First Anniversary
The *Extension in the City* e-newsletter started a year ago this month. I hope that it has served to keep all of the urban initiative county agents informed about opportunities for urban programming and upcoming events, and that by highlighting some of the success stories, other counties have taken ideas for program replication. If you have information that you feel is appropriate to share through this medium, please let me know. Wishing all of you a successful, high impact, and highly visible program year!

2008 Extension in the City Award
The second annual *Extension in the City Award* was presented to the Honorable Dan Gattis, Texas House of Representatives, representing Williamson/Milam counties. The award was presented at the January AgriLife Conference in College Station. Representative Gattis was very appreciative of the recognition and spoke highly of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service expertise available to his clientele. David Wright, CEA, Williamson County was in attendance. Representative Gattis’ district is experiencing the urban sprawl, so he has first hand experiences with urban Texas! Issues important to Texas citizens know no county/city boundary. Our 20 urban initiative counties are certainly aware of that! AgriLife Extension plays a critical role in urban Texas and we appreciate Representative Gatti’s support.

This was our year to recognize a state elected official and we will rotate so that next year we will honor a city, county or national elected official. This is open to ALL urban initiative counties and I hope that you will consider recognizing an elected official that has been a strong supporter and deserves this honor. The deadline will be October 1, 2008, but you can start thinking about this NOW. (Application form attached).
Urban Professional Development Opportunity
The first Extension in the City Professional Development Opportunity participants are completing their assignments. Ricky Thompson, District 5 and Karen Tellman, District 1 have had a unique opportunity. Ricky was involved in Fort Bend County this past fall and learned about all the programs and how the agents program for the large population in that county. He indicated that it was a very valuable experience for him.

Karen Tellman participated with Tarrant County agents and activities by splitting her time between fall and winter so that she can have a broader scope of activities. She is also scheduled to meet with Travis County agents to learn more about their 4-H activities. It's time for us to select next year's participants. Encourage those that you feel would benefit from the urban experience to complete their professional development plan and application by April 21, 2008. (Application form attached).

Applying Technology for Management and Programming Centra
The February 5th Centra on technology was very informative in looking at both management tools and programming. Cynthia Bryant, CEA, 4-H & YD, Tarrant County, presented the Corroboree project which combines science and technology in a hands-on learning project with youth in Australia, Texas, Oregon and Arizona doing extensive water testing and posting/sharing the data on their websites.

Another management technology tool was presented by Derrick Bruton, CEA, 4-H & YD, Smith County on his experience in submitting Texas 4-H Reports on-line. His approach is a time saver as well.

A unique programming approach was shared by University of Florida Extension Multi County Extension Agent – Vegetables, Bob Hochmuth, who has developed Virtual Tours as a way to share his trainings with those who cannot attend. He discussed the logistics of developing a virtual tour program, the impact and the buy-in by his clientele. He feels this is meeting real needs and is an effective teaching tool for his and other programs. The subject matter is not a limiting factor, the approach can work in all program areas.

Jennifer Jahedkar, Assistant Extension Information Technologist, shared with the 29 participants the many electronic learning opportunities currently available to all AgriLife Extension employees through the Extension Information Technology Unit.

Next Urban Centra is scheduled for JUNE 11, 2008. More information to follow.
Spotlight

Parenting Along the Border
Over half of the 210,000 households in El Paso county have children under the age of eighteen. Although children are influenced by many different elements in their environment, parents still occupy a central role in their children's healthy development. The El Paso FCS response to this need was to provide a four lesson series called, “Parenting Along the Border”. The series focused on child growth and development; parent-child communication; self-esteem; discipline; nutrition and health; and safety issues.

Adrian, a participant, stated that she was very glad to have had the opportunity to learn how to positively discipline her child. She said that she was brought up with very strict parents and she wants to raise her children with cooperation rather than just obedience. Contact: Virginia L. Alonso, CEA-FCS, El Paso.

“Beneficials in the Garden” Web page
Galveston County recently released a Web page on beneficials in the garden (http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/beneficials_in_the_garden.thm). Eighteen Master Gardeners collaborated to produce this educational resource that encourages reducing the overuse and misuse of pesticides in the landscape. Contact: Dr. William Johnson, CEA-Hort, Galveston County