

Annual Family Conference Reaches New Heights in 2006

Extension's Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs unit, headquartered at Alabama A&M University, will hold its Annual Family Conference Oct. 5 at the Von Braun Center in Huntsville. This year's theme is "Strengthening Family-Centered Communities: Reaching New Heights."

Alabama First Lady Patsy Riley is scheduled to appear during the opening session. She is devoted to family and childhood initiatives, such as Internet Keep Safe Coalition, Healthy Exercise and Living, and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters.



*"Famous" Wally Amos
Keynote Luncheon Speaker*

Motivational speaker and author "Famous" Wally Amos will be the keynote luncheon presenter. Amos established Famous Amos Cookies in 1975 and is known as the father of the gourmet chocolate chip cookie industry. Since 1979 he has been the national spokesperson for Literacy Volunteers in America and is also a board member of the National Center for Family Literacy and Communities in Schools.

The conference provides a platform where family care professionals, educators, advocates, researchers, health-care providers, clergy and the public can come together to learn and share resources that strengthen families and communities.

(Continued next page)

Extension Joins Auburn Institute

New Structure for Agriculture, Forestry, Related Areas at AU

Auburn University's mission as a land-grant institution places heavy emphasis on agriculture and engineering. Funding for agriculture, forestry, and other areas related to improving our lives represents a significant portion—20 percent—of AU's budget. These funds make up at least 50 percent of the research and Extension dollars available to Auburn. Yet, no centralized management structure has been in place to provide strategic use of these resources.

Based on recommendations from the Auburn community and on changing circumstances affecting these areas, President Ed Richardson recommended to the AU Board of Trustees that an institute be formed to provide initiatives in agriculture, forestry, water, natural resources and related areas. During its meeting in June 2006, the board approved his recommendation.

"The institute will develop a set of priority initiatives that will mobilize the resources within the included units and throughout AU in areas such as alternative energy, water resources, environmental sciences, rural economic development, nature-based enterprises and food production," said Dr. Gaines Smith, Extension Interim Director.

"We in Extension look forward to being an integral part of the institute and the positive impact it will have on our economy and quality of life in Alabama," he added.

Units initially in the institute are the College of Agriculture, the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Environmental Institute, the Alternative Energy Initiative and the Water Resources Unit. A formal name and interim leadership for the institute will be determined soon.

Extension Hosts AU Sesquicentennial Event

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is helping Auburn University celebrate its sesquicentennial this year. A group of 10 WPA-style murals by Mobile artist John Augustus Walker, originally created for the 1939 Alabama State Fair, will be the subject of an exhibit and talk by Extension artist Bruce Dupree. The paintings depict the history of agriculture in Alabama.

Come to Foy Union's Exhibit Lounge at 4 p.m. on Sept. 21 for the opening exhibit, lecture and reception—and to meet some of Walker's family, who are also part of the Auburn family. Come back from 10 a.m. to noon Sept. 23 before the Auburn/Buffalo football game for an informal visit with Extension and the Walkers. For details, contact Dr. Carol Whatley, Extension Communications co-leader, at (334) 844-5690 or cwhatley@aces.edu.



JOIN THE
**ALABAMA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SYSTEM**
AS WE CELEBRATE OUR PAST AND FUTURE
AT AN EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY
JOHN AUGUSTUS WALKER
FIRST PRESENTED AT THE 1939 ALABAMA STATE FAIR IN BIRMINGHAM
**FOY UNION GALLERY SEPT. 21-23
AUBURN UNIVERSITY**
**RECEPTION AND LECTURE 4 P.M. SEPT. 21 FOY UNION
RECEPTION 10 A.M. TO NOON BEFORE
THE AUBURN/BUFFALO GAME SEPT. 23**

What Extension Does for You...

Extension vs. Yellow Jackets

Auburn University researchers are gaining a clearer picture of the causes behind the growing numbers of super-sized yellow jacket nests throughout the state, thanks to the work of Extension. First, an Extension Communications specialist worked with two AU entomologists on a series of press releases alerting Alabamians about this phenomenon and encouraging them to report suspicious looking nests. Extensive media coverage throughout the state has enabled the entomologists to catalog more than 50 such nests. Roughly 15 regional Extension agents and county coordinators throughout the state are setting traps and assisting with monitoring for the nests to understand the causes of this phenomenon and to develop control measures.

Wildlife Expert on Damage Control

“Over the Hedge,” a movie released earlier this year, is about animals that fight back after their forest and food supply are replaced by a suburban housing development, an all-too-familiar theme to Alabamians living in newly built neighborhoods bordering on animal habitats. Dr. Jim Armstrong, an Extension wildlife specialist, has capitalized on the movie’s release to educate thousands of Alabamians about this growing environmental problem. He has spoken to civic groups across the state through Extension’s new Speakers Bureau and interviewed with several newspapers and television stations.

For expert advice 24 hours a day visit www.aces.edu

Rural Development Experts Convene

A brain trust of 50 rural development experts met at Auburn University June 16—part of a statewide effort under way by the newly organized Economic and Community Development Institute to determine how people and organizations at the rural grassroots can work together for a brighter future. The discussion was sponsored by the ECEDI’s Alabama Rural Roundtable, a forum through which major rural development issues can be discussed. The meeting also marks a major milestone for ECEDI, which now functions as a combined effort of Auburn University and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

Couples Get a Boost Through Marriage Handbook

With the release of a new Extension publication, “The Alabama Marriage Handbook,” Alabama joins only a handful of other states in providing an educational resource for couples seeking marriage licenses. The colorful, user-friendly handbook provides newlyweds and other couples with skills considered essential for healthy marriages. Written and compiled by Dr. Francesca Adler-Baeder, an Extension family and child development specialist and professor at Auburn University, the handbook was unveiled at a press conference with Gov. and Mrs. Bob Riley. Funding was provided by the Alabama Children’s Trust Fund and other agencies. The book is being distributed primarily through probate court offices and is also available on the Extension Web site at www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/H/HE-0829/HE-0829.pdf.

Expanding Youth Leadership Programs

Edna Coleman, an Extension youth development specialist at Alabama A&M University and co-leader of a team of urban youth experts, is taking the reins to expand statewide an Extension youth leadership program through the Points of Light Foundation. The Foundation offers certification training to community leaders who desire to pass leadership expertise on to the next generation through its Points of Light Youth Leadership Institute. First developed by Prudential Financial, the institute was turned over to the Points of Light Foundation in 2004 and is now being offered in 10 countries and 40 states.

Golfing for 4-H

More than 135 golfers and supporters of Alabama 4-H gathered in June for the second Annual Alabama 4-H Golf Classic to raise awareness and support of Alabama’s youth. The classic and a silent auction raised \$20,860, which will support Alabama 4-H programs statewide and assist in the construction of the Alabama 4-H Environmental Education Center. Twenty-five teams of golfers participated in the classic, held a second year at FarmLinks Golf Club near Sylacauga.

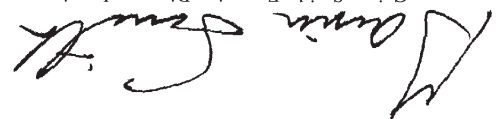
(Conference, continued from previous page)

The conference also includes exhibits, concurrent educational sessions and other dynamic guest speakers, such as Kimberly Oliver, 2006 National Teacher of the Year.

“A goal of this conference is to enhance the capacity of professionals to reach new heights in creating resources in the areas of health, family development, family literacy, financial literacy and education for family-centered communities,” said conference chair Dr. Wilma Ruffin.

For more information, contact Dr. Ruffin at (256) 372-4960 or registration chair Susan Glover at (256) 372-4946, or visit the Web site at www.acesfamilyconference.org.

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Gaines Smith, Extension Director, Interim


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