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## Ora Lee Yates' gift of gab and knack for helping people led to successful Extension career

Ora Lee Yates started working at Extension in her late 30s, but wishes it had been the first job she landed after graduating from high school.

She loved it that much.

Yates retired in February 2016 after 30 years with Extension. She held various roles, the last being administrative specialist in Saline County.

"I was told I should be sure and take my crocheting projects to the Saline County office," she recalled with a laugh. "But I was busy. The county agent I worked for was busy. I was afraid I'd be bored, but I definitely was not."

Yates was never in bored in any of her Extension roles, starting with the first job as a secretary at the State Office. She decided to be brave and take the typing test at Extension – and passed. She was married with two kids and had been working for a while, but decided Extension was calling.

She started out in the agriculture section in Pest Management at the State Office, working for three specialists: entomology, cotton and small farm ag. The bug specialist had been through three secretaries in quick succession, so they asked Yates if she was scared of creepy crawlies.

"I told them no. I loved the subject matter, weeds, bugs and trees," she said. "I love identifying them."

Her knack for identification came in handy when people would call the office asking about this or that thing they'd found on their property.

Once a man came into the office and said he'd taken a bite of the item he was holding in his hand, but wasn't sure what it was. Luckily, she said, it was just a pawpaw fruit.

"Remember that song, Picking up pawpaws, puttin' 'em in a basket," she said.

Yates loves to meet new people and to chat with them, so she was perfect for answering the phone at the Extension offices where she worked. She said her family teases her about her gift of gab.

Her teenage granddaughter once put a picture up on Facebook of herself in a sleeping bag on the floor of a local store. The caption: "This is me with my granny. She found someone to talk to."

Yates had known about Extension since she was a young girl, growing up on a farm in Saline County. She was a self-described tomboy with two brothers, but she also went with her mother to Extension Club meetings. They used recommendations from those meetings to can their own food and much more.



Ora Lee Yates

*(Continued, page 4)*

### THE INSIDE STORIES

#### 2018 regional fall retiree events set

Plan to attend a meeting near you this fall.

#### Donors to the Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship

New donations to the "Keys to Our Success" Retiree Scholarship Endowment totaled \$1,025.

#### New retiree

Wanda Barker joins the ranks of Extension retirees.

#### Honorary and memorial donations

Gifts made from May 1-31 in honor or memory of individuals.

#### Condolences

#### Housekeeping Made Easy

Home management tips from 1935.


#### To Extension retirees

Dr. Rick Cartwright introduces Dr. Deacue Fields, says goodbye to Dr. Rick Roeder, and highlights summer Extension programs and activities.

## 2018 regional fall retiree events

A CES retiree event is coming to a location near you. Due to the success of last fall's events, seven regional retiree events have been scheduled around the state. Last fall's events were a trial run to see what kind of attendance these types of events might attract. Many of them were well attended, and by changing the location of a couple, we hope they all will be well attended. The dates and locations are as follows:

- ◆ *October 17 – Ozark Folk Center, Mountain Home*
- ◆ *October 18 – Craighead County Extension Office, Jonesboro*
- ◆ *October 23 – Crawford County Extension Office, Van Buren*
- ◆ *October 24 – Don Tyson Center for Agricultural Science, Fayetteville*
- ◆ *October 26 – Little Rock State Office, Little Rock*
- ◆ *October 31 – Southwest Research and Extension Center, Hope*
- ◆ *November 1 – Drew County Farm Bureau Building, Monticello*


Registration information will be distributed via the *Extension Cord* or mailed to those who don't receive the *Extension Cord*. 

### July birthdays

Michael A. Hedges, July 1	Dolores McBride, July 14
Wanda Snow Pemberton, July 3	Jim Lee Wallace, July 14
Dr. John E. Gunter, July 3	Candace Carrie, July 15
James E. Jefferson, July 3	Dr. H. Wallace Goddard, July 15
Randy M. Chlapecka, July 3	Patsy R. Stephens, July 16
Shirley Hesselschwerdt, July 4	James E. Aikman, July 17
Jane A. Mowry, July 5	Joyce Whittington, July 19
Jimmy Joe Moore, July 5	Ora Lee Yates, July 19
Mary B. Dunn, July 6	Leon Marvin Ferguson, July 20
Debbra E. Still, July 6	J.B. Williams, July 21
Millie Jo Collins, July 7	Dr. John W. Boyd, July 21
Andy M. Vangilder, July 7	Helen Glass, July 22
Betty Archer, July 8	Relda S. Washburn, July 24
Carolyn H. Lewis, July 8	Virginia Cottrell, July 24
Quinton Hornsby, July 8	Dr. David E. Foster, July 25
Howard S. Young, July 9	Dr. Tony E. Windham, July 26
Dr. Jim Bemis Jr., July 10	Ruben H. Johnson, July 28
Elizabeth A. Childs, July 10	Wanda W. Shelby, July 28
Linda Gaye Tanner, July 10	Tommy Thompson, July 29
Thomas F. Vaughns, July 12	Madlyn Mason, July 30
Carolyn L.W. Burns, July 12	Dr. A. Edwin Colburn, July 31 

## Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship donors

The following retirees have made a gift to the "Keys to Our Success" CES Retiree Scholarship Endowment. To this point, \$1,025 has been received. We wish to recognize the following donors for their gifts:

Saundria Ash	Martha and Mark May
Gordon and Lyndle Barnes	Darlene Z. Millard
James and Doris Barrentine	Kenneth and Celia Shireman
Ray and Patricia Benz	Phil and Susan Tacker
Rick and Lynette Cartwright	Terrie and Curtis Treadway
Ramona and Richard Gordon	Tom and Rosa Troxel
Bobby and Anita Hall	Brenda and Bruce Vick
Gary and Mary Lou Huitink	J.B. and Betty Williams 
Rich Maples	

## 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 May 1-31, 2018.

### ■ Cooperative Extension Service Retiree Scholarship

By Darlene Z. Millard

*In memory of Dennis R. Millard*

By Ramona Gordon

*In memory of Helen Nowlin*

By Don and Lorena Plunkett


*In memory of Marvin Wall*

By Gary and Mary Lou Huitink

*In memory of C. A. Vines*

By Rich Maples

*In memory of Dr. Randel E. Price*

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. 

## Condolences

The Editorial Board extends its sympathy to Margaret Alexander on the death of her son, Barney Louis Alexander, 65, who died May 21, 2018.

## Housekeeping Made Easy

Yes, it is possible, according to a 1935 Extension circular of the same name written by Mrs. Ida A. Fenton, Bradley County home demonstration agent.

According to Fenton, “The solution to an unbalanced routine of living lies in introducing into the family living pattern some new methods for those tasks which consume much time, such as meal preparation, cleaning, laundering, and caring for poultry. This will mean:

- (1) Simple meals
- (2) Training each family member to keep his room in order
- (3) Assigning different members of the family the tasks of caring for poultry, doing some garden work, caring for lamps, carrying out ashes, and bringing in wood
- (4) Simplifying the ironing.”

It was suggested that cleaning aids, including ammonia, furniture polish, soap, wax, olive oil, borax, kerosene, washing soda, alcohol, whiting and a step ladder (“a good 5-foot one can be bought for a dollar”) should be kept in stock. The kerosene was also useful for cleaning windows, stoves and bathroom fixtures.

A wall dough for cleaning dirty walls and ceilings could be made from flour, warm water, kerosene, salt, vinegar and ammonia. This mixture had to be cooked, stirred and kneaded before it was ready to use. Hard to see how this was labor saving.

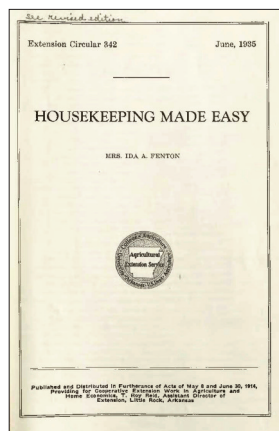
In anticipation of today’s Magic Eraser, Fenton had instructions for making a “magic mitt” for polishing silverware. The main ingredient was iron oxide.

A homemade solution of calcium hypochlorite was “recommended for sterilizing milk bottles, vessels, cream separators and equipment, and is also recommended as a disinfectant for kitchen, sick room, bathroom, and garbage cans. It is a bleach for removing stains, and is good as a first aid for open wounds.”

Instructions were also given for some home maintenance tasks such as resizing rugs, restoring and filling cracks in worn linoleum.

Along with tasks familiar to us like washing dishes and tidying the living room, chores for the “housewife”

(See “Housekeeping,” page 4)



## To our Extension retirees

It is June and already hot, with lots of fire ants and mosquitoes and poison ivy and ticks and even an unexpected thunderstorm and flash flood or two, so all in all a good and typical summer month in Arkansas. Hope all of you are in good spirits and ready for the rest of what promises to be a “record” summer season.

With all the great weather comes even greater activity within Extension and the Division of Agriculture. We welcomed a new dean of the College of Agriculture recently – Dr. Deacue Fields. He grew up on a farm in Louisiana, then became an ag economist and worked in extension, research and teaching, much of it at Auburn where we hired him from. He started the other day and indicated he would be trying to recruit students from every county in Arkansas, and working with county extension and 4-H to help make this happen. He is a breath of fresh air to date. I hope you get to meet him.

We are saying goodbye to Dr. Rick Roeder, associate director for the Experiment Station. Rick served 16 years here, following stints at Southern Illinois and Idaho previously. He worked hard for our research programs and was a good friend to Extension. We hope that he and his wife are now able to focus on all the stuff they wanted to do but did not have the time during work life. We wish them the best.

Speaking of Extension activity, I was able to attend the AEHC annual conference, Breakthrough Solutions meeting, the annual Tomato Festival and Luncheon in Warren and the 4-H Teen Star Banquet. These are excellent examples of what all Extension is involved in, and it was my honor to participate.

The EHC members always amaze me with their energy and endurance, and serve as “the” example of volunteerism in our state.

Mark Peterson and Breakthrough Solutions continue to define community creativity and active involvement, doing the impossible at times as they battle the “forces of decline” in rural Arkansas and America.

The Tomato Festival in Warren is Americana at its positive best, and while many politicians were in evidence this year, the local extension staff, including Michelle Carter, John Gavin and Robin Hollis, along with the EHC Club and 4-H members were quietly helping make this event happen – behind the scenes but mighty.


(See “Cartwright,” page 4)





**Housekeeping** (Cont. from page 3)  
included washing the cream separator and milk things, churning, dusting the bed springs and washing the mattress, and cleaning the cook stove and fireplace.

A lot has changed in 83 years. Most of us no longer spend our house-keeping time taking care of poultry and gardens, patching linoleum, churning or cleaning cream separators, making our own cleaning solutions – or even ironing. One thing hasn’t changed: the desire to minimize time spent cleaning in order to maximize time available to spend with family and friends.

Extension Circular No. 342, *Housekeeping Made Easy*, by Ida A. Fenton, was accessed from the Digital Archives of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, <http://digitalcollections.uark.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/ArkExt/id/11450/rec/2> 

**Yates** (Cont. from page 1)  
“I still can food from my garden,” Yates said. “I just like to do it. Last year I didn’t plant a garden. I thought, ‘I’m retired, I don’t have to do that anymore.’ But I missed it. I have one this year. I’ve got squash, zucchini, peppers, cabbage – though I think the heat might kill those – tomatoes, cucumbers and okra.”

Yates likes to do all things with purpose and as well as possible.

“I’m a real fanatic in things being done the way they should be done,” she said, thinking back to her Extension working days.

That commitment to excellence earned her an Outstanding Support Employee award in April 1999. She went to Fayetteville for a meeting and was surprised to receive the recognition.

In retirement, she keeps busy quilting, crocheting, knitting and being involved in two Extension Homemakers clubs. As part of the two clubs, she crochets caps for babies at Children’s Hospital and veterans at the VA Hospital.

Yates is also active in the church she’s attended all her life. She helps her brother make sorghum every fall because she wants her grandchildren to know how to make molasses. She recently bought a 100-year-old Singer treadle and is piecing together a quilt.

**Cartwright** (Cont. from page 3)

I confess I was impressed and somewhat intimidated by the 4-H Teen Stars and Hall of Fame awardees this year. These young people have achieved so many accomplishments already, and know exactly where they are going, it is daunting to talk to them. But it gives one hope that our state and country will be OK if we have enough 4-H youth to lead in the future – we will be alright. Katie and Sara Gardner were the Hall of Fame awardees, and these sisters exemplify all four elements of 4-H at the absolutely highest level. I really hope you get to meet some of these young stars.

Another young 4-H “star” is Tania Kelly. She is from Pulaski County and is a singer in 4-H Performing Arts. Recently, Tania was asked to sing the National Anthem at the Washington Nationals baseball game in Washington, D.C., in late June. I heard her audition tape, and this young person has the gift. Sometimes one does not know what excellence really is until you hear it, but I heard it, and Tania is excellence in singing.

In this issue, our highlight is Ora Lee Yates. I cannot think of a better highlight, or a better example of Extension and its mission than Ora Lee. Dedication, commitment to excellence and service, lifelong learner, helping others and all of the other traits of Extension people are embodied in Ora Lee. She is a star.

Have a warm and wonderful June and may your summer be the greatest ever.  
– Rick Cartwright 

“I want my grandkids to learn the old ways,” she said.


Yates also likes to try new things and isn’t afraid to experiment.

She recently got a hankering for a corn dog and decided she’d whip up a batter and make one. It was pretty tasty, she said.

She loves her family dearly and is happy her son, daughter, seven grandkids and great-grandchild live near her farm out in the woods. She and her husband of 50 years live in the

house in the woods with two dogs, six cats and several chickens. Twenty-four of the chickens are laying hens and the others are what she calls “friz-zles,” just cute chickens to make her grandkids happy.

She still misses her friends at Extension, but pops over on occasion to say hello.

To reconnect with Ora Lee, you may call her at (501) 794-1176 or e-mail her at [olyates719@att.net](mailto:olyates719@att.net). 

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.

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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: \_\_\_\_\_

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