Centra Program Highlights/Schedule

Interpretation of Program to Stakeholders Centra
Resource Speaker: Wil Galloway, Attorney and Lobbyist

Twenty-nine participants indicated that the first Centra held for the Urban Initiative Counties was a tremendous success! Wil Galloway of Austin gave helpful tips on the most effective ways to interact with elected officials. As a successful Attorney and Lobbyist with years of experience, his perspective was very practical. Highlights of his presentation included the following points: 1) When meeting with an elected official have a goal identified for your communication plan; 2) It is important to have accurate facts and figures; 3) Always be courteous and acknowledge previous support; 4) It is important to develop a relationship with the elected official and their staff over time; and 5) Remember that Communication is a PROCESS, not an EVENT. It takes more than one contact to have a relationship. This is ongoing and a very important part of becoming a credible resource for the wealth of information we have to offer.

You can access this presentation on the TCE Centra listing. Future Centra training dates for the Urban Initiative Counties will begin at 9:45 a.m. and include:

- **August 22, 2007:** Urban Volunteer Management
- **November 7, 2007:** Urban External Funding
- **February 5, 2008:** Use of Technology in Urban Programs
- **June 11, 2008:** Collaboration/Partnerships in Urban Counties

What is an effective Partnership?

We talk often about partnerships and collaborations as a part of extending our resources in urban counties. Following is a set of conditions that will help you determine how effective your partnership can be:

- The groups have a common interest and concern.
- The people are interested in and willing to work together.
- There is a common understanding of what the partnership is/is not.
- The partnership will add real value to existing activity in the community.
- Potential members are open to change.
- Each partner shares risk, responsibility and accountability.
Spotlight on successful programs:

Red Tide Rangers

When red tide strikes the coast of South Texas killing millions of fish and affecting residents of South Padre Island with an irritating aerosol that causes respiratory problems, the Cameron County Marine agent has a cadre of volunteers that are ready and available to gather information so the residents and tourist know the status of the red tide situation and its potential health effects.

The “Red Tide Rangers” are a group of volunteers made up primarily of Rio Grande Chapter Master Naturalist. They have been trained on red tide sampling techniques, cell identification and how to determine cell concentrations. During the red tide, an extensive daily sampling effort provides results for the Convention and Visitors Bureau and Texas Parks and Wildlife web sites to help visitors determine safety levels. Based on the ranger reports, local fishermen can determine the impact of red tide on fish.

The rangers were activated twice in the 1990’s during red tide events. When activated, you can spot the Red Tide Rangers by their special Red Tide Ranger hat (red of course!).

Contact: Tony Reisinger, County Extension Agent – Marine, Cameron County

Financial Literacy at the Ballpark

Batter Up! An innovative way to reach a new audience in Tarrant County was to set up a financial literacy teaching module at a local Triple A baseball game with the Fort Worth Cats Baseball club.

For several years the Tarrant County Financial Literacy Coalition has hosted a “Cover All Your Bases” savings event at the baseball game. Many partners were involved in putting on this major FCS outreach effort. Highlights included saving bonds drawing and the Money Management Wheel. The wheel spin offered opportunity for teaching some of the financial principles as conversations develop from the right and wrong answers given. The Money Management Wheel has questions about credit, housing, consumerism, banking and life/health insurance.

Contact: Marian Ross, County Extension Agent – FCS, Tarrant County