

JANUARY 2012
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER SPECIAL
EDITION

Note: Due to circumstances beyond my control the quarterly newsletter was not distributed prior to the Holiday Season. I would like to offer my apology and hope you enjoy this edition. I wish all of you a Wonderful ESPA New Year!

INSIDE THIS EDITION:

President's Corner

TERSSA Update for 2012

2012 ESPA Awards

2012 Annual Meeting Overview

And More.....

**Happy
New
Year!**

We're Proud To Be Celebrating 25 Years of Service in the State of Alabama!

Extension Support Personnel Association
(ESPA)





PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I pray that all of you had a wonderful Christmas/New Year break and that it was relaxing, peaceful, prosperous and safe. Welcome back to our busy schedules. There is so much illness among our ESPA family, so please don't forget to keep our ESPA family in your prayers.

There is a little less than four months before our annual meeting. Thanks to everyone that has helped to raise funds for our meeting.

I would like to personally thank everyone that has gone beyond the call of duty to help me in preparing for this upcoming event.

SPRING BOARD MEETING:

There are two months to go before our Annual Spring Board meeting in Clanton, Alabama. The board and I will come together to make important decisions to make this the best conference for you and your guest.

PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITIES:

Frona Bridgmon and I had the opportunity to meet with our new director, Dr. Lemme on October 19, 2011. Dr. Lemme wanted to meet with each president and one officer of the association. The meeting went very well.

Sandra Walton and I are in the process of finalizing the menus. If you have any suggestions, please let me know. We have received some donations. Some of our speakers have confirmed.

AUCTION ITEMS: Please start gathering your auction items.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS FOR MAY:

I know that some of you have already reserved your room but in the meantime if you haven't please go ahead and reserve your room.

The excitement is in the air so please make plans for May 16, 17, and 18th in Orange Beach, Alabama. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Vanessa Pratcher
ESPA President 2011-2012



Alabama ESPA members represented Alabama at the TERSSA Annual Meeting in Starkville, MS on October 17-19, 2011. The meeting was held on Mississippi State Campus.

Donna Mahrous, Sandra Walton, Karen Bixler, and Trelle Cavallaro was greeted with great Southern Hospitality by the

ladies and staff at Mississippi State University.

On Monday the 17th, we were invited to attend Mississippi Secretary Association Banquet.



Mississippi State Ex-

ension Director, Dr. Gary Jackson, gave the keynote address. He encouraged all of the support staff to keep up the good work they were doing because they are the first person everyone sees when contacting Extension.

On Tuesday, we took a tour of MSU. We were greeted by Mississippi State University, First Lady, Rhonda Keenum in her home. After a tour of her beautiful home, we continued a tour of Mississippi Campus. What a pretty campus it was.

On Wednesday, we had the TERSSA Annual Business Meeting. Trelle Cavallaro was elected Secretary and Karen Bixler was elected President for fall of 2012. We hope everyone will make plans to attend TERSSA in 2012 since it will be in Montgomery. The cost to join is only \$10.00.

*Thanks To Donna, Karen, Sandra
& Trelle for Representing Our
Organization in Mississippi!*





CONGRATULATIONS TO KAREN BIXLER
FOR BEING ELECTED PRESIDENT OF TERSSA FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR!

PLEASE TAKE SPECIAL NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING LETTER!

HAPPY NEW YEAR TERSSA MEMBERS,

I HOPE YOUR HOLIDAY WAS a great time with family and reflection. Now that the New Year is upon us, what is your goal for 2012? Where do you see TERSSA in the year 2012? I hope you see it as an organization that is constantly growing and providing excellent professional improvement to this organization.

As your new President, my goal is to see TERSSA do just that. As a National Organization, we need to have showmanship of a growing and professional organization. The planning stages now begin for our TERSSA Meeting to be held in Montgomery, Alabama in the fall of 2012. I hope each of you are planning now to attend. I hope to be able to provide great professional improvement sessions, as well as show you some good southern hospitality! The board will start meeting this month to begin planning this meeting. I encourage all TERSSA members to attend. This is a TEAM Organization and I want all members to know that they have a voice. I know that all of the officers would love to hear about your concerns.

Thanks for supporting me this year as your 2012 TERSSA President. My goal is live up to your expectations of me and provide the best meeting there is. So, come down South and join us in the fall of 2012 for our TERSSA Annual Meeting.

Look for monthly updates via your State's President. I hope each of you have a great New Year and let's look at the positive side of our job as an Extension Support Staff: we are the first people that our clients will see. Let the public see your smiling face and winning attitude!

Karen Bixler, TERSSA President 2012

TERSSA Officers 2012

President: Karen Bixler - Alabama
President-Elect: Debby King - North Carolina
Recording Secretary: Trelle Cavallaro - Alabama
Membership Secretary: Christine Barrier - North Carolina
Treasurer: Deana Malone- Arkansas
Webmaster: Tracy Brown - North Carolina

For more information visit the following site:
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/assn/sressa/>





2012 ESPA Awards

The annual ESPA Professional Improvement Seminar & Awards Banquet for 2012 will be held at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Orange Beach, AL on May 16-18, 2012. Vanessa Pratcher, ESPA President, has planned a fun, innovative and informative meeting. One important aspect of the professional seminar is the professional recognition of our ESPA members

The Professional Recognition Award recognizes an ESPA member for outstanding performance in Extension support service. The winner of the award will receive a certificate and a \$200 monetary award. Three non-Extension professionals will select the winner.

The Special Achievement Award recognizes an ESPA member who exhibits outstanding ability and expertise that far exceeds the norm in one or more phases of his/her job performance. The winner of the award will receive a certificate and a \$150 monetary award.

A nameplate will also be secured for hanging on the plaque in Duncan Hall. Three non-Extension Professionals will select the winner.

The ESPA Member of the Year Award recognizes an ESPA member for outstanding contributions to the organization, such as dedication or commitment to certain aspects to the organization. The winner of the award will receive a certificate and a \$100 monetary award. The award will be judged by ESPA Members.

The ESPA Merit Award recognizes an ESPA Member for outstanding service in administrative support to ACES and ESPA. The winner of the award will receive a certificate and a \$100 monetary award. Three non-Extension professionals will select the winner.

Administrative support personnel are the "backbone" of any successful organization. Therefore, it is imperative that we recognize

a job well done. Please make nominations. An ESPA member, CEC, REA, or non-ESPA co-worker can make the nomination. Members may even nominate themselves. Nomination forms will be coming to you via email in a few days. Please remember that nomination forms must be received by 4:00 pm on March 15, 2012. The nominee's supervisor must approve all nominations.

ESPA members who will reach their 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, etc. Anniversary date between May 15, 2011 and May 15, 2012 will receive a service certificate. Please submit your information no later than March 31, 2012. You can submit the information via phone, fax, or email.

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Fundraising

RAISING DOUGH FOR ESPA

Where would ESPA be without money? **NOWHERE!** It takes money for our organization to run to its fullest potential so that we can reach the maximum benefit of our organization.

We will be working on a few fund-raising endeavors throughout this current ESPA year. It's up to the membership to help so that we can reach our full potential and be able to offer the best meeting we can! We can't do it without you!

Our projects for the year are as follows:

Raffle: Sandra Walton is working on getting a painting donated for us to raffle off at the meeting in May.

Program Ads: This is an easy one that everyone can do. We can sell ads to different business', organizations, etc. We already have a 1/2 page ad for \$50.00. We can sell them as follows: 1/4 page ad for \$25; 1/2 page ad for \$50 and a full page ad for \$100.00. We'll be sending this form out separately to the whole membership so be looking for it soon in your email in-box.

Auction: As always, this is our biggest fund-raiser for the year. Begin now looking for the perfect auction item. It was decided by the board that the items be a minimum of \$25.00. It was also suggested that some of the smaller counties could go together and bring in one or two bigger auction items. Thanks for your help in this matter.

So, begin now thinking about how you can contribute to one of these fund-raisers and help our organization, ESPA, be the best it can be. Let's make this year the highest year to date in raising money for our organization. Remember, it takes all of us to make it work.

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please feel free to call me at 334-270-4133 or email at bixlekr@auburn.edu.



Congratulations to
Kathleen Douglas
On Her Retirement!



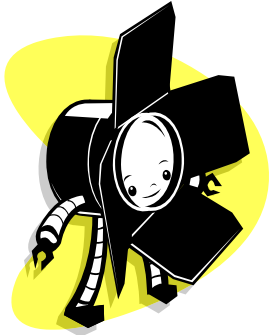
Kathleen “Kathy” Douglas, Cleburne County Administrative Support Associate, retired on December 13, 2011. Kathy was definitely an asset to ACES and the ESPA organization.

During her service within ESPA, Kathy held the positions of President, President-Elect, and Secretary. Kathy has been supportive of the Extension Support Personnel Association and the mission of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.



Congratulations Kathy on your well-deserved retirement. It is our wish that you are successful in all your future endeavors. You deserve it!

See you in Orange Beach in May!



ESPA SPOTLIGHT

Melissa Wise *Covington County*

We would like to extend an “ESPA Welcome” to Melissa Wise who is new to the Alabama Cooperative Extension System as well as the Extension Support Personnel Association. Melissa is currently working in the capacity of Administrative Support Associate I in the Covington County office of ACES. Her employment began eight months ago so she has only begun to “get her feet wet”.



Melissa is married and has three beautiful girls which are ages 14, 6, and 3. When asked about hobbies, she responded ‘Who has time for hobbies with three girls’.

Melissa stated she was not familiar with ACES prior to her employment; however, ACES means learning lots of new things about agriculture, 4-H and other program areas. Since knowledge is power..... she was eager to jump in! She believes that ESPA will allow her an opportunity to gain so much by connecting with other Administrative Support Assistants around the state. It’s awesome to be able to have a support system like ESPA to make sure our voice is heard.



AU SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

The Spirit of Excellence Award has been established to recognize a special group of employees for their service to Auburn University. Each month an award is given to an Auburn University employee from each of the following groups: SERVICE/MAINTENANCE; SECRETARIAL/CLERICAL; TECHNICAL; ADMINISTRATIVE/PROFESSIONAL.

Please take the time to nominate a deserving member of our organization for this award.



It's Almost Here!

PREPARATION FOR MAY ANNUAL MEETING IN ORANGE BEACH

We are making plans for our annual meeting in Orange Beach. You can make your reservations at the Hampton Inn, which is right on the beach, by going to http://hamptoninn.hilton.com/en/hp/groups/personalized/M/MOBOBH-X-SPA-20120516/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG. You can also call for reservations at 251-923-4400. The deadline for reservations with our ESPA block will be April 24.

Tentative Wednesday, May 16

Pat Libby, Master Gardener, will bring out our creative side with a project decorating hurricane globes with dried flowers. Some of you are helping to dry these flowers and I am truly grateful. We will use the globes for decorations and then put them in our auction. Sand Odyssey (SO) will provide ,for the Extension Support Personnel Association (ESPA), a sand castle demonstration and team building exercise at the Hampton Inn Beach. We will divide into teams to build a sand sculptor that will be judged. You can participate, judge or just bring a towel to sit and watch while you enjoy the beach. Participants should be prepared to get a bit sandy and wet up to their knees but that is the fun part of the beach.

Tentative Thursday, May 17

We will tour the Sea, Sand and Stars which is a learning center for students that teaches about the Gulf Coast.

We will visit The Hot Spot at the Orange Beach Art Center where you will have the opportunity to paint a watercolor for \$15 or make a hand-blown ornament for \$20. You will



pay for this in advance with your registration. We will need 18 for the watercolor and 10 for the glass blowing to offer this activity. So, please plan to take advantage of this great opportunity to have a keepsake from Baldwin County.

Weather permitting, our Baldwin County REAs will have a fish fry for us outside at the Art Center with Rick Zapata frying and providing the fish. The Baldwin County Master Gardeners have agreed to prepare sides, desserts and drinks.

Dr. Gary Lemme, Extension Director, will be our banquet speaker. We look forward to meeting him and hearing his ideas for Extension and what part we will have in the future.

I hope we will have some free time so that you can enjoy the beach, shopping and networking.

Don't forget your beach towels, sunscreen and other necessities for the beach. We are still finalizing speakers and other activities. I look forward to seeing you on the sunny beaches of Orange Beach on May 16!!!

Fundraising Notes

Colette Waite, Baldwin County Master Gardener, is donating a large painting of Weeks Bay Pitcher Plants valued at approximately \$500 for our fundraising efforts. We will raffle this painting like we did the quilt last year. Karen Bixler will be sending this information out as soon as she can.

Colette Waite's story on how she began painting. A hiking adventure on Monhegan Island, an artist's colony off the coast of Maine, led Colette into the world of art. Prior to this 2002 trip, while travelling with her husband Taylor, a collection of work by local artist's to reflect their travel experiences was begun. While hiking around Monhegan, she was inspired by the many artists who were painting along the coastline to begin her own portfolio reflecting their travels. Each new travel experience creates an ever expanding photo collection and inspires her to continue to create special works of her memories. She captures on canvas the everyday scenes which pass by unnoticed by most in today's hectic world. Whether painting landscapes, still life, or street scenes, her goal is to let the viewer stop and rest in the beauty of life's everyday visual experiences.

Colette, a former high school math instructor, lives in Daphne, AL. Her art education began with a drawing class in 2002. Since then, she has studied with several local, regional, national and internationally known artists. In 2004, her first juried show entry won Eastern Shore Art Center's Best of Show Award. She began painting in oil in 2005 and has won several awards. You can Google her website at Colette Waite for more information.



Sandra Walton
ESPA Program Chair



HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!!

God has a special birthday planned just for you.
It's full of rich blessings and happy times, too.
May your cup be overflowing with the joy that God brings
And spill out on others as your heart sings

Wishing You A Happy ESPA Birthday.....

October

Annette Drummonds 10/1
Deborah Crawford 10/2
Phyllis Bookers-Chambers 10/5
Betty Witchard (Retired) 10/5
Felissa Morgan 10/11
Stacey Morton 10/15
Jackie Collier 10/14
Kathleen Douglas (Retired) 10/22
Janet Ray 10/24

November

Paula Mayo 11/1
Jan Jenkins 11/11
Sherry Kelley 11/19
Frona Bridgmon 11/29

December

Cathy Banning 12/2
Portia Watkins 12/2
Sheila Dorriety 12/3
Lisa Powell 12/4
Ethel Stanley 12/12
Vanessa Pratcher 12/14
Helen Drake 12/19
Sharon Fox 12/19
LaTanga Charley 12/20
Susan Glover (Retired) 12/23
Erica James 12/31

January

Camellia Taylor 1/6
Brenda Potts 1/17
Nancy McCrary 1/24

February

Kristie Allen 2/10
Elaine King 2/11
Sherry Welsh 2/23
Cynthia Makemsom 2/24

March

Jacqueline Duff 3/11
Brenda Cobb (Retired) 3/16
Sharon Tate 3/21
Nan Chambliss 3/22
Deloris Windham 3/29

April

Betty Chatman (Retired) 4/1
Myra Gartman 4/4
Amanda Foss 4/5
DeLaine Cooper 4/11
Donna Mahrous 4/18
Raydonna Sims 4/22
Joanna Jetton (Retired) 4/27
Rita Meredith (Retired) 4/27

May

Angie Moore 5/6
Susan Stokes (Retired) 5/12
Dolores Tiner 5/20
Camilla Greene 5/21
Jennifer Whitman 5/27
Cheryl Steven 5/28
Elaine Densmore 5/29
Melissa Wise 5/29



Leadership Lesson From Geese

The lesson:

Like geese, people who share a common direction and sense of community, who take turns doing demanding jobs, and who watch out for one another, can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of their teammates. Geese are defined by how they stay connected with one another. Successful teams – and excellent leaders – are defined the same way.



OBJECTIVES

- To foster and recognize exemplary professional work by Extension Support Staff.
- To promote cooperation and understanding among Extension Staff.
- To provide opportunities to promote professional improvement and exchange of ideas.
- To provide a mechanism for maintaining and improving relationships with other professional organizations.
- To perform any other service for the benefit of its members that may be mutually agreeable.

This organization will not establish policy nor will it serve as a substitute for the established procedure for resolving individual grievances.

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