. Larry Wayne Smith, May 29
Mrs. Dianna Gayle Cox, May 17	Mr. Donald Adams, May 30
Mr. Harold B. Williams, May 18	Mr. Donald Adren Slate, May 30
Ms. Deborah Ann Dority, May 18	Dr. Darlene Zeh Millard, May 31
Mr. William L. Russell Jr., May 19	

Retiree scholarships, cont.


She is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in business administration from the University of Arkansas System eVersity.

JoAnn Vann is pursuing a Master of Science degree in Agriculture and Extension Education at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

One of her co-workers said:

“She is one of the most dedicated FCS agents that I have had the opportunity to work with during my Extension career. She conducts a variety of educational programs and has strong working relationships with individuals throughout the county. She does an outstanding job presenting to clientele in small and large settings and reaches people of all ages.”

The Extension retiree scholarship supports professional development opportunities for Extension faculty and staff. It is funded by generous donations to the retiree scholarship fund from retirees, Extension faculty and staff, and friends and family members of retirees. Because of them, 20 scholarships have been awarded to Extension employees since 2009, for a total of \$10,000.

The editorial board would like to thank all those who have contributed to the retiree scholarship fund for making these scholarships possible. 



JoAnn Vann receives scholarship award from Stan Chapman.

Yes, I will subscribe to the *Extension Cord*.

	Cost	Amount Enclosed
<i>Extension Cord</i>	\$18.00	_____

Please make check payable to **UA CES** and mail to Martha Thorpe, Communications Department, 2301 South University Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72204-4940.

NOTE: Please do not combine payment for an Extension Cord subscription and a scholarship donation in one check. Payment for the **Extension Cord** should be made to **UA CES**. Payment for **scholarship donations** should be made to the **UA FOUNDATION**. If you include payment for an Extension Cord subscription in a check made payable to the UA Foundation, the entire amount will go to the UA Foundation.

Yes, I want to support the fundraising initiative in support of the Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship.

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____. My gift is in honor / in memory of _____.

Name/Address for notification of honorary and memorial gifts:

Please make check payable to the **UA Foundation** and mail to Brian Helms, Development Office, 2301 South University Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72204-4940.