



Keeping you connected

extension cord

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Extension Homemakers and Master Gardeners hold annual meetings


The Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council held its annual meeting June 6-8 at the Hot Springs Convention Center. This year's theme was "Volunteering: That's What We Do."

Keynote speaker Beth Anne Rankin, Associate Director of Development and Major Gifts for Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia, and 1994 Miss Arkansas, talked about leadership. Deb Crow, competitive events administrator for the State Fair, and Hannah Mills, owner of Hot Springy Dingy and costumer for the First Ever Annual World's Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade, were featured during the closing session.

The conference featured an array of how-to classes and remembrance of deceased members, including a tribute to Dr. Anne Sortor, Associate Director - Family and Consumer Sciences and 4-H Youth Development, who died April 6, 2017.

Arkansas Master Gardeners held their state meeting May 21-23 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock. The conference included tours to the Pulaski Tech School of Culinary Arts, P. Allen Smith's Moss Mountain Farm and Gardens, Pinnacle Mountain State Park Master Gardener Native Plant Project, and other gardens of interest in the Little Rock area, as well as a Garden to Table Dinner at Heifer International. Featured speakers and topics were horticulturist and author Erica Glasener Goldstein, "A Passion for the Gardening Life," and Dr. Jim Collins, former horticulture professor, Arkansas Tech University, "Reflections of a Newly Retired Horticulturist."

Janet B. Carson Scholarships were awarded to Brittney Beck of Faulkner County and Jessica Wesson of White County.

The 2018 Annual Conference will be in Fort Smith. 



The scene just before the opening of the annual conference of Arkansas Extension Homemakers, June 6, 2017.



Brittney Beck



Jessica Wesson

Save the date: 2018 Retiree Luncheon, Friday, March 16, 2018, at the C. A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center.

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Pursuant to 7 CFR § 15.3, the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs and services (including employment) without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, sexual preference, pregnancy or any other legally protected status, and is an equal opportunity institution.

2017 Extension Retiree Survey results

Thank you to the 64 retirees who provided very valuable feedback via the 2017 Extension Retiree Survey. This information will be used to guide Extension Administration and the *Extension Cord* editorial board as we go forward. We want you to know that you have a voice, and we have heard you. We will do our best to implement these changes over the next year or so. I will briefly summarize the results in this article. Several of the questions were short answer; thank you for the rich feedback you provided.

In regards to the annual retiree luncheon, there were some things that the respondents were pretty clear about, and others may not be so important. You really liked having the luncheon at the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center (47 percent ranked the 4-H Center first), and you liked having a short program (68 percent said yes). Also, the majority liked having the luncheon during the spring. So, please mark your calendar for Friday, March 16, 2018, so you can attend the 2018 Retiree Luncheon. We will be working over the next few months to incorporate additional feedback you gave about the luncheon into the program. A short program with some resources for retirees will definitely be included to make next year's luncheon better than ever.

Another idea we asked about was holding regional retiree events during a different time of the year. Fifty-six percent of the respondents like this idea. We would like to schedule some regional retiree events for the fall of 2018. This would not take the place of the annual luncheon but would provide an additional opportunity for retirees to get together and visit and allow those who didn't make it to the

annual luncheon an opportunity to visit with fellow retirees. If you have ideas on potential locations, please let us know.

Thank you for the feedback regarding the *Extension Cord*. It is our goal to always make it better and for you to look forward to receiving each edition. The editorial board is always looking for retirees to interview. We try our best to keep up with who has been interviewed. If you have not been asked to be interviewed and would be willing, please let me know. There are some retirees who do not wish to be interviewed.

If you know of retirees who have received awards, are involved in organizations in a significant way or have an exciting career after Extension, please share that information with us so we can include it in the next edition of the *Extension Cord*. If you have information to be included in future issues, please feel free to give me a call at 501-671-2156 or email me at bhelms@uaex.edu.

— Brian Helms 

Mike Wright dies


Michael Barnett Wright, 79, of Little Rock, died June 23, 2017.

He was a graduate of Little Rock Central High School, Little Rock University and the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. He was employed for almost 34 years by the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, retiring as Assistant Director in 1998.


He had served as treasurer of the Cooperative Extension Service Federal Credit Union since 1983 and as a member of the *Extension Cord* editorial board since 2003.

He was active in the Boy Scouts of America program for more than 55 years and received several awards for leadership from that organization.

He is survived by his wife, Louise W. Wright; brother, Ralph D. Wright; two step-children, Kevin Pittman of Fayetteville and Allison Madison of Seattle, Washington; and five step-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at Pinecrest Funeral Home on July 1, 2017. Memorials may be made to the Quapaw Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, 4330 Cantrell Road, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72202. To share memories and condolences with the family, go to www.pinecrestfuneralhome.com. 

Angie Freel becomes acting head of 4-H

Angie Freel is taking on additional responsibilities as the Interim Associate Department Head - 4-H. In addition to her work in 4-H citizenship and leadership, she will be managing the day to day activities in the 4-H department. 

Division of Agriculture gets good news on funding

The Division of Agriculture is scheduled to receive \$2.5 million in one-time monies from the Attorney General's settlement funds. This funding will be used to enhance the consumer education work done by Family and Consumer Sciences, civics and leadership programs in 4-H and work done by Community and Economic Development, including its public policy programs, agricultural law and other programs.

The plan is to invest the money not only in the Extension programs that conduct our statewide educational outreach but also the Division of Agriculture research programs that provide

the science-based backbone to our curriculum. These funds in the short term will greatly assist the delivery of our statewide programs to our diverse audiences related to strong families, vibrant communities, natural resources conservation and safe, healthy and affordable food and fiber.

Starting in July, the Extension Service is working in partnership with the Attorney General's office to host her mobile offices in each county.


We want to express our deepest appreciation to Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and her staff for making this funding available so we can strengthen the public education and outreach

efforts of both the Attorney General's Office and the Division of Agriculture through these programs.

Federal situation

At the federal level, we are operating under an omnibus appropriation for the balance of FY2017 that provides essentially flat funding from the FY2016 levels. President Trump's recently proposed budget request for FY2018 includes an overall 21 percent decrease to USDA funding for FY2018, including an 8 percent cut to NIFA programs.

Other research-related cuts proposed by the President are 21 percent for the National Institutes of Health,

29 percent for the National Science Foundation and 15 percent for USDA-Agriculture Research Service. Congress will begin work on its FY2018 budget shortly. Should the President's request be adopted, these cuts will not take place until October 1. It will likely be on and around September 30 at the earliest before we have a better understanding of the level of federal appropriations available for FY2018. Even then, a protracted fight over FY2018 appropriations is expected. As you can readily understand, with federal appropriations currently accounting for roughly 20 percent of the Division's overall budget, this hampers our ability to plan. 

To our Extension retirees

I hope this issue of the *Extension Cord* finds you in good health and spirits, ready for the heat and general pleasantries of another Arkansas summer.

I wish to let you know that Ronnie Bateman, Ursula Crow and Brenda Waldrum retired in June after many years with the Cooperative Extension Service.

Ronnie worked as diagnostician for the Nematology Laboratory at the Southwest Research and Extension Center near Hope and was an expert on identifying nematodes in soil, seed and turf. I worked with Ronnie for many years off and on, and I never met a finer person or colleague. He plans to live near his hometown in southwest Arkansas and publish some books on poetry, work more on gardening, enjoy his extended family and catch up on the many things we all "put off" during our careers.

Ursula is one of those people you meet in life who never seems to have an "off" day, always a ray of sunshine. She worked many years in the warehouse and facilities group at the State Office, knew everybody, helped all. Ursula helped me during my career as an Extension specialist with everything from finding publications to distributing Flag the Technology flags to finding computers I had lost, to simply cheering me up when things were not going so well. As a friend and colleague, she is one of a kind, and we will miss her deeply at work. However, she tells me not to worry, she has plans to travel and just "live life large" – also catch up on "stuff" she has put off for many years.

Finally, our friend Brenda Waldrum retired in June after years of service with our grants office. Brenda always befriended and tried to help all at the State Office and set an example for calm and enduring work in the midst of sometimes frantic deadlines. She plans to catch up on many things that were set aside over the years while working and is really looking forward to spending more time with her husband Joe and making sure he is behaving and getting things done that need to be done.

I sincerely wish all of our new retirees the best and hope that I did not forget anyone else who left in June, the ending month of another great fiscal year – stick a fork in FY17, it is done.

It is with much sadness that we report in this issue on the passing of Mike Wright. As I was coming into the Cooperative Extension Service from research, Mike was getting ready to retire in a couple of years, but I remember his "extension" spirit and dedication. And, we truly hope his family understands what his work life meant to us, and to the people of this state. He left a great legacy of trust, integrity, hard work and professionalism for others to admire and follow. Mike will always be a cherished part of the Extension family.

To all of our retirees and colleagues, I look forward to FY18 and hope all of you have a great and blessed summer

– Rick Cartwright 



Honorary and memorial donations

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 1-30, 2017.

■ Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship


By Jimmie Bowling

In memory of Dr. Randel Price

In memory of Wallace Cummings

By Frank Plafcan

In memory of Wallace Cummings


Honorary or memorial 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, please also include in whose honor or memory the gift is made and the mailing address of the person to receive the notification. 

New retirees

Congratulations to the following individuals who joined the ranks of retirees during the month of June.

Ronnie Bateman, Pest Management Program Associate, Southwest Research and Extension Center, is retiring after 37 years with Extension.

Ursula Crow, Warehouse Specialist, Little Rock State Office, is retiring after 25 years with Extension.

Brenda Waldrum, Grant Contract Analyst, Little Rock State Office, is retiring after eight years with Extension. 

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Raymond Duncan, August 1	Gloria Pickett, August 19
Billy Moore, August 1	Estella Hayes, August 20
Berline Wright, August 1	Wanda O'Neal, August 20
Linda Floyd-Chappell, August 3	James Ragland, August 20
Betty Poe Holman, August 4	Jan Rogers, August 21
Louise Burns, August 5	Claudia Corbin, August 21
Ronald Beaty, August 9	Barbara Simmons, August 21
Delbert Taylor, August 11	Steve M. Jones, August 23
Eugene Terhune, August 12	Earlton Sanders Jr., August 23
Gene Lowrey, August 14	Betty Youngman Thomas, August 23
Beverly Fountain, August 15	Sharran McCullar, August 24
Janis Huddleston, August 15	Charles Whitaker, August 24
Mark Brawner, August 17	Terry Davis, August 25
Barbara Holt, August 17	Martha Albright, August 26
Jeannette Pollard, August 18	Frank Plafcan, August 28
Gail Clark, August 19	Lott Rolfe III, August 29
Carolyn Grimes, August 19	John Langston, August 30 
Laura Luther, August 19	

Extension Cord Editorial Board

Stan Chapman	Earl Wilson
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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.