



Keeping you connected

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THE EXTENSION CORD EDITORIAL BOARD WISHES YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON

Stan Chapman, Kott Rolfe III, Earl Wilson, Donald Plunkett, Diane Jones, Tom Leslie, Darlene Millard, Mike Wright



Extension personnel honored for efforts throughout 2016

Extension faculty and staff met in Little Rock Dec. 5 to honor their own, recognizing standout achievements during the 2016 Excellence Awards.

Janet Carson, extension horticulture specialist, was named 2016 Employee of the Year. Rick Cartwright, interim director for agriculture - extension, noted that the Employee of the Year award represents the “gold standard” for performance, going “above and beyond all expectations,” he said.

“Janet Carson is an exceptional representative of the Division of Agriculture by any measurement,” Cartwright said. “She is an extremely gifted professional, demonstrating the highest levels of competence, dedication and impact to benefit our stakeholders.”



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End of year giving may reduce your tax burden


The holiday season is upon us, and you may be considering making a charitable contribution to your favorite organization. Making charitable contributions is an excellent way to reduce your tax burden for the year. First, make sure the organization you wish to make your contribution to is a qualified charitable organization, such as your local church, the UA Foundation, UA Cooperative Extension or the Arkansas 4-H Foundation. A recent change in federal law made permanent changes for making annual contributions you might want to consider.

The PATH Act of 2015 permits individuals 70.5 years or older to roll over up to \$100,000 each year from an individual retirement account (IRA) directly to a qualifying charity without recognizing the assets transferred to the qualifying charity as income. This rollover is referred to as a qualified charitable distribution (QCD). One of the key benefits of the QCD from your IRA is the distribution counts towards your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). Under this provision, individuals may exclude the amount distributed directly to an eligible charity from their gross income; however, because donors exclude this contribution from their gross income, they cannot take a charitable deduction for the contribution. To do so would result in a double benefit for donors, which is strictly prohibited.



Some of you may be thinking, “Why wouldn’t I just take my required minimum distribution from my IRA and then make the charitable contribution?” When an individual receives a distribution from their IRA and makes a corresponding charitable contribution, they must count the distribution as income and then receive a charitable deduction for any amounts they donated to the charity. For some individuals, the charitable contribution deduction they receive may not totally offset the taxes they must pay for receiving the distribution from their IRA. In such cases, donors would potentially benefit more by using the charitable rollover provision when making a charitable donation.


Remember, for the donor to take advantage of the IRA charitable distribution, the distribution must be sent directly from the IRA company to the charity. If the IRA company mails the distribution check by Dec. 31, it would be counted as an IRA distribution in 2016.

This information is not meant as tax or legal advice. Tax laws are complex and subject to change. Please consult a professional tax advisor to determine how this information affects your tax situation. If you are interested in making a gift to support the Cooperative Extension Service or any of its programs, please contact Brian Helms in the Development Office for giving opportunities. – *Brian Helms* 

Introducing two Executive Team members

Two Executive Team members who you may not know have been in those roles less than one year.

Jerry Clemons has served as District Director, Delta District, since March of this year. He has prior experience as staff chair and agriculture agent in Clark and Fulton counties.

Dr. Stacey McCullough has served as Assistant Director - Community and Economic Development since Sept. 1, 2016, and is also Director of the Public Policy Center. She had previously held those positions in an interim capacity. 

Extension personnel honored for efforts throughout 2016, *continued from page 1*

Other individual award honorees include:

Steven Hefner, website software developer: Early Career Classified

JoAnn Vann, Clark County Cooperative Extension Service agent: Early Career County Agent

Terry Spurlock, plant pathologist: Early Career Faculty

Kristin Higgins, public policy program associate, Early Career Non-Classified


Team award winners included:

Diane Clement, Nora Terry and Les Walz, Cleveland County: County Team

Diane Clement, Mark Peterson and Les Walz, Issue Team Award for Positioning a Rural County for Success in the New Global Economy

Creenna Bocksnick, Shannon Caldwell, Eric DeVries, Darlene Horne, Taylor Knox, Casey Marshall, Luke Nipper, Chris

Russell and Mike Simmons, 4-H Center Programs: Unit Team Award

“All of our honorees represent the best qualities of the Cooperative Extension Service and the Division of Agriculture,” Cartwright said. “They were honored for their performance, creativity, responsiveness, dedication and program impact. These are truly outstanding individuals and teams that we are proud to call vital members of the Division family.” 

To our Extension retirees

First, I simply want to thank you for your work and dedication, you made our organization and Arkansas better.

For those that have not met me yet, my name is Rick Cartwright, and I took on the Interim Director of Extension job on Sept. 1 after Dr. Tony Windham accepted a new career path in private industry. Dr. Windham worked incredibly hard over 28 years through some particularly trying times, and we continue to wish him and his family the best. All of us working today sincerely hope to honor him, and you, by making sure the Cooperative Extension Service continues to be the powerful force for improving Arkansas.

The 21st Century Cooperative Extension Service has many exciting things going on such as robotics in 4-H, unmanned aerial robots (drones) in agriculture; teaching about gene-editing in crops and large scale field demonstrations using self-driving tractors and precision space planters; “kick-starting” community development; remote-controlled irrigation and precision water quality monitoring; sophisticated family and nutrition education and studies; polymerase chain reaction testing for animal and plant disease; rural health; and even live video field days and conferences. The 21st century is a great time to be alive and to be able to use new and powerful technology to further our mission.

But with all this technology, some things do not change and the most important thing about Extension is its people. We continue to seek out and train and work with the best people, those who have the “Extension heart and personality.” This fact is undeniable, our organization is only as good and as effective as its individual members. And we have some of the best and brightest, and they work incredibly hard every day for Arkansas. But their model for professionalism and work ethic is you – you showed us how it was supposed to be done, and we do our best to honor that legacy.

In my case, I came back to Arkansas from California with a Ph.D. in plant pathology and started working with long-time county agents and specialists who showed me what my advanced degree really meant in the field. It was a humbling realization that rice plants and diseases and weeds and insects and farmers did not necessarily “read the books” I had learned from in college. Regardless, all of the Extension folks and farmers I worked with then are why I am doing what I do today, and why I do things the way I do.

Once again, I say thanks and just assure you that all of us today are committed to making sure the 21st Century Cooperative Extension Service remains the best – it is your legacy.

Have a wonderful holiday season.




– Rick Cartwright

Woody Miley dies

Dr. Woody N. Miley, 90, of North Little Rock, died Nov. 23.

Miley received bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees from Louisiana State University. He served as Extension soils specialist from 1954-1979 and added section leader - Agronomy duties in 1979. He retired from Extension in 1990. In that year, he was named Adjunct Professor of Agronomy by the University of Arkansas.

He is survived by his wife, Georgia; his daughter, Phyllis Smiley; son, Roger Miley; step-daughter, Lisa Myrick; three grandchildren; and two brothers, Gene and Wayne Miley.


A funeral service was held Dec. 3 at Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock. Memorials may be made to Park Hill Baptist Church. 

Lorraine Hupp dies

Lorraine O'Mary Hupp, 80, of Alexander, died Nov. 27.

Hupp had a 26-year Extension career, beginning in 1975 as a secretary in the Little Rock State Office. She retired in 2001 as administrative assistant for the Southwest (now Ouachita) District. After retirement, she served on the *Extension Cord* editorial board from 2006 through 2016.

Hupp is survived by a sister, Linda McKinnie of Benton; two daughters, Linda Simmons and Lisa Brewer, both of Benton; four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

A memorial service was held Dec. 1 at Smith-Benton Funeral Home. Memorials may be made to Relay for Life of Saline County. 

TIAA counseling sessions

Retirees may schedule a counseling appointment with a TIAA representative by going to www.TIAA.org/schedulenow or calling 1-800-732-8353 for appointments at Extension's Little Rock State Office, UALR or in the TIAA Office in Little Rock on Financial Center Parkway.

Look for more information on TIAA in future issues of the *Extension Cord*. 


Scholarship donations

The following donation was received to support professional development opportunities for faculty and staff of the Cooperative Extension Service. This list covers donations deposited Nov. 1-30, 2016.


■ Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship

Diane Jones

Donations may be forwarded to the Development Office, Cooperative Extension Service, 2301 South University Avenue, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72204.

To ensure that proper notification is sent for honorary and memorial gifts, please also include in whose honor or memory the gift is made and the mailing address of the person to receive the notification. 

Reminder

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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 Martha Thorpe, Communications Dept., 2301 South University Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72204-4940.