

Leadership Advisory Board

Travis County

Jon Banks
Dorothy Browne
Thomas Graham
Walker Hale
Joe Morris
Jerry Naiser
Mary Ann Neeley
Bonnie Nothcutt
Karen Sonleitner
Lydia Steinman
Lupe Velasquez

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

July 2012

- 3-17 Healthy Food, Healthy Families (Tuesdays)
- 4 Independence Day Observed—OFFICE CLOSED
- 11 Pesticide Applicator Training & Exam
- 14 Good Bugs/Bad Bugs Seminar
- 18 Food Preservation Seminar
- 19 How to Build & Install Drip Irrigation Seminar
- 23-25 Youth Leadership Program
- 26 CEU Course for Private & Structural Pest License Holders

August 2012

- 11 Rainwater Harvesting in a Thirsty World
- 16 Time to Plant the Fall Garden
- 17 4-H Achievement Banquet

September 2012

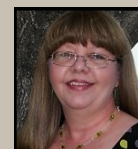
- 3 Labor Day Observed—OFFICE CLOSED
- 12 Stinging & Biting Arthropods
- 20 Dividing and Transplanting Perennials
- 27-28 4-H Science of Agriculture Expo
- 29 Compost Tea 101

October 2012

- 7-13 National 4-H Week
- 18 Planting for Winter and Spring Blooms

Making a Difference in Travis County

SUMMER 2012



Dolores Sandmann
County Extension Director
Texas AgriLife Extension
Travis County

Message from the Director:

I hope you enjoy this Summer issue of our newsletter. This is always an exciting time of the year with a very high demand from our clientele. People are outside more and have many questions related to their homes, landscapes, and gardens. Our youth audiences are out of school and taking advantage of the summer programs, camps and leadership opportunities we offer. And our agricultural producers are running at full speed and are in need of up-to-date information. Your Travis County AgriLife Extension staff is working hard to meet this demand with quality, researched-based information.

Take a look through this issue of *Extension Matters in Travis County* that highlights a few of the recent programs and events conducted by our staff. If you are interested in arranging for an educational program, or if you have questions about what the Texas AgriLife Extension Service can offer you in Travis County, please give me a call at 512-854-9600.

Best wishes,

-Dolores Sandmann

4-H Robotics Program is FUN!



The 4-H CAPITAL program of AgriLife Extension in Travis County implemented the Lego Robotics Curriculum at 11 Austin ISD elementary school sites in June for a technology summer camp. The program was presented at Barrington, Harris, Norman, Pecan Springs, Winn, Hart, Brown, Pickle, Langford, Rodriguez and Widen elementary schools – all Title 1 schools are located in Austin's eastern corridor.

"The basic LEGO robotics construction set is an easy-to-use set that introduces young students to robotics," explained Lydia Domaruk, County Extension Agent – Urban Youth Development with the 4-H CAPITAL Project. "More advanced LEGO robotics kits contain software and hardware to create small, customizable and programmable robots. They also have a computer that controls the system, modular sensors and motors, and LEGO parts for building mechanical systems."

Domaruk said students using both curriculums built and programmed robotic models and participated in a series of cross-curricular, theme-based activities while developing skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Five schools working with the more advanced Lego robotics program participated in a 'virtual robotics' competition using Skype and YouTube to compete against other schools on their assigned challenges, she said.

"The targeted students were at higher risk of lower academic performance than their peers in other AISD schools," Domaruk said. "The program was to engage them in hands-on science learning and teach them things like problem-solving, patience and teamwork. U.S. students are lagging behind in math and science. Only 27 percent of high school grads are ready for college-level science, and minorities are underrepresented in science and technology related employment."

Domaruk said 255 students participated in this technology-based 4-H CAPITAL program and many had expressed they had a greater interest in science and technology after participating.

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

CONTACT US

Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Travis County
1600-B Smith Road
Austin, Texas 78721

TEL: 512.854.9600
FAX: 512.854.9611

E-mail: Travis-TX@tamu.edu
Web: <http://travis-tx.tamu.edu/>

EDITORIAL TEAM

Paul Schattenberg, Editor
Communications Specialist

Dolores Sandmann
County Extension Director

Elida Urtado
Office Supervisor

Angela Reyes
Administrative Assistant

Travis County 4-H Youth and Volunteers Honored at Texas 4-H Roundup

In June, the 2012 Texas 4-H Roundup took place – for the first time – on the campus of Texas Tech University in Lubbock. Since 1946, the Texas 4-H Roundup had previously been held on the campus of Texas A&M University in College Station.

“For Travis County 4-H attendees – 17 youth and adults – this year’s Roundup was also a first-time experience for more than three-quarters of them,” said Cory Talley, AgriLife Extension Agent for 4-H and Youth Development. “The 4-H seniors attending also brought home \$38,500 in scholarship money.”

Talley said those who received scholarships included Allison Hodde and Brandon Masi (both from Richland 4-H), Hallie Casey (Discover 4-H) and Marissa Wilhite (Creedmore 4-H).

She added that four youths represented Travis County in various contests, including:

- Meredith Masi – (Richland 4-H) Health Presentation - 2nd Place
- Alec Bainter (Discover 4-H) - Share the Fun Musical- 4th Place
- Trent Warwick (Hill Country Austin 4-H) - Science Poster Contest - 4th Place
- Collin Warwick (Hill Country Austin 4-H) - Public Speaking



Violet Alexander attended the event.

During Texas 4-H Roundup, Amy Jarmon was recognized at the Salute to Excellence Banquet as a Texas 4-H Alumni Award Honoree by Dr. Edward Smith, Director of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Amy’s family, Jameson and McKenna Jarmon, and parents Joe and

Financial Literacy Coalition Named *Volunteer of the Year*

The Financial Literacy Coalition of Central Texas (FLCCT), a coalition administered by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County to help Texas residents improve financial decision-making, was presented the Volunteer of the Year award in an event held at the Travis County Correctional Complex

“At the recognition event, the FLCCT was recognized for its various financial literacy education efforts,” said Amy Harris, AgriLife Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences in Travis County. “It was a great honor for the dozens of individuals, financial services organizations and other businesses and human services agencies involved in the coalition.”

Harris said some of the more recent educational presentations by the coalition have taken place at Blackland CDC, PRIDE, Goodwill, AVANCE-Wooldridge Elem, AVANCE-Palm, Austin Learning Academy, AVANCE-Ebenezer, AVANCE-Allan, Princess in Training, Park at Summer’s Grove, Boys & Girls Clubs and Safe Place. She added that during April more than 170 participants attended lessons from the Money Smart Curriculum, which has 11 topic areas, some of which are Checking Account Basics, Ways to Save Money, Credit Scores, Spending Plans, and How to Save and Invest.

“The award-winning Money Smart curriculum helps adults enhance their money skills and encourages building positive financial relationships,” Harris said. “Our post-lesson evaluations show attendees had a significant increase in their knowledge of banking regulations, financial terminology, factors affecting credit, the steps required to buy a home, financial readiness to buy a home and other important aspects of personal money management.”



AgriLife Extension Teaches Kids about Nutrition and Gardening

AgriLife Extension played a role in the KLRU celebration of 50 years of public television broadcasting in the Austin area. The ‘birthday party’ was held April 29 in the 2nd Street district of downtown Austin and was focused primarily on kids. The event included appearances by many children’s favorite public TV characters, including Cookie Monster, Arthur, Clifford, and Maya and Miguel.

“There was fun for the whole family, including a Central Texas Gardener booth with a hands-on ‘Eat the Rainbow’ activity in which kids made bracelets from colored beads which represented different fruits and vegetables,” said Daphne Richards, AgriLife Extension Agent for Horticulture.

Richards said more than 1,700 youth ages 2 through 10 participated in their gardening and nutrition activity, which was supported by 15 Travis County Master Gardeners.

“We were the only local show with a booth,” said Richards, who has a regular segment on the Central Texas Gardener. “Everyone had a wonderful time and we were happy to see so many kids involved in the day’s activities.”

For more gardening news and information, check out the Central Texas Horticulture Blog at: <http://centraltexashorticulture.blogspot.com/>



MEET THE STAFF: Julie Ansley, County Extension Agent - Agriculture & Natural Resources



Julie Ansley began her new role as County Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources on June 18.

Ansley has a master’s degree of science in agriculture from Tarleton State University and previously served as Animal Science Coordinator for AgriLife Extension’s 4-H CAPITAL program.

“Julie begins her new role with familiarity of her surroundings and the people of the county,” said Dolores Sandmann, AgriLife Extension County Director. “She will use the knowledge and people skills she developed and honed with 4-H CAPITAL to serve residents of Travis County as their new Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources.”

Ansley will serve residents in both urban and rural settings of the county, helping educate them on how to conserve and protect valuable natural resources, such as soil and water,” Sandmann said. “Additional service areas will include crops, livestock, and sustainable agriculture and land management.”

“I’m looking forward to continuing to serve the people of Travis County in my new position,” Ansley said. “AgriLife Extension is all about serving the residents of Texas and improving their lives through educational outreach. I hope to continue in that worthwhile mission and tradition.”