

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

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Okaloosa Extension Agent Recognized by DAR for Decades of Conservation Service

Okaloosa County, Florida – Okaloosa County UF/IFAS Extension Services Agent Sheila Dunning was awarded the prestigious Conservation Award by the Choctawhatchee Bay Daughters of the American Revolution during a ceremony on Feb. 1, 2024. The award recognizes volunteers with distinguished conservation efforts which include sustained accomplishments that improve the environment and educate the public on conservation issues while exceeding job expectations.

“We are fortunate to have such a devoted and passionate agent like Sheila,” said Okaloosa County Board Chairman Paul Mixon. “We are proud to see her receive this honor and appreciate everything she does for the community.”

The award recognizes Dunning’s achievements in implementing programs for Green Industry professionals that include: Best Management Practices, environmentally friendly landscape designs, installation and maintenance. An outstanding public speaker and educator, she frequently presents to garden clubs, civic groups and community groups that include “Attracting Pollinators”, “Consider a Native Evergreen This Christmas,” “Native Plants and Wildlife” and “Protecting Precious Species from Pesticides”.

“Sheila is an outstanding example of excellence in her field and is more than worthy of this recognition,” said Okaloosa County Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel who is also a member of the DAR. “Sheila’s efforts have enriched our community with environmental education that coincides with an effective relationship between our residents and nature.”

Dunning holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Horticulture and a Master of Science degree in Agriculture Education and Communication from the University of Florida. She has worked in this industry for 22 years before joining the Extension Service 20 years ago.

The UF/IFAS Extension Okaloosa County is the educational outreach arm of the Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida. It is a three-way cooperative arrangement between the Board of County Commissioners, the University of Florida, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

[Photo Caption: DAR State Regent Cindy Addison presents the Conservation Medal and Award to Sheila Dunning]

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