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Randy Chlapecka still helping solve problems for Arkansas farmers

Randy Chlapecka says one of the most satisfying things he's ever done is help solve problems for farmers and other hard-working Arkansans.

He got to do just that on a regular basis for 32 years as an employee at Extension.

"I loved working with the farmers, 4-H'ers, homeowners and community leaders," he said. "I enjoyed identifying a problem they had and then solving that problem for them. That was probably the biggest high you could get."

Chlapecka loved it so much he stayed in a similar field after retiring from Extension in 2014. He's now an agronomist for the Farmer's Supply Association.

He and his wife moved to Jonesboro two years ago, but Chlapecka still works with many of the same farmers and community members from Extension. There are just more of them now, he said, since he travels to Jackson, Poinsett and Cross counties.

His new job is seasonal – March through September – but he's available to consult with customers and members the other months.

"It's really the best of both worlds," Chlapecka surmised. "I get to act retired in the winter."

Of course, he knows all about working year-round. He was born in Stuttgart, raised in Slovak. He grew up on a rice and soybean farm.



Randy Chlapecka

"It bordered all around me," he said. "I've been around it all my life."

After college graduation, Chlapecka wanted to continue in the life, taking a job in 1982 as a county Extension agent - agriculture/4-H in Randolph County. In 1988,

he married his sweetheart, Paula, on March 19, then moved to Jackson County to take a post as county Extension agent - staff chair on June 15. It was a little of a whirlwind for the young couple.

The Chlapeckas lived in Newport until December 2016, when they moved to Jonesboro, a place they'd always wanted to live. Both Chlapeckas are retired now.

They have two grown sons and a young grandson, Jack. They celebrated his second birthday party a few weeks ago with a car theme.

Both of their sons, twins, were living in Jonesboro when they first moved there, but Justin, who was an Extension county agent for two years, (See Chlapecka, page 4)

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Sara Gardner wins Governor's Award; Maloch, Rutledge honored for 4-H support

A young woman with her sights set on the governor's mansion, the state attorney general and a state senator were all honored July 25 at Arkansas 4-H's biggest night – the Awards of Excellence banquet.

Sara Gardner of Washington County was named the 2018 Arkansas Governor's Award winner.

Gardner has been in 4-H for a decade. She has served as county council president and a state officer, as vice president of the Ozark District. For nine years, Gardner's work has been guided by her "Pledge to Patriotism" platform.

Gardner has spearheaded projects collecting 3,500 canned food items for homeless veterans, creating 7,500 handmade gifts and cards, and spent nine years working on projects with the national cemetery at Fayetteville.

Being fluent in Spanish, she has begun sharing the goals and opportunities of 4-H in Hispanic communities. She hopes to work as an attorney for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

During the finalists' award luncheon with Gov. Asa Hutchinson and his wife Susan at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion, Gardner announced her intention to become Arkansas' first female governor.

"We'll have the place ready for you," Susan Hutchinson said with a smile.

"If you want to see what tomorrow will be like, look at today's 4-H youth leaders – these young people are going to better the world and shape all of our futures – we are in good hands," said Rick Cartwright, associate vice president - extension. "I plan to vote for Sara."

Friends of 4-H

4-H honored two people as Friends of 4-H on July 25, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and state Sen. Bruce Maloch of Magnolia.

"Each year, we recognize those who truly give of themselves to this youth development program," said Martha Ray Sartor, extension's associate director - 4-H and Youth Development and Family and Consumer Science. "This year, we honor two people who have been very generous in their support of our state's 4-H youth."

Rutledge is the state's 56th attorney general and first woman elected to the office. This year's first Friend of 4-H believes face-to-face conversations lead to real solutions. Since taking office, she began a Mobile Office program for all 75 counties, a military and veterans Initiative, a metal theft prevention program, and a Cooperative Disability Investigations program to stop fraud in Social Security disability claims.

In addition to her state responsibilities, she actively works on multi-state issues with other attorneys general. She also re-established and co-chairs the National Association of Attorneys General Committee on Agriculture.

This year's second Friend of 4-H, state Sen. Bruce Maloch, grew up on the farm near Emerson, where he still farms today. In his youth, he was active in 4-H and served as state president and national officer of the FFA.

Maloch also served as chairman of the Arkansas FFA Foundation and Arkansas Cattlemen's Foundation. He has long been active in Arkansas Farm Bureau activities and supporting agricultural youth by donating his auctioneering services for charitable events throughout the area at multiple junior livestock sales. Maloch has also hosted the state 4-H Livestock Leadership Academy program at the state Capitol.

Throughout his tenure, he's been recognized as Legislator of the Year by the Arkansas Realtors Association, Person of the Year by the Arkansas Municipal League, and was named one of the top 10 legislators by *Talk Business* magazine.

The senator and his wife live on a farm south of Magnolia, where they raise registered Brangus cattle and enjoy spending time with their three children and five grandchildren, who have all taken part in 4-H livestock projects. 




Governor's Award winner Sara Gardner (center) with, left to right, Dr. Rick Cartwright, Christina Miller, Darlene Millard and Martha Ray Sartor.

New retirees

These Extension employees have joined the ranks of retirees:


Yvonne McCool – Office of Information Technology. Yvonne began her career with Extension in 1987. She served as a Project Leader in the Office of Information Technology for more than 30 years until her retirement May 30, 2018.

Gloria Mayhugh – Office of Communications. Gloria began her career with Extension in 1969. She held several positions during her career but served as the Publications Coordinator in the Office of Communications from 2005 until retirement. She was 84 days shy of having 50 years of service. She retired on July 31, 2018. 

Fall Extension Retirees meetings scheduled

Dr. Rick Cartwright would like to invite all Extension retirees to participate in the upcoming Regional Extension Retirees meetings being held around the state. **All meetings begin at 10:00 a.m. with registration and social time.** The program will begin at 10:45 a.m. There will be a ballot issues update, Extension update and question/answer time. Lunch will be provided. Socializing and catching up with longtime friends is an important component of these meetings. The meetings will be held on the following dates.

- **October 17 – Mountain View**, Skillet Restaurant, Ozark Folk Center
- **October 18 – Jonesboro**, Craighead County Office
- **October 23 – Van Buren**, Crawford County Office
- **October 24 – Fayetteville**, Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Science
- **October 26 – Little Rock**, LRSO
- **October 31 – Hope**, SWREC
- **November 1 – Monticello**, Drew County Farm Bureau

Invitations and RSVP information were mailed in early August. Registration deadline is October 5, 2018. Please contact Verna Waddell at (501) 671-2326 with questions. 

Check out the ARExtension YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/ARExtension>) for short videos of the 2018 State 4-H O-Rama as well as highlights of innovative Extension programs, horticultural how-tos and other items of interest.

To our Extension retirees



It is August in Arkansas, and that is about all I want to say about this month.

Please note that Yvonne McCool and Gloria Mayhugh recently retired after many years of excellent and dedicated service. Both were kind to me when I entered the world of Extension in December 1995, and both spent many years trying to teach me something, anything at times. Gloria served 50 years – what an achievement!

Our feature story is a catchup with Randy Chlapecka, who worked many years in Jackson County. Randy and I spent many hours together in the field, and I have never met a more professional or accomplished agent. He is a truly exceptional person and friend, and I really look forward to the achievements of his two sons – one currently working on the Ph.D. in agriculture and the other an outstanding teacher. Great family.

The 4-H State O-Rama was held in late July in Fayetteville and was again a very inspirational gathering. The Gardner family of Washington County were well represented by sisters, Sara and Katie, and both have ambitious plans for leadership and service in the coming years. I trust we will hear more of these two in the future, all positive, as they are truly exceptional young leaders.

Dr. Sartor, Angie Freel, Priscella Thomas and all our 4-H state and county professionals have these programs going in a very positive, highly visible direction. I noted that at the O-Rama we heard from the Governor (twice), the Attorney General, Senator Boozman, a national vice president of Wal-Mart, a state senator and probably some other VIP stakeholders. Quite a feat. I sincerely hope these efforts and support will help this team move 4-H to an even higher level, because looking about these days, we need more 4-H'ers in society, not less.

I hope that all 4-H alumni and supporters will continue to invest in these programs on a regular basis. There are many ways to do so and yes, I am doing this myself.

Have a great August and Labor Day.

– Rick Cartwright

Chlapecka (Cont. from page 1)


is currently working on his Ph.D. in Agriculture at the University of Arkansas. Austin is a history teacher and Quiz Bowl coach at Brookland High School. Austin and his wife are Jack's parents.

Chlapecka enjoys all the good restaurants and many other amenities in Jonesboro, but he's not fond of the soil for gardening at his home. It's one of his most enjoyed hobbies, and he didn't get to tend one this year.

"We've been frequenting the Farmer's Market quite a bit," he joked.

Chlapecka said he'll have to turn to container gardening next summer so his grandson can see how it's done and continue the family tradition.

In addition to gardening, Chlapecka is also an avid sports fan. In fact, he was the public address announcer for football and basketball games for many years in Newport, while working for Extension. He was a color and play-by-play announcer for football games for the Newport cable television station for more than 20 years. He returned to the press box as the PA announcer for Newport Senior High football last year and is scheduled to do so again this season.

He also attends many of the ASU athletic events and does a little traveling to see them play. His wife likes to go with him, and they have plans to watch ASU play in Tulsa this year. He notes that she likes to plan a few little excursions along the way, and this time there's going to be a side trip to the Pioneer Woman Mercantile, a bakery, restaurant and store that belongs to famous food blogger Ree Drummond. 

September Birthdays

Kay Dickens, Sept. 1	Charles Albritton, Sept. 17
Alberta James, Sept. 1	Irene Carlock, Sept. 18
Diana Baker, Sept. 4	Steven Simpson, Sept. 18
Jim Denton, Sept. 4	June Williams, Sept. 21
Vickie Huddleston, Sept. 4	Bill Jones, Sept. 21
Johnnie Younger, Sept. 5	Gloria Mayhugh, Sept. 21
Bob Blake, Sept. 6	Belinda Weaver, Sept. 21
Carol Sanders, Sept. 8	LeVeda Tate, Sept. 22
Barbara Singleton, Sept. 8	Tom Mertens, Sept. 23
Venetta Rice, Sept. 9	Willie Booker Jr., Sept. 25
Jerry Wooley, Sept. 9	Stephen Vann, Sept. 27
Bill Wallace, Sept. 12	William Dodgen, Sept. 28
Catherine Grills, Sept. 12	Henry Rice, Sept. 28
Lee Hunter, Sept. 12	Don Plunkett, Sept. 28
Raymond Benz, Sept. 16	Bettie Wilson, Sept. 30
Joe Stuart, Sept. 16	



Proceeds to benefit the Arkansas 4-H Foundation to assist with 4-H scholarships, activities and camps

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 27 – 8AM TO NOON AT THE ARKANSAS 4-H CENTER TRAP RANGE IN FERNDALE

Event will include a team tailgate area with snacks, finger foods, and ice cold water and drinks. BBQ lunch will be served beginning at noon.

COSTS:

- \$500 per team with five person squads – 50 targets per shooter
- \$100 per individual (can team with other individuals) – 50 Targets per shooter
- Bring your own shells or purchase at the event for \$10 per box

AWARDS:

- Travelling trophy or award for corporate team
- Plaques for high point team members
- Plaque for high point individual
- High point media team

For information including pre-registering contact:

Jesse Bocksnick
Arkansas 4-H Outdoor Skills Coordinator
(501) 671-2334 or
jbocksnick@uaex.edu

WALKUPS WELCOME THE DAY OF EVENT

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The Arkansas 4-H Foundation

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action institution. If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate or need materials in another format, please contact the 4-H department in the Little Rock state office as soon as possible. Dial 711 for Arkansas Relay.

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.