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Retiree Spotlight

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DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Family, Farm and Community Keep Tom Riley Busy

While working for Extension, Tom Riley traveled to Japan and Thailand through Winrock International. While there, he was able to experience Kobe beef and was surprised at how good it tasted. He had grown up on a livestock farm and knew quality beef.

Years later, Riley still remembered that taste and began breeding with a Wagyu strain. He started out producing beef just to feed his extended family.

When he married Judy, a former Extension employee as well, 16 years ago, she brought two children to the marriage and Riley, a widower, already had two. (Riley says: "They're not her kids and my kids. They're our kids.")

After a while, friends and family started asking about the good-tasting beef and the Rileys started adding processing orders for them. Eventually, they had a big enough customer base to turn it into a business. He now sells about 18 steers a year.

Of course, Riley already had a job working at Extension. His first Extension job was in Newport in 1976, where Riley worked as a county Extension agent - agriculture/4-H. After three years, he moved to Conway. After three years there, Riley decided he was going to go to law school. He'd passed his entrance exam and had been admitted to law school when some farmer friends encouraged him to apply for the job of executive vice president for the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts. He got the job. While in that post, Riley was able to be part of the first LeadAR class,

something that would have been impossible if he was working for Extension at the time.

After seven years, Riley circled back to Extension. This time, he was hired to take over the direction of the LeadAR program and organize a new environmental and natural resources section. His team dealt with everything from forestry and wildlife to environmental policy.

Late in his Extension career, Riley helped develop the Public Policy Center, which included hiring and other organizational tasks. In this role he served both the Research and Extension missions of the UofA Division of Agriculture.

Three years before he retired in July 2014, Riley served as interim assistant director for Community and Economic Development for Extension.

Born in Northeast Arkansas, Riley's family also

farmed. Riley actually lives on the former cotton farm in El Paso that his father share-cropped as a beginning farmer. That crop failed (boll weevil damage), leading his father to Monette, Arkansas, and marriage. That leads to Riley's blaming the boll weevil for his very existence.

Riley was in 4-H as a kid, and from the time he can remember, his family had cattle. Now he has his herd, plus he's taking care of his mother's herd while she's not well.

Before this interview, Riley was out chasing an errant calf. He's out tending cattle with the farm dogs most days. His

(Continued, page 3)



Tom Riley

Mike Moss Recalls Working With Producers and 4-H'ers During His Time With Extension

It's a pretty good gig when the first 10 days of your new job are spent working at the state fair.

Mike Moss just jumped right in there when he was hired by Extension in September 1973 as a livestock specialist. He enjoyed all the aspects of his job, which included giving talks to county groups about beef cattle production, animal improvement projects and judging at area fairs.

Moss also helped develop handouts for agents to distribute to their producers and worked with folks at livestock auctions to help producers select the best animals.

He said he always appreciated working with such a talented group of people at Extension. "It was an excellent group of people to work with."

During his time at Extension, Moss also served as the youth livestock specialist - 4-H. He enjoyed working with the kids on their fair projects and all aspects of the 4-H experience.

Moss resigned in June 1983, so he's been away from Extension for 33 years. Soon after leaving, he went to work for a weed control company and in 1987 opened his own business, Professional Weed Control in Cabot.

Moss has been married to his wife, Anne, for 50 years. They have three daughters and six grandchildren. Moss, who will celebrate his 71st birthday next month, said they'll probably have an anniversary party when the kids all come home for Christmas.

Anne Moss works at Cabot Public Schools and will retire in January. Mike Moss isn't sure when he'll officially retire yet. He plans to fight weeds for a few more years.

To reconnect with Mike Moss, contact him at 501-681-4675, P.O. Box 1283, Cabot, Arkansas, 72023.

– Shannon Magsam



Mike Moss

Carreather Perry Dies

Carreather Feaster Banks Perry, 93, died July 24.

Perry retired from Extension in 1985 after 39 years in St. Francis County as an Extension home economist. After her Extension retirement, she went on to chair the home economics department at Philander Smith College.

Funeral services were held August 5 at First Baptist Church in Forrest City, where Perry had been an active member.

Dayton Thomason Dies

Dayton Thomason, 86, of Amity died August 1. Thomason was a member of the Amity United Methodist Church and a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves.

He held a master's degree in farm management from the University of Arkansas. From 1954-86, Thomason served as assistant county agent, associate county agent, county agent, farm management specialist, staff chair and district program leader, working out of offices in Sheridan and Danville and the Southwest District Office in Little Rock.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Wanda Thomason of Amity; two sisters, Janice Jester of Glenwood and Carolyn Denton of Hot Springs; sons,

Gary Thomason of Arkadelphia, Danny Thomason of Floral and Jeff Thomason of Benton; one daughter, Cindy Reeves of Arkadelphia; nine grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held August 4 at Davis-Smith Funeral Home Chapel in Glenwood with interment in Jones Cemetery.

Honorary and Memorial Gifts

The following honorary and memorial gifts were received to support professional development opportunities for faculty and staff of the Cooperative Extension Service. This list covers honorary and memorial gifts deposited June 1 through July 31, 2016.

■ Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship

Margaret Alexander

In memory of Ann Brown

In memory of Betty Oliver

In memory of Jean Frisby

Darlene Millard

In memory of Dennis Millard

In memory of Lynn Russell

In memory of Betty Oliver

In memory of Ann Brown

In memory of Gerald Crossland

In memory of Charlotte Fant

Lloyd Westbrook Dies

Lloyd T. Westbrook, 83, of Conway died August 5.

Westbrook received his bachelor and master's degrees in agriculture from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

In 1961, Westbrook took his first Extension job when he became an agriculture agent in Stone County. In addition to Stone County, he also served as county agent in Miller, Union, Cleburne and Faulkner counties. He served 17 years as state program leader - 4-H where he was instrumental in the development of the Arkansas 4-H Center. He retired from Extension in 1987 after 32 years.

Westbrook is survived by his wife of 64 years, Connie Westbrook; brother, Loy Westbrook of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma; daughters Barbie Henry of Little Rock and Beverly Arnold of Conway; six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held August 8 at First Baptist Church in Conway. Memorials may be made to the Lloyd and Connie Westbrook Endowment Fund at Central Baptist College, Faulkner County 4-H or the First Baptist Church Building Fund.

Tom Riley (cont.)

wife helps with processing orders and marketing. They have a thriving business and strive to produce quality beef.

Riley and his wife are also very community oriented. They are active in their small local church, farm associations and the El Paso community.

A local family donated a historical building that is day by day being turned into the El Paso Library with help from the Rileys and others.

Riley is on the board of the Parks and Playgrounds Association of El Paso, and the library is one of its projects (led by Judy).

Riley might be found painting the interior or hauling building materials. Speaking of painting, Riley is also an artist. He inherited an artistic bent from his mother, and he paints, sculpts and writes poetry as a creative outlet. He and his wife also repair broken or discarded items, giving them purpose once again.

They recently purchased a house and 17 acres next door and are fixing up the house and grounds.

Next month, the Rileys plan to travel to see one of the children who lives with his wife and children in Alaska. The Rileys have five grandchildren.

To reconnect with Tom Riley, contact him at 501-944-9269 or 501-796-2298, 1943 Highway 64 West, El Paso, Arkansas, 72045, rileyfarm@windstream.net.

– Shannon Magsam

From the Editorial Board

Extension Director Tony Windham Departs Extension

Tony Windham, director of the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, is bringing to an end a 28-year career that redefined how ideas and innovations flowed within the organization, strengthening local roots and making it better equipped to serve the farmers, families and communities that are its constituents.

Windham announced his departure on Aug. 8 to take a position in the private sector. His last day at Extension will be Aug. 31.

Windham joined the organization in 1988 as an extension economist based in Little Rock, helping farmers better manage their operations and marketing. He served as section leader for agricultural economics and community development. In 2005 he rose to assistant director of Community and Economic Development. In 2006, he oversaw both Community and Economic Development and Agriculture and Natural Resources and was appointed interim director of the organization in 2009. The following year, he was named associate vice president for agriculture and director in 2010.

Mark Cochran, vice president - agriculture and head of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, said that Windham "had been key in helping the organization grow in good times and enabling the extension service to weather tough times that have caused some of our peer organizations to falter."

Following Windham's announcement, Cochran appointed Rick Cartwright as interim director. Cartwright had been associate director - agriculture and natural resources based at the Cooperative Extension Service office in Little Rock.

Your editorial board

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Cooperative Extension Service
2301 South University Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72204-4940

September Birthdays

Kay Dickens, Sept. 1	Joe Stuart, Sept. 16
Alberta James, Sept. 1	Charles Albritton, Sept. 17
Diana Baker, Sept. 4	Irene Carlock, Sept. 18
Jim Denton, Sept. 4	Steven Simpson, Sept. 18
Johnnie Younger, Sept. 5	Bill Jones, Sept. 21
Bob Blake, Sept. 6	June Williams, Sept. 21
Carol Sanders, Sept. 8	Mike Wright, Sept. 21
Barbara Singleton, Sept. 8	Tom Mertens, Sept. 23
Venetta Rice, Sept. 9	Willie Booker, Sept. 25
Jerry Wooley, Sept. 9	Stephen Vann, Sept. 27
Catherine Grills, Sept. 12	William Dodgen, Sept. 28
Lee Hunter, Sept. 12	Don Plunkett, Sept. 28
Bill Wallace, Sept. 12	Henry Rice, Sept. 28
Raymond Benz, Sept. 16	Bettie Wilson, Sept. 30

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<i>Extension Cord</i>	\$18.00	_____

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Yes, I want to support the fundraising initiative for 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:

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