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Retiree Spotlight

Mike McCarter
Dennis Holzhauser

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Welcome, Darlene

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Long-Time Pike County Agent Enjoying Life on the Farm

When his dream job wasn't all it was cracked up to be, Mike McCarter decided he should consider walking in his dad's footsteps.

McCarter's father had been an Extension agent in Arkansas, but the junior McCarter didn't know if it was the best place for him. Turns out Extension was the dream job.

McCarter started working at Extension in 1979 in Nevada County. He was a half-time agriculture agent and half-time 4-H agent. He met his wife, Laurel, in Prescott and their two sons were born in the decade that McCarter worked there.

When Pike County Extension offered the McCarters an opportunity to move close to "home" – Mike is from Norman, Arkansas – they jumped at the chance.

McCarter retired as an ag agent and staff chair on July 1 of last year, and he and his wife remained in Pike County where they have a farm.

These days, McCarter heads out early every morning to tend his cattle before the day gets too hot. He also spends time checking the progress of his garden, orchard and vineyard. McCarter babies his grapes, muscadines, peaches, pears and the latest fruit – figs. He's watching the figs closer than any of the other crops because they're in that crucial first year.

McCarter graciously shared that figs grow on big bushes and that "the little ones are best."

So far, his wife – who works as an elementary school counselor – hasn't preserved any of the figs, but she's been able to put up most of the other produce and fruits.

"She makes jellies and jams," McCarter said. "She's a good cook."

The McCarters formerly taught Master Gardener classes and enjoy gardening and tending flowers together.



The McCarter family (left to right): Daughter-in-law, Britteny; oldest son, Walt; wife, Laurel; Mike McCarter; and youngest son, Wade.

Dennis Holzhauser's Love of Computer Programming Led to Long Extension Career

Enrolling at Little Rock-based Lions World Services for the Blind turned out to be one of the best decisions Dennis Holzhauser ever made.

Holzhauser, who was born with a disease that caused him to eventually become legally blind, had a college degree, but became interested in computer programming after graduation.

He turned to World Services, a nonprofit rehabilitation and vocational center in Little Rock with the mission of “empowering blind or visually impaired adults to achieve sustainable independence.”

He met his wife, Diana at the Fair Park nonprofit, while also learning to write computer programs, which led to a job at Extension in 1982.

Holzhauser loved computer programming, particularly since he's fascinated with solving problems.

“A computer program is just a list of instructions for what you want the computer to do,” he said. “You just have to write it in computer language.”

When Holzhauser first started working for Extension, he could read his computer screen if the type was large enough. He eventually moved to screen-reading software – which goes by the acronym of JAWS – that read aloud everything he typed.



Dennis Holzhauser

It's what he still uses at home since retiring from Extension in October 2014.

Holzhauser worked for 32 years as a computer programmer at the Extension State Office.

He and his wife, who is also blind, both retired on a Friday and boarded a cruise ship that weekend. They took a long trip and have continued the tradition of enjoying a cruise together every year.

The two “ran into each other” in the halls of World Services and have been married for 35 years. They both like to read a LOT, Holzhauser said, and find most of their books at the Arkansas Regional Library for the Blind. The books are often read by celebrities, he said, and are quite animated.

His favorite genre is mystery fiction. Authors Laura Lippman

and Stephen King are among his stash right now.

In their retirement, the Holzhausers also enjoy eating out at new restaurants (if they're not feeling adventurous, their favorite is Brave New Restaurant) and taking a variety of eight-week courses at LifeQuest of Arkansas.

Holzhauser also enjoys listening to sports talk and games. He has Sirius XM and listens to sports shows about the Razorbacks, Pittsburgh Steelers and Pirates, among others.

He also enjoys listening to his wife sing in the Arkansas Chamber Singers. She also plays guitar and is learning to play the piano.

“We always find something to do,” Holzhauser said.

To reconnect with Dennis Holzhauser, contact him at 501-228-9183, #4 Foxcroft Village Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72227.

– Shannon Magsam

Welcome, Darlene!

The *Extension Cord* editorial board would like to welcome its newest member, Darlene Millard. Darlene retired in 2009 from Extension as assistant director of 4-H Youth Development after an almost 31-year career with Extension.

From the Editorial Board

This Summer at Extension

Extension faculty and staff are busy this summer with a number of projects. Here are some of the things Extension personnel are involved in.

- The 101st NACAA Annual Meeting and Profession Improvement Conference July 24-28 in Little Rock. Featured speakers will be Walt Coleman, controller of Hiland Dairy in Little Rock and NFL referee; John Dillard, an attorney with OFW law, an agricultural and food law firm in Washington, D.C.; and Jerry Nelson, freelance writer and former dairy farmer whose work has appeared in several national farm magazines and a weekly newspaper column called Dear County Agent Guy. Tours highlighting Arkansas' culture and agriculture will be offered as well as seminars, exhibits and a trade show.
- The sixth annual Rice Expo August 10 at the Rice Research and Extension Center in Stuttgart. Producers and other participants will have a chance to check out the research being conducted at the Center. Activities and exhibits are planned for adults and children, including the Arkansas Rice Expo recipe contest.
- Extension's Public Policy section is gearing up for the November election. Kristin Higgins, program associate - Public Policy, will supply continuously updated information on proposed constitutional amendments and laws that will be on the ballot. Check out the Public Policy voter education website at www.uaex.edu/ballot for more information on ballot issues.

Your editorial board

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Mike McCarter, *continued*

McCarter also enjoys hunting when he can, often with old Extension buddies. His group traveled to Colorado together last year, and they turkey hunt in Texas when the chance arises.

McCarter made lots of friends while working the past 20-plus years in Pike County, including many of the local farmers. He still gets the occasional phone call from someone with a burning question about crops, cattle or pests.

He's happy to help, but mostly he's been enjoying the peace and quiet – “just laying low” – this first year of retirement.

To reconnect with Mike McCarter, contact him at 870-285-1199, 20 McCarter Road, Nashville, Arkansas, 71852.

– Shannon Magsam



Cooperative Extension Service
2301 South University Avenue
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| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Raymond Duncan, Aug. 1 | Gloria Pickett, Aug. 19 |
| Billy Moore, Aug. 1 | Estella Hayes, Aug. 20 |
| Berline Wright, Aug. 1 | Wanda O'Neal, Aug. 20 |
| Linda Floyd-Chappell, Aug. 3 | James Ragland, Aug. 20 |
| Betty Poe Holman, Aug. 4 | Jan Rogers, Aug. 21 |
| Louise Burns, Aug. 5 | Claudia Corbin, Aug. 21 |
| Ronald Beaty, Aug. 9 | Lorraine Hupp, Aug. 21 |
| Delbert Taylor, Aug. 11 | Barbara Simmons, Aug. 21 |
| Eugene Terhune, Aug. 12 | Steve M. Jones, Aug. 23 |
| Gene Lowrey, Aug. 14 | Earlton Sanders Jr., Aug. 23 |
| Beverly Fountain, Aug. 15 | Betty Y. Thomas, Aug. 23 |
| Janis Huddleston, Aug. 15 | Sharran McCullar, Aug. 24 |
| Mark Brawner, Aug. 17 | Charles Whitaker, Aug. 24 |
| Barbara Holt, Aug. 17 | Terry Davis, Aug. 25 |
| Jeannette Pollard, Aug. 18 | Martha Albright, Aug. 26 |
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