Direct Line

The summer of 2004 is a time of major transition for the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Following many months of planning and preparation, changes are occurring. We’re well down the road of new directions, of specialized program teams and of regionalization of assignments. The result — Extension will provide more highly specialized knowledge and programs to Alabama citizens.

Priority program teams (PPTs) have been formed and announced. Check our Web site at https://ssl.acesag.auburn.edu/internal/ if you haven’t already seen them. The 14 teams are various combinations of regional Extension agents (REAs), specialists, county Extension agents (CEAs), county Extension coordinators (CECs) and agent assistants (AAs). Supervisory reporting responsibilities changed July 1 as shown in the Alabama Cooperative Extension System Restructuring Plan. Revised procedures and protocols to support the program teams are being developed. E-mail listservs for each of the priority program teams are functional. Program team coordinators (PTCs) are being identified with initial team meetings to be scheduled soon.

District Extension coordinators (DECs) have been reassigned. Clarence Johnson, Ray Rice and Paul Waddy are district administrative directors (DADs). Rebecca Dollman is the state leader for program development. She will lead the program development team in transforming our program development process to focus on the team approach while being more targeted, more responsive to needs and opportunities, and more accountable to constituents and funding agencies.

Thanks to everyone involved in getting the word out about our new direction. Releases prepared by Donna Reynolds, Jim Languster and Maggie Lawrence in Extension News and Public Affairs have been picked up by several daily newspapers, at least one national newspaper and several television stations.

Local newspapers are also sharing our message. Chuck Browne had an excellent article in the Opelika-Auburn News. I’m sure there are others; share them with us.

Jodi Robinson did a good job of describing the reorganization in the July issue of Extension Update.

Katanga Mants put together an excellent “Spotlight on Extension” for her local newsletter. Ken McNabb developed an effective background piece on the forestry, wildlife and natural resources team.

These and other examples of publicity are essential in keeping us visible and in the minds of our citizens. The media’s increased familiarity with Extension has also given rise to several program opportunities.

Our changes have generated a new set of acronyms and initialisms to learn. Check them out in another section of this newsletter. Let us know if we’ve left out any.

As we look to the future on these and other changes, we take time to celebrate 40 years of success in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program. In the 1960s, Alabama piloted the program that grew into a national program using innovative teaching techniques. Those techniques, still in use today, generated some of the best documented impacts of our Extension programs. They have also served as examples for other programs. Thanks to all the agents and program assistants whose work created this success. It was a pleasure to welcome Anna-Mae Kobbe, Director of USDA-CSREES Family Consumer Sciences and Nutrition, as part of the celebration. Nancy Leidenfrost, retired EFNEP program leader, recently transferred the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program Annotated Bibliography to the Special Collection at the Auburn University Libraries. It’s already being researched by students and others here on the AU campus.

Jannie Carter and the urban staff have begun the publicity for the Annual Family Conference set for Oct. 13 and 14 at Alabama A&M University. “Prescription for Healthy Lifestyles” will cover
major current health issues such as obesity, HIV/AIDS, cancer, hypertension, nutrition and exercise, and diabetes. The lineup of outstanding presenters includes former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher as the keynote speaker. Registration is now being accepted.

All of us in Extension welcome Michael Weiss as director of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station and dean of the College of Agriculture at Auburn University. Dr. Weiss brings to Alabama a strong background of experience and accomplishments in teaching and research with in-depth knowledge of Extension. We look forward to working with Dr. Weiss in continuing the positive, productive relationship with the college and the experiment station.

Thanks to John Jensen for the outstanding leadership he provided over the last two years as dean and director, while providing the stimulus for the strong partnership with Cooperative Extension. We look forward to continuing to work with Dr. Jensen in his new assignment.

A very special thanks to Alfa Insurance Company and Alabama Farmers Federation for their generous contribution that made possible the new Alfa Agricultural Services and Research building on the Auburn campus. The building, which houses the soil testing lab, the plant diagnostic lab and other support labs, was dedicated July 21. Jerry Newby, Alfa and Federation president, and Ed Richardson, interim Auburn University president, spoke very positively about the major benefit that this building represents to Alabama agriculture and to all citizens.

Please remember our daughters and sons, brothers and sisters, spouses, family members and friends stationed around the world to protect our freedom and way-of-life. Include them in your thoughts, and be sure to let them know of your appreciation and support.

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Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Acronyms and Initialisms

Agent Assistant — AA
Alabama Cooperative Extension System — ACES
Alabama Cooperative Extension Nutrition Education Program — ACENEP
Assistant Directors for Programs — AD-AFNR (Ag, Forestry and Natural Resources), AD-FCP (Family and Community Programs), AD-4H (4-H and Youth Development), AD-UNNTP (Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs)
Associate Director for Human Resources — ASD-HR
Associate Directors—Programs — ASD-UNNTP (Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs)
Associate Director—Programs — ASD-RTP (Rural and Traditional Programs)
Chief Financial Officer — CFO
Community Resource Development — CRD
Computer Technology Unit — CTU
County Extension Agent — CEA
County Extension Coordinators — CEC
District Administrative Directors — DAD
Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program — EFNEP

Extension Team Projects — ETP
Human Resources — HR
Long Range Plan of Work — LRPOW
Nutrition Education Program — NEP
Priority Program — PP
Program Assistant — PA
Program Development Team — PDT
Program Priority Team — PPT
Program Team Coordinator — PTC
Regional Extension Agent — REA
Regional Research and Extension Center — RREC
State Leader Program Development — SLPD
Strategic Directions Action Team — SDAT

PERSONNEL
Kudos:
- **Bob Keith**, Extension Nutritionist, and **Jean Weese**, Extension Food Science Specialist, made the front page of the *Birmingham News* Commentary Section in an article discussing causes of and solutions to the Black Belt obesity epidemic.
Betty Gottler, Morgan County Extension Agent, has been selected as national winner and Southern Region winner in the Distinguished Service Award category of the 2004 National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences National Awards Program.

Joann Smith Wissinger, Jefferson County Extension Agent, has been selected as national winner and Southern Region winner in the Continued Excellence Award category of the 2004 NEAFCS National Awards Program.

Sondra Parmer, ACENEP Project Manager, and Barb Struempler, Extension Nutritionist, have been selected as Southern Region Finalists for the Florence Hall Award in the 2004 NEAFCS National Awards Program.

Appointments:
- Nancy Powell, Administrative Secretary, Pike County, May 17
- Hugo Troche, CTU, Sr. IT Specialist, June 14
- Melissa Norman, Crenshaw County, Administrative Secretary, July 19
- Lakesha Dotson, Family and Community Programs, Extension Health Associate, July 19

Resignations:
- Shirley Schofield, Crenshaw County, Administrative Secretary, May 28
- Rebecca Rogers, County Extension Agent, Crenshaw County, June 9
- Adrienne Battle, ACENEP Agent, Crenshaw County, June 25
- Susan Taylor, ACENEP Agent, Coffee County, July 16
- Joy K. Hicks, ACENEP Agent, Bibb County, July 30
- Kenetria Hewitt, ACENEP Agent, Walker County, July 30
- Mary Brunson, Administrative Secretary, Montgomery County, July 30

Retirements:
- Vivian Chaffin, Program Assistant, Morgan County, June 30

ACES Family Happenings
- Congratulations to Joy Hicks, Bibb County ACENEP Agent, on the birth of her son, Ethan Kane Hicks, June 4.
- Our condolences to Mary Brunson, Montgomery County Administrative Secretary, whose father, Johnnie L. Maddox, died June 6.
- Our condolences to Robbie Willis, Shelby County Administrative Assistant, whose mother, Lois Byrd, died June 10.
- Our condolences to Sandra Walton, Baldwin County Administrative Assistant, whose mother, Lovie Byrd, died June 11.
- Our condolences to the family of George Robert Stritikus, retired Jefferson County Extension Agent, who died June 13.
- Our condolences to the family of Robert Thornton, retired Walker County Extension Agent, who died June 13.
- Our condolences to the family of Jeanette Sirten, a member of the Volunteer Association in Limestone County, who died June 21.
- Our condolences to the family of Kathryn “Bit” Ingram, retired Director’s Secretary, who died June 28.
- Congratulations to Christa Shackelford, Franklin County NEP Agent and her husband, Jody, on the birth of their daughter, Katie Elizabeth, July 7.
- Our condolences to the family of Mildred M. Ward, retired Houston County Extension Agent, who died July 14.
- Our condolences to Janice Neloms, Lauderdale/Colbert County Urban NEP Agent, and Kara Neloms, Lauderdale County Agent Assistant, whose mother and grandmother, Annie P. Roy, died July 20.
- Our sympathy to Merri Pitman, Bullock County ACENEP Agent, whose mother, Jeanne Sanders, died July 30.
- Our condolences to Walter Sowell, retired District Coordinator, who died Aug. 1. Dr. Sowell also served Extension as a county agent and soils specialist.
- Our condolences to Wanda Carpenter, Houston County Urban Secretary, whose father died Aug. 2.
Proposals Funded:

• Elaine Alberson and Denise Shirley, Alabama Department of Public Health for Alabama Community Abstinence Education Program, $26,733

Proposals Submitted:

• David West, Urban and Community Forestry for 50 Recommended Urban Trees for Alabama, $10,000

• Ken Tilt, Urban and Community Forestry for Educational Opportunities for ACES Professionals, $10,380

• David West, Urban and Community Forestry for Street Trees: Site Selection, Care and Maintenance, $10,143

• Chazz Hesselein, University of Florida for Organic Nurseries and Landscapes (Sub-award), $3,421

• Jimmy Smitherman and Shannon Andress, ASDE for Twenty-First CCLC Natural Resources Camp, $10,000

• Paul Mask, USDA Forest Service for U&CF FY04 Carryover, $20,000

• Susan Thompson, Melanie Broussard and Kristin Woods, USDA for For a Healthy Future Nutrition Education Program, $243,879

• Barbara Struempler, Alabama DHR for Nutrition Education Program, $1,567,436

• Katrina Mitchell, ADECA for The Parent Project – Elmore County, $20,000

• Vickie Fussell, ADECA for Parent Project – Escambia County, $50,000

• Jackie Mullen, University of Florida for Animal and Plant Disease and Pest Surveillance, $36,000

• Carl Hughes, AL SDE for Helping Hand Community Learning Center, $124,586

• Ken Tilt and Deacue Fields, USDA for Developing Careers in Alabama’s Green Industry, $50,000

Gaines Smith, Interim Director