

Third Thursday

A message from Chancellor Larry Arrington

Strong support from volunteers is a cornerstone of the Institute of Agriculture. At the UT Volunteer Leadership weekend earlier this month, we had strong participation from our UTIA Advancement Board. Mark Wilson chairs the board, and board members in attendance included Dan Ashby, Bill Latimer, Susan Marks, Jim Nunn, Myers Parsons, Joe Pearson and Julie Watts. These individuals work hard to advance our UTIA programs, and we are most grateful for their support.

Speaking of volunteers, we will be holding another round of meetings with our UTIA Regional Advisory Councils in early December. These three committees provide counsel on programmatic priorities for UTIA. The December meetings will focus on determining our roles in implementing the Governor's Strategic Plan for Rural Tennessee.

Wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!



New strategic plan to guide UT Extension Agriculture, Natural Resources and Community Economic Development program



In a letter to the institute, UT Extension Assistant Dean Robert Burns presents a new strategic plan for Extension's Agriculture, Natural Resources and Community Economic Development program. The plan will better facilitate educational program planning, delivery and evaluation across an array of outreach programs. **[Learn more about the plan.](#)**

New AgResearch bioinformaticist brings exciting capabilities



Scientists throughout the institute's AgResearch unit are excited about the capabilities and impacts that will occur through the appointment of bioinformaticist Meg Staton. Staton joins the institute Jan. 6, 2014.

Learn about bioinformatics and how Staton will accelerate UTIA's discovery science. **More ...**

Outstanding hands-on learning for CASNR students

Studying endangered shore birds. Leading youth experiences at a 4-H camp. Working in Hawaii for Monsanto.

Watch a video produced by Chuck Denney of the institute's Department of Marketing and Communications about the dynamic learning CASNR students are experiencing through world-class internships.



Two AgResearchers win maturation funding



The UT Research Foundation has announced its 2013 Maturation Fund Awards, and AgResearchers **Feng Chen** and **Neal Stewart** are among the winners. **More ...**

New coordinator for student life and diversity starts work

Dean Caula Beyl says new institute member Craig Pickett will serve as a catalyst for holistic student development through new programs and resources that promote student engagement and involvement.

Pickett will provide leadership of multicultural awareness, inclusivity and student success. **More ...**



UT Extension homebuyer education team wins three honors



The **Tennessee Housing Development Agency**, the state's housing finance agency, has honored a 38-member team of UT Extension Family and Consumer Sciences specialists and agents who teach citizens across the state how to buy a home.

The agency presented UT Extension with its 2013 awards for total, urban and rural loan production. Among the state's 40 homebuyer education providers, Extension ranked second in each of these award categories. In the past year, Extension assisted 171 customers with mortgage loans that totaled \$17,014,106.

The agency presented Founder Awards to Extension specialists Dena Wise and Ann Berry for their leadership, guidance and support on behalf of Tennessee's homeownership educators and counselors.

Seventh annual Buggy Buffet draws a big crowd

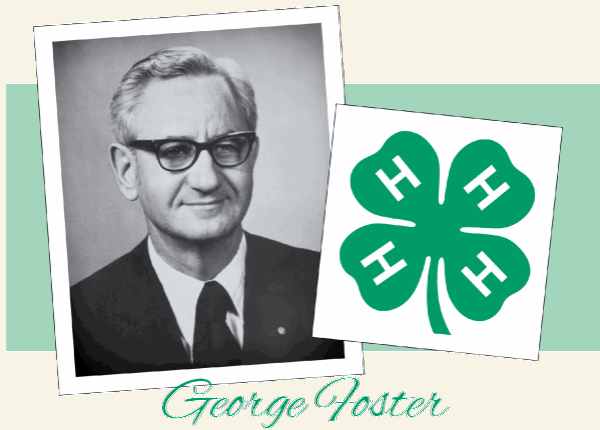
Some 250 adventurous eaters turned out Nov. 7 for the institute's Buggy Buffet. The insect smorgasbord in Knoxville offered participants chocolate-covered insects, cricket stir fry and other bugalicious foods, all featuring insects as the signature ingredient.

The Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology hosts the spirited event with students in first-year studies course 129: A Bug's Life.

While bugs may not sound appetizing as food, insects are actually a large part of the diet for many people in other parts of the world. Event coordinator Jerome Grant, professor of entomology, says insects could be a growing food source to feed an expanding global population.



Tennessee 4-H leader inducted into national Hall of Fame



The National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, National 4-H Council and 4-H National Headquarters has inducted former Tennessee 4-H leader George Foster into their 4-H Hall of Fame.

Foster led Tennessee 4-H Youth Development from 1956 to 1981. "Dr. Foster was a visionary in his approach to volunteer development," says Tennessee 4-H director Steve Sutton. "Thousands of 4-H volunteers were recruited and trained under his leadership. He is certainly most deserving of

this honor."

Foster joins three other institute Hall of Famers: former 4-H professors and State 4-H program leaders Ben Powell and Martha Jo Tolley and 4-H specialist Peggy Adkins, who is a past president of the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents. **More ...**

Tree growing on AgResearch land to be state Christmas tree

Reaching more than 50 feet skyward, a tall, proud Norway spruce is giving up its mountaintop home to make the trip from Morgan County to Nashville to serve as the Tennessee state Christmas Tree. The tree will soon be decorated and on display at the State Capitol in Nashville.

"The UT Institute of Agriculture is honored to provide the tree for the enjoyment of the state's citizens during the 2013 holiday season," says Martin Schubert, manager of UT's Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center. "It speaks to the nature of the research that's been going on here at the Cumberland Forest since the 1950s."



The spruce has been growing some three decades at the institute's Cumberland Forest near Oliver Springs and was originally planted at another location as part of a UT AgResearch project on growing Christmas tree crops on strip mines.



A 2012 graduate of the



Even in the animal kingdom,



Gardening trends for 2014

Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, Anton Astner, has received the prestigious Leo Schörghuber Award for the Promotion of Wood Research. [More ...](#)

parents will do anything to protect their children. As shown by Knoxville's WBIR TV, a llama donated blood for her baby's surgery at the UT College of Veterinary Medicine. [More ...](#)

point to consumer interest in healthier vegetables. Research by UTIA plant scientists may help heighten the nutritional and flavor qualities of certain vegetables. [More ...](#)

Project enables students to gain experience in constructing wetlands

Students in the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries are teaming up with wetland and environmental studies biologists to construct three wetlands at the UTIA Cherokee Woodlot, a unit of the East Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center.

In a project coordinated by associate professor Matthew Gray, the students have engaged in surveying, planning and constructing the wetlands. "This has been a great opportunity for learning, to build skills in wetland restoration techniques, and for biologists, engineers and equipment operators to interact," Gray says.



CASNR student elected national FFA secretary



Mitch Baker, an agricultural leadership, education and communications student in CASNR, has been elected secretary of the national FFA organization.

National officers commit to a year of service to the National FFA Organization. Each travels more than 100,000 national and international miles to interact with business and industry leaders, thousands of FFA members and teachers, corporate sponsors, government and education officials, state FFA leaders, and the general public. [More ...](#)

In memoriam

Bessie Jones, retired Extension Family and Consumer Sciences agent in Fayette

County. **Fletcher Luck**, former Extension county agent and institute director of services for 19 years. A lane on the agricultural campus is named in his honor. **John New**, revered professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine. (Names link to obituaries.)



iCook is a UT 4-H partnership program that encourages children and parents to prepare food together and learn about healthy lifestyles. Through it, 10-year-old Joshua Weaver is ready to roll up his sleeves and cook this Thanksgiving.

Watch a video about the program on the institute's YouTube channel.



The UT Beef and Forage Center is having its 2013 Research and Recommendation meeting Dec. 17 in 263 Brehm Animal Science Building.

The meeting will discuss current research and educational programs being conducted by UTIA individuals. For more information, contact center director **Gary Bates**.



In an effort to help pet owners celebrate the lives of their companion animals, both living and dead, Veterinary Social Work at the UT College of Veterinary Medicine is hosting its winter Pet Memorial Celebration, Friday, Dec. 6.

Sarina Lyall, VSW social worker, says the opportunity to gather with others who have also experienced the loss of an animal can be therapeutic. **More ...**

Enter the 2013-14 institute-wide photo competition

The institute's chapter of **Gamma Sigma Delta**, the honor society of agriculture, has launched the 2013-14 institute-wide Photo Competition.

New this year are special categories of awards, from shots of institute members at work and study to the most fun photo and the most creative plus several more. So start snapping images now!

Enter images in the competition by visiting **<https://tiny.utk.edu/UTIA-photos>**. Submit images by March 14, 2014.

You may see images from the previous two



Tennessee Gamma Sigma Delta

The Honor Society of Agriculture

UTIA Photo Competition



competitions by visiting UT Library's **TRACE website**. These images are available for your use in posters, presentations, websites and other purposes.

Learn more about our chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta, its activities and awards, and how to be a member at its **website**.

Join the UT Gardens, Knoxville, for holiday fun

Come spread some holiday cheer at a new seasonal event hosted by the UT Gardens. Families are invited to join members of the UT Gardens staff and friends for the Gardens' first Winter Wonderland from noon until 3 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7. **More ...**



Senior 4-H member Caroline Emory of Franklin County rode her Tennessee walking horse at UT's Homecoming football game on Nov. 9.

She and her horse, named An Amazing Grace, are shown here on a practice run the afternoon before game day. Emory has been champion at the 4-H State Horse Show and also competes at the National Walking Horse Celebration and other recognized horse shows. (Photo credit: Phil Snow, College of Veterinary Medicine.)



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