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## Retiree Spotlight

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**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE  
RESEARCH & EXTENSION**  
University of Arkansas System

## Bob Blake Is Enjoying His Life of Leisure

If you see Bob Blake around town, he'll likely be wearing a tropical-print shirt and flip-flops, Jimmy Buffett style.

He retired from Extension on Labor Day 2014 and is enjoying slower-paced days while still hanging on to the working life a little. He's an usher at the Arkansas Travelers' games and for UALR basketball.

"I get minimum wage and I get to watch great sports," he quipped.

This part-time gig harkens back to his first career, before Extension. Blake did some undergraduate college work in his hometown in New Jersey in physical education before joining the Air Force, which brought him to Little Rock Air Force Base where he ran the base sports and fitness program.

After four years, he finished his undergrad degree from UALR and then became the first parks and recreation director in Maumelle.

He went on to administer a statewide grants program funding outdoor recreation facilities across Arkansas. Later, he went to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, as a special events specialist for the city parks and recreation department, eventually managing the city's sports stadium complex with the New York Yankees spring training and professional soccer. In 1985, he came back to the Little Rock Air Force Base with his wife and young son to work as a civilian running the base's

recreation programs. (Incidentally, his wife, Marsha, is a 23-year veteran of the Air Force. They met in the chow hall at LRAFB and he proposed that same day. They married in the base's chapel in 1974.)

After a decade at the air base, Blake became the city of Fordyce parks and recreation director. There he built a new civic center and city park. While in Fordyce, Blake met Bobby Hall, who was the county agent in Dallas County at the time. Hall recommended Blake

for the director position at the 4-H Center in Ferndale.

Blake took the job and was director for 18½ years. He lived with his family on the property for a dozen of those years.

During his tenure, he oversaw a variety of major renovations and additions to the campus, including a new

lodging unit and extra meeting space, as well as an expansion of areas like shooting sports.

The meeting space welcomed diverse groups and the center achieved self-sufficiency.

When Blake retired, he looked forward to reading novels. He never had time to read anything but work books before retirement, but these days he runs through multiple books a month. He's read probably 50 books since retiring, mostly spy novels and whodunits.

*(Continued, page 3)*



*Bob Blake with wife, Marsha, son, Robert,  
and daughter-in-law, Amy, on their way  
to a Jimmy Buffett concert*

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## Cycling and Chess Are Passions of Retired Staff Chair Stan Carter

Stanley Carter became the third Extension agent in the family when he went to work in Independence County in 1978.

Carter's father, John, and his uncle, Howard Young, had both been Extension agents, so he knew what to expect when he took his first job as a soybean specialist in Mississippi County.

As a child who had moved around a lot for his dad's job, Carter was also familiar with the frequent job changes.

After being in Mississippi County for about three years (where Carter met his wife, Duska, at Eaker Air Force Base), Carter went to Independence County as assistant agent. Next up was Fulton County, where he was promoted to county agent - agriculture.

He finally settled in for a while as the staff chair in Clinton for eight years, then moved back to Independence County in the same position until retiring in May 2014. He worked for Extension for 36 years.

Since leaving Extension, Carter has logged thousands of miles on his bicycle. He completes century rides and has been in several

competitions. The century rides – which means, you guessed it, 100 miles – are done with fellow cyclists.

Last year, Carter won the Arkansas State Road Racing Championship, beating out everyone in his age group and also some of the cyclists in the younger age groups, too.

"I finally got a championship jersey, even if it was in the 60-year-old division" he joked.

Carter is looking forward to the century ride in April because the route goes through his hometown of Paris.

Carter is also a chess enthusiast and plays in tournaments a few times a year. He's secretary/treasurer of the Arkansas Chess Association, so he helps facilitate chess tournaments in the state.

The next state tournament is in April in Batesville, where he lives since retirement.

Carter also works with the local high school chess team.

When he's not enjoying his main hobbies, Carter and his wife often travel to see their daughter's family in Houston. They'll be grandparents



*Stan Carter with grandson, Carter*

a second time over when their granddaughter is born in August. Their grandson is two.

They also spend time visiting their son who lives in Fayetteville.

Carter said his next big retirement project is to remodel several rooms in their house.

To reconnect with Stanley Carter, contact him at 195 Bluff View, Batesville, Arkansas 72501, (870) 834-8335.

*– Shannon Magsam*

## Charlotte Fant, Retired Health Education Specialist, Dies

Charlotte Mills Fant, 68, died Feb. 15 in Conway.

Fant served as a health specialist with Extension from 1977 until her retirement from that position in 2000.

She held degrees from State College of Arkansas (now University of Central Arkansas) in physical education and special education. At the time of her death, Fant worked at UCA as an academic advisor in pre-physical therapy, where she advised more than 300 students a year, including students in the physical therapy program and undergraduates who were applying for the program.

A memorial service was held Feb. 19 in the Doyne Health Sciences Center Auditorium on the UCA campus.

## Ada Raye Hicks, Retired Clerk Stenographer, Dies

The editorial board recently received news of the death of Ada Raye Hicks, 86, of Grand Blanc, Michigan, on Nov. 2, 2015.

Hicks served as clerk-stenographer in Independence County from 1977 until her retirement in 1994.

Survivors include her son, Gary Wade Hicks of Grand Blanc, Michigan; a grandson, Daniel Hicks of Searcy; a brother, Harold Moore of Conway; and a sister, Medrith Anschultz of Bowling Green, Kentucky.

## News Briefs

**Tommy Wallace**, son of Bill Wallace, former Extension agent in Faulkner County and beef cattle specialist, exhibited photos he took with smartphones at the Delta Visual Arts Show in Newport on February 27. Wallace, who serves as associate pastor of Family Life Bible Church in Conway, specializes in smartphone photography. He says that his aim is to tell stories of life through his photography.

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Condolences are extended to the family of **Wanda Gray**, 85, of North Little Rock who died Feb. 11, 2016. She was the widow of Leroy Gray, former Extension fisheries specialist.

## Loretta Smith, Retired Communications Administrative Assistant, Dies

Alice Loretta Smith, 78, died March 4 in North Little Rock.

Smith began work at Extension in 1983 as a secretary in the Communications department at the Little Rock state office and retired in 2001 as administrative office supervisor for the department.

She is survived by sons, Randy Smith and Marty Smith, both of North Little Rock; daughters, Becky Cleveland of Maumelle and Lori Wolfe of Farmers Branch, Texas; a brother, Lawrence Johnston of Branson, Missouri; four granddaughters and a great-grandson.

A memorial service was held March 7 in Roller-Owens Funeral Home Chapel in North Little Rock.

Memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Foundation of Arkansas or Hospice Home Care of Little Rock.

## Bob Blake (Cont.)

Blake also has more time to kick around with his son, Robert, and daughter-in-law, Amy. Every year, the family has a big blowout, themed pool party for Amy and the start of summer, since her birthday is June 1.

So what's the theme this year?

Blake said it's a Jimmy Buffett Parrothead party.

To reconnect with Bob Blake, contact him at 135 Lily Drive, Maumelle, Arkansas 72113-5830, (501) 680-6036, bobblake1951@gmail.com.

## From the Editorial Board

Check out these opportunities to see what Extension is up to.

Take a listen as **KUAF-FM's Community Spotlight Series** features aspects of Ozarks agriculture. The series is the handiwork of Johnny Gunsualis and Neal Mays, Benton County staff chair and ag agent, and Pete Hartman, operations manager at KUAF. And talk about homegrown, the music is composed and performed by John Clark, world-renowned fruit breeder for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. Here are links to KUAF interviews on agritourism and family farms.

<http://www.uaex.edu/media-resources/news/DWAYNE%20PARSONS.mp3>

<http://www.uaex.edu/media-resources/news/MON%203.7%20COMMSPOT%20ME%20AND%20OAL%20VERSION%201.mp3>

<http://www.uaex.edu/media-resources/news/MON%203.7%20COMMSPOT%20ME%20AND%20OAL%20VERSION%202.mp3>

Since the 1990s, the University of Arkansas System's Division of Agriculture has produced **Arkansas Land & Life** magazine. The twice-a-year publication highlights the Division's people and the work they do on behalf of all Arkansans. The video version of *Arkansas Land & Life*, which made its debut in 2015, brings our stories to life.

Find these and other news, feature and how-to videos on our ARextension channel:

[www.youtube.com/user/ARextension/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/ARextension/videos).

Your editorial board

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– Shannon Magsam

Cooperative Extension Service  
2301 South University Avenue  
Little Rock, AR 72204-4940

## April Birthdays

Annette Coor, April 1	John Payne, April 11
Linda King, April 1	Ed Erwin, April 12
Yvonne Mizell, April 1	Rich Maples, April 12
Kenneth Williams, April 2	Mary Ruth Miner Fallin, April 17
Woody Miley, April 3	Brenda Henderson Pratt, April 18
Nancy Winterbauer Olofson, April 3	Rebecca Reynolds, April 19
Susan Sanders, April 4	Mary Butler, April 21
Easter Tucker, April 5	Phil Tacker, April 22
Janice Wadkins, April 5	Tommie Wyatt, April 22
Kathryn Lynch, April 6	Claude Bonner, April 25
Bonnie Wright, April 7	Eleanor Walls, April 27
Ann Gray, April 8	Diane Jones, April 29
Colleen Owen, April 8	
Stanley Chapman, April 9	
Louise Walker, April 10	

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.

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

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