



Keeping you connected

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U of A
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

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Students receive on-farm training in agricultural sustainability

Seeds. Soil. Soybeans. Drones?

More than 150 high school students from around the state attended the ninth annual Environmental and Agricultural Sustainability Field Trip on Sept. 26. The University of Arkansas department of crop, soil, and environmental sciences hosts the event every year at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture's Arkansas Agricultural Research and Extension Center.

Holly Yeatman, recruiting coordinator for the CSES department, said the event connects students with environmental and agricultural experts for hands-on experiences related to what they're learning in the classroom.

"So many of the things that we talk about and show students are directly related to their curriculum," Yeatman said.

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Dr. Larry Purcell's drone searches for a satellite signal before taking off on its automated flight.

Fall Extension Retirees meetings scheduled

Dr. Rick Cartwright, Associate Vice President for Agriculture Extension and Director, Cooperative Extension Service, would like to invite all Extension Retirees to participate in the Regional Extension Retirees meetings being held around the state.

All meetings begin at 10:30 a.m. with registration and social time. There will be an Extension update, benefits update and question/answer time. Lunch will be provided. The meetings will be held on the following dates.

October 25—Hoot's BBQ, McGehee

October 27—Fruit Research Station, Clarksville

November 2—Clark County Fairgrounds, Arkadelphia

November 7—Craighead County Extension Office, Jonesboro

November 14—Little Rock State Office

To aid in our planning process, please RSVP by October 18 at the following link.

<http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07eeo8mb8kj8am1c54/start>.

Please contact Verna Waddell at (501) 671-2326 with any questions.

THE INSIDE STORIES

2018 Flower & Garden Show

Dr. John Clark and Janet Carson are featured speakers at show next March at its new location at the Arkansas State Fairgrounds.

Tax info available online

National 4-H Month

4-H is celebrating its legacy of forging future leaders through learned responsibility, challenges and engagement during October, National 4-H Month.

Obituaries

Jeannette Pollard, retired Extension management specialist

Rosemary Gardner, retired administrative office supervisor

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Clark, Carson to speak at 2018 garden show at new location

Two of the best-known names in Arkansas gardening will be featured speakers at the 2018 Arkansas Flower and Garden Show, taking place at the Arkansas State Fairgrounds, March 2-4.

Dr. John Clark, distinguished professor and fruit breeder for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, known for developing breeds of blackberries now grown on six of the world's seven continents, will speak about the fruit's well-suited temperament for home gardening. Clark's presentation will highlight blackberries' strongest attributes, and how to choose the best varieties for each garden, said Krista Quinn, executive director for the show.




Hay bale gardening demonstration at 2017 Arkansas Flower and Garden Show.

Clark is scheduled to speak at 11:15 a.m. on Friday, March 2.

Janet Carson, extension horticulture specialist for the Division of Agriculture, will speak the following day at 1:45 p.m. Carson, who is also the State Master Gardener Coordinator for Arkansas, will speak about how to make care for both annual and perennial plants easier.

2018 will mark the Arkansas Flower and Garden Show's debut at the Arkansas State Fairgrounds. The three-day show will feature gardens, vendors, speakers and more spread out through several buildings on the grounds. The new location offers several improvements over the show's previous location at the Statehouse Convention Center in downtown Little Rock, perhaps the most impactful among them being parking, which is plentiful and included in the ticket price.

"Moving the show to the fairgrounds has a lot of advantages," Quinn said. "We'll have plenty of secure and convenient parking and more space for our vendors and other gardening exhibits."


The Arkansas Flower and Garden Show, now in its 27th year, is a nonprofit organization that uses the vast majority of money raised through ticket sales and vendor fees to fund Greening of Arkansas grants, which help subsidize community beautification projects in public spaces throughout the state, and scholarships for students studying horticulture at universities in Arkansas. 

Arkansas property tax info available online

Updated publications showing the sources and beneficiaries of property tax revenue are now available, for all 75 Arkansas counties and the state, at <https://www.uaex.edu/business-communities/government-policy/local-government-finance.aspx>. The publications also provide information on property assessments, property tax rates (millage) and the property tax burden compared among counties and to other states in the nation.

Visitors to the site can see the sources and beneficiaries of property tax revenue in their respective counties, compare their local property tax rate (millage) with those in neighboring counties, compare the property tax burden among Arkansas counties with other states in the nation and more, said Wayne Miller, professor and extension economist for the Division of Agriculture.


"While the property tax may be unpopular, communities rely on the property tax to generate a substantial share of revenue that funds local schools, county and city governments," Miller said. "No one likes to pay taxes, but we like good schools for our children, good roads and safe communities."

Despite the importance of property tax revenue to local governments, the property tax burden placed upon Arkansans was relatively low compared to other states in 2014, according to the report. The state's \$672 per capita property tax revenue is the third-lowest in the nation; the 1.8 percent share of personal income typically collected by the property tax in the state is the fourth-lowest. 

October is National 4-H Month

With fall weather finally working its way through the Mid-South, and the new school year well underway, Arkansas 4-H, along with 4-H organizations across the country, is celebrating its legacy of forging future leaders through learned responsibility, challenges and engagement during October, National 4-H Month.

"True Leaders" is the theme of this year's National 4-H month. Angie Freel, Interim Associate Department Head for 4-H and Youth Development, said October is a natural fit for the annual outreach efforts, because it coincides with the start of the 4-H program calendar, when 4-H officers are elected and leadership teams are formed.

Arkansas 4-H is encouraging local and county-level 4-H organizations throughout the state to engage their communities through a number of suggested activities, including adopting service projects throughout October, a "healthy living day," making promotional videos for social media. 

To our Extension retirees

We hope this issue finds you in good health and happy spirits, “rarin” for autumn in Arkansas, usually a great time to reflect on summer past and get ready for winter coming. My mom says the squirrel tails are really big and fluffy this time, so she expects a colder than normal winter.

Please note in this issue of the “Cord,” the five “legacy” meetings with retirees, starting Oct. 25 at McGehee and ending Nov. 14 in Little Rock, with Clarksville, Arkadelphia and Jonesboro in between. Some have already asked me why we are doing this: Because we have not done it before. Well, the main reason is that I wanted to. Brian Helms and I are dead serious about greater engagement and support for our retirees, and area meetings give more opportunity to all across the state. Make no mistake, you are all very, very important to us.

Also, this issue mentions that October is National 4-H Month. There are many activities this month to celebrate 4-H. We hope you can support 4-H any way you can and make some noise about this great program during the month. If you read the news, you should recognize like I do that we need more 4-H in this world – not less – it will help. Speaking of 4-H, we have many dedicated staff but lately Angie Freel, Jesse Bocksnick and Shannon Caldwell have set the bar really high, so I have to say thanks to them and kudos to all the 4-H staff. Also, kudos to Dr. Martha Sartor for her embrace of new ideas.

I like the word “kudos,” so kudos also to our horticulture group, mentioned in this issue. Janet Carson and our agents have worked the Arkansas Flower and Garden Show forever, and it will move to the Arkansas State Fairgrounds on March 2-4, 2018. This new location should allow an even greater “show” and help us continue to dispel the myth that Extension is the “best kept secret” in Arkansas. This show will be greatly enhanced because it features our own Janet Carson (all things gardening and horticulture) and John Clark (incomparable fruit breeder). There are no better experts in the horticulture world than Janet and John. No brag. Just fact.

The current issue also has a nice story about sustainability and drones. Drones and robotics in agriculture are the next “big thing,” already well under development worldwide. We recently passed a foundational policy on the use of drones, and several faculty and staff are involved in their use in research and education. Dr. Terry Spurlock is an

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Jeannette Pollard, former Extension management specialist, dies

Jeannette Pollard, 82, died Sept. 24, 2017. Pollard graduated with honors from the University of Arkansas and earned a Master’s degree in business from Louisiana Tech University.

She began her Extension career in 1971 as administrative assistant in the Little Rock state office where she served for a time as secretarial supervisor. In 1979 she became an Extension management specialist, working in the Business Office as accounts payable manager. She retired in 1996.

She is survived by two nieces, Linda Pollard Korb and Ann Pollard Zega; two nephews, Robert Pollard and David Pollard; and four grand nephews.

Memorial service and internment were held Sept. 30 at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in North Little Rock. Memorials may be made to St. Luke’s or Camp Mitchell Episcopal Camp and Conference Center.

Rosemary Gardner, former administrative office supervisor, dies

Rosemary Gardner, 87, of North Little Rock passed away Sept. 18.

Gardner began her Extension career in 1974 as clerk-stenographer at the Little Rock state office. She subsequently worked as an accounting assistant and administrative office supervisor before retiring in 1996.

She is survived by her children, George Ray Gardner and Mary Anne Thomas; grandchildren, Joseph Ray Gardner, Kolton Ray Gardner and Gunner Hayes Gardner; and other extended family.

A funeral mass was held Sept. 21 at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church with burial at Rest Hills Memorial Park. Memorials may be made to Diocesan Clergy Welfare Fund, c/o Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 7000 JFK Boulevard, North Little Rock, Arkansas 72116.

Agricultural sustainability field trip (cont.)

Tom Ethridge, AP Environmental Science teacher at Mountain Home High School, said he loves the hands-on nature of the trip. “They get to come out here and touch everything and see everything, and maybe just open up their eyes to – ‘Hey, what’s close to my house that I might not know about?’”

One of Ethridge’s students, Stephanie Jones, thinks learning about sustainability is important for all high school students. “It’s going to affect everybody later in the future. It’s definitely something that we should take interest in,” she said.

Ethridge added, “Living sustainably hurts nobody and helps everybody.”

Students arrived at the research and extension center first thing Tuesday morning. Following a brief welcome address from Yeatman, students split into small groups and loaded into rustic hay wagons toled by tractors. Each group visited stations led by faculty and personnel of the CSES department and visiting specialists from the Beaver Water District. Each session lasted about 15 minutes and introduced students to sustainability concepts that are shaping the future of agricultural practices and environmental management.

Two tours, each with six stations, covered a wide range of topics, including water resource management, soybean breeding and erosion control. A biodiesel plant demonstration was particularly popular. Used cooking oil from University of Arkansas dining halls is recycled into biodiesel fuel that powers farm equipment at the research and extension center.

Another favorite session demonstrated how researchers like Dr. Larry Purcell are using drones to improve soybean production.

Andrew McGlynn and Emily Efurd thought the drone automation was especially interesting. “You can program it and make it go on its own missions by itself,” McGlynn said.

Purcell, CSES professor and holder of the Alzheimer Chair for Soybean Research, said technology like drones is becoming more and more common out in the fields. “What we talked about here today is really just the tip of the iceberg,” he said.

Yeatman said future CSES career openings are expected to exceed the number of qualified graduates, making events like the Environmental and Agricultural Sustainability field trip a great chance to introduce high school students to opportunities they might not have considered.

“It kind of gives them a hint of what we’re going to learn in class and what they can do as a career after they graduate,” said Jade Cameron, agriscience educator at Fayetteville High School.

“The kids really enjoyed it this year. It gets them excited,” Cameron said. (e)

To our Extension retirees (cont.)

absolute authority on this stuff – the stuff of science fiction when I was in high school, now. Exciting times to be doing Extension Work.

Finally, my condolences to the families of Jeannette Pollard and Rosemary Gardner. While it always hurts to say goodbye to Extension family, we will certainly honor their lives and work.

Until next time, be safe, happy and spend time with your family and friends. – Rick Cartwright (e)

November Birthdays

- Eric Grant, Nov. 3
- Massie Silva, Nov. 3
- Reba Hawkins, Nov. 3
- Frances Story, Nov. 4
- Sue Palsa, Nov. 9
- Ursula Crow, Nov. 9
- Jerry McIntyre, Nov. 11
- Gerald Alexander, Nov. 12
- Doris Begeman, Nov. 13
- Milo Shult, Nov. 13
- Patsy Keller, Nov. 15
- Gloria Eubanks, Nov. 16
- Eugenia Hockett, Nov. 18
- Luther Roberts, Nov. 20
- Joe Vestal, Nov. 22
- Brenda Hawkins, Nov. 24
- Janice Jones, Nov. 24
- Kathryn Fowler, Nov. 25
- Vatra Stone Hibbs, Nov. 27
- Louise McPherson, Nov. 28
- Jim Frala, Nov. 30

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