Urban Program Director Comments

You are doing a fantastic job in our population centers to help Texans have a better life. I am very proud of your work and I’m delighted to serve as your Urban Program Director. I have big shoes to fill in following Dr. Bonnie McGee in this role. She has really put Extension urban programming on the map in Texas and across the nation. Luckily, she is still nearby for guidance and counsel as we continue to blaze new trails.

My goals for the urban program are to: 1) Involve more Texans in urban Extension programming; 2) Ensure that our programming is of the quality that helps people to change their lives in positive ways; 3) Increase awareness of “Extension in the City” by both the general public and our key leaders, including elected officials; and 4) Grow our programs with enhanced funding. Together we can achieve these goals and create a future that is brighter than we can now imagine.

If I can assist you in any way, please let me know. I am here to serve you. Joan

Urban Centra—November 5

Our next Urban Centra is coming up on November 5 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The topic of this Centra will be “Science in Agriculture,” focusing on ways to engage youth in activities that introduce them to the food and fiber industry by teaching them about the original sources of their food, clothing, and shelter. The Centra will feature county faculty from the Osceola County, Florida program sharing about their Farm City Days events. Jeff Howard, Associate Program Director for 4-H will share an update on Science in Agriculture 4-H curriculum and evaluation. Ken Johnson, CEA ANR in Tarrant County, will share an Implementation Guide for his award-winning Pizza Ranch. This is a great opportunity to learn more about one of our largest and most important projects in 4-H. The URL for this Urban Centra is: http://webconference.tamus.edu/main/tce/
Extension in the City Award

The Extension in the City Award is presented to elected officials during the Texas A&M AgriLife Program Conference each January. The purpose of the award is to recognize outstanding support and leadership by elected officials for Texas AgriLife Extension Service Urban programs.

Nominations can be made by employees in any population center in Texas. This year the award will be presented to an elected official at the county, city, or federal levels.


Spotlight

Urban Responds to Hurricane Ike

When Hurricane Ike struck landfall in the Gulf Coast region of Texas, Extension was there before, during, and after to provide assistance and expertise to serve families, communities, and businesses.

CEA FCS Jolyn Jennings helped families in Harris County make family disaster supply kits in advance of the storm to help families survive in safety and comfort during and after the storm.

Agent Micah Meyer, CEA Horticulture in Jefferson County, used the media—both newspaper articles and TV appearances—to discuss how to recover landscapes from hurricane damage.

The statewide Extension effort, “Operation No Fences: Hurricane Ike Horse and Cattle Relief,” set up a hub in Chambers County. This operations hub received and distributed feed, hay, and water to allow for gathering of cattle off major roadways and to minimize further loss of livestock. This relief for livestock producers in need of care for stranded livestock in Chambers, Jefferson, Galveston and Orange Counties served the public safety component and health components related to the disaster. The relief site was stood up by Monty Dozier, South Region Program Director. Over 7,000 round bales of hay, as well as cubes, horse feed, water troughs and portable panels were delivered. Cattle vaccine and antibiotic were donated by pharmaceutical companies. Over 400 water troughs were provided with clean water for stranded cattle. Joe Mask, CEA ANR in Fort Bend County coordinated much of this water effort. CEAs ANR and Animal Science Livestock/Beef Cattle Specialists assisted with assessing damages; collecting and distributing hay donations; water troughs; portable livestock holding panels; and relocating horses and cattle to safer areas.
Terrie Looney, CEA Marine in Jefferson County, assisted with assessing damages and developed a commercial fishing update for the Port Arthur Shrimper Association, which was sent by letter to update commercial fishermen about assessment and recovery efforts for the fleet. She also presented an update on Hurricane Ike damage to the Texas Coast fishing industry for a researcher’s conference.

In Harris County, CEA FCS Elizabeth Trejo presented a program on financial management focusing on how to manage with the additional expenses required before, during, and after Hurricane Ike. She advised on ways to work with creditors and how to put together a simple budget.

Agents in all affected and surrounding counties assisted with distributing resource publications and providing translation and referrals. Agents, RPDs, and Administrators assisted with staffing district disaster centers and the state operations center in Austin. Post storm assessments were conducted and follow up meetings with affected citizens are part of the continuing recovery effort.