

Leadership Advisory Board

Travis County

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For more information about these and other events, please call 512-854-9600 or visit our website:

<http://travis-tx.tamu.edu/>

Calendar of Events

October 2012

2 Pond Management Class
7-13 National 4-H Week
10 Pesticide Applicator Training & Exam
18 Planting for Winter and Spring Blooms
20 Backyard Poultry Seminars
20 Inside Austin Gardens Tour: Edible Gardens
20 Cooking Well with Diabetes
25 STRONG STARTS: Urban Farming 101 Series

November 2012

1 STRONG STARTS: Urban Farming 101 Series
8 STRONG STARTS: Urban Farming 101 Series
12 Veterans Day Observed—OFFICE CLOSED
15 All About Bulbs
22-23 Thanksgiving Holiday Observed—OFFICE CLOSED

December 2012

4 Food Preservation Seminar: Sensational Salsa's
12 Pantry Pests
24-25 Christmas Holiday Observed—OFFICE CLOSED

January 2013

1 New Year's Day Observed—OFFICE CLOSED
22-24 Last Chance CEU's Course

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
Cooperative Extension Program

In Cooperation With... TRAVIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT

Samuel T. Biscoe
County Judge

Ron Davis Commissioner, Precinct 1
Sarah Eckhardt Commissioner, Precinct 2
Karen Huber Commissioner, Precinct 3
Margaret Gomez Commissioner, Precinct 4

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TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Making a Difference in Travis County

FALL 2012



Travis County Youth Selected as 4-H Livestock Ambassador

Ellerie Jackson, age 17, of the Wilbarger Creek 4-H Club was one of 25 youth selected from throughout the state to attend this year's Livestock Ambassador Training in College Station.

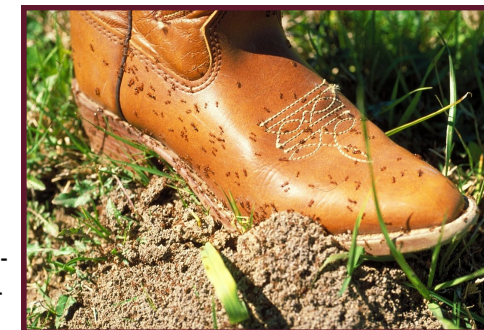
"Ellerie mentors her peers and younger 4-H'ers as they work with their livestock projects," said Cory Talley, AgriLife Extension agent for 4-H and Youth Development. "She also serves on the Travis County Extension Emergency Management Livestock Issues Team, which will be activated to assist at the Travis County Exposition Center with large animal housing in the event of a natural disaster."

Talley said Jackson delivered a program to 4-H livestock exhibitors on interviewing with the media in July as part of the 30 hours of service she has committed to provide in her role as a 4-H Livestock Ambassador.

The Texas 4-H Livestock Ambassador program was developed by state 4-H personnel in College Station to give high-school-age 4-H members the opportunity to develop and practice advanced leadership skills related to mentoring and becoming advocates for animal agriculture. It also prepares them to serve in leadership roles at junior livestock programs and introduces them to a university setting.

Fire Ant Control

This marks the eighth year AgriLife Extension in Travis County has been involved in community-wide efforts to combat fire ants in the approximately 525-home Wood Glen subdivision in north Austin.



"We've been involved in other community fire ant control in Travis County, but the effort in Wood Glen is our longest and the best to offer data on the results of our efforts," said Wizzie Brown, AgriLife Extension Entomologist and Integrated Pest Management Program Specialist.

In a recently completed study of the fire ant control efforts in Wood Glen, Brown said her data showed:

- A median of 5.6 years in program participation.
- An average pre-program cost of \$32.52 annually for fire ant control and post-program cost of \$11.07 annually.
- A 66.88 percent reduction in the amount of pesticide used.

Brown said data for the study was provided by program participants who had picked up additional fire ant bait to treat their back yards, in addition to the bait provided through the program for each of the community's front yards and common areas.

"This further validates what we've always said about community fire ant management," Brown said. "With everyone working together, your neighbor's fire ants won't become yours."

A&M AgriLife Extension's Pesticide Applicator Trainings Help Landowners

As of Sept. 2012, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County has already helped 87 area individuals in receiving the needed instruction and associated continuing education units for Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) private pesticide applicator licensees.

"These private applicator trainings (PAT) are useful to farmers,

ranchers and other landowners wanting to get control of prickly pear, cedar and various noxious weeds on their property,” said Julie Ansley, the new Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources. “People find many pesticides that serve their purposes require a license to purchase them. This is where receiving training to get a Private Pesticide Applicators License for state limit and restricted use of pesticides is extremely useful.”

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension coordinated with TDA to present these trainings, most of which are provided at the Extension office in Travis County. “We’ll have a few more PAT programs before the end of this year, and anticipate having eight or nine in 2013,” Ansley said.

Soil Fertility Series Utilizes Education via Technology

A total of 32 Travis County residents attended a four-part computer-link seminar series on soil fertility and mineral nutrition held weekly at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service office in Travis County from Sept. 4-25.

Series sessions were held on consecutive Tuesdays, with each session focusing on a different nutrient or nutrients. Nutrient groupings were divided into nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium, magnesium and sulphur, and micronutrients.

“Each session covered the role of that week’s element or elements in plant and soil material in regard to leaching potential, the best method of application, proper application rates and timing, and symptoms of deficiency or toxicity,” said Daphne Richards, A&M AgriLife Extension agent for Horticulture in Travis County and a seminar coordinator.

Richards said sessions were presented via computer link and were led by Dr. Sam Feagley, A&M AgriLife Extension State Soil Environmental Specialist in College Station.

“This was a special opportunity for attendees as Dr. Feagley rarely provides his expertise to those outside his classroom,” she said. He addressed commercial inorganic and organic sources of nutrients, as well as well as ‘snake oil’ products with little or no nutrient value.”

Richards said she believed attendees ranging from backyard gardeners to current and future farmers in urban and rural communities benefited from the seminars.

Youth Leadership Program Teaches Public Speaking Skills

Sixteen young people from 4-H clubs in Travis County participated in the 2012 Youth Leadership Program 3-day seminar held in July at the Goodwill Community Center in Austin.

“This program is a joint effort between Toastmasters and Travis County 4-H and is designed for youth ages 12 to 18 years of age,” said Cory Talley, agent for 4-H and Youth Development. “The goal of this program is to help youth become more comfortable in developing and delivering speeches, speaking off the cuff, and learning to use hand gestures and voice inflection in their speaking.”

Attendees gained skills and knowledge in public speaking and delivering speeches, Talley said. They were asked to write and evaluate three speeches, as well as stand before their peers to deliver five impromptu speeches of their own. Feedback on the speeches was given by other participants.

A recognition ceremony, which included friends and family, was held the final night of the program. During the event, the youth delivered speeches to a crowd of about 50 attendees.

“Another assignment for the program involved participants writing a motivational speech,” Talley said. “One participant chose to write her speech on why others should participate in the Youth Leadership Program. That was pretty special.”

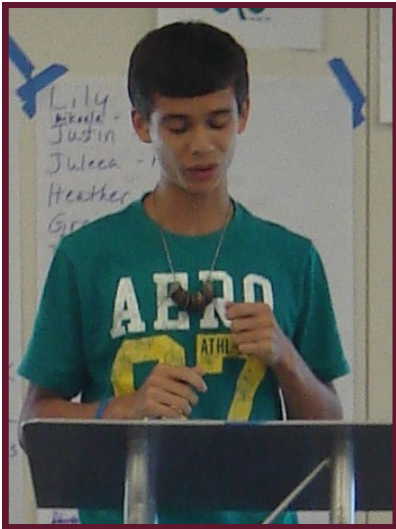


Photo: Collin Warwick, member of the Hill Country Austin 4-H club, delivers an impromptu speech.

10-Year Anniversary of AmeriCorps and A&M AgriLife Extension

In 2002, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County reached out to AmeriCorps by requesting grant money and assistance to help increase the breadth and impact of its 4-H CAPITAL youth programs. As a result, the Travis County CAPITAL AmeriCorps Project (TCCAP) has been able to serve at-risk youth throughout the county under the banner of the 4-H CAPITAL program for a decade.

“The grant has been annually renewed since then, allowing us to further expand our program and activities,” said Lydia Domaruk, agent for Urban Youth Development, 4-H CAPITAL Project.

The program began with 19 half-time AmeriCorps volunteers serving a handful of schools and community sites. Over the years, this has expanded to a total of 16 half-time and 16 full-time AmeriCorps volunteers serving in more than 25 schools across the Austin and Del Valle school districts.

Since its inception TCCAP AmeriCorps members have served approximately 10,000 youth through community service projects, school day curriculum enrichment and after school education in the areas of science enrichment and character education.

Photo: 4-H CAPITAL AmeriCorps member Kristen Aaltonen shows students at Norman Elementary how to plant vegetables as part of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services’ Junior Master Gardener program.



Kristen Aaltonen, 4-H CAPITAL AmeriCorps member, received Governor’s Volunteer Award



Kristen Aaltonen, an AmeriCorps member working in conjunction with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County, was presented a state and national award for her work in connection with the 4-H CAPITAL and Junior Master Gardener programs.

Aaltonen received a Governor’s Volunteer Award -- the AmeriCorps State and National “Getting Things Done” Award -- at the recent 2012 Texas Nonprofit Summit in Austin.

“It was great to receive an award for helping at-risk kids in second through fifth grade get education and enrichment experiences they would not otherwise have had the opportunity to participate in,” Aaltonen said.

Aaltonen worked with at-risk youth at two Title I elementary schools, teaching the 4-H CAPITAL urban animal science program at Pecan Springs Elementary and spearheading the Junior Master Gardener program at Norman Elementary.

Currently 32 AmeriCorps members, including Aaltonen, work with A&M AgriLife Extension in Travis County, serving more than 25 schools in Austin and Del Valle independent school districts.