



West Virginia

AGED NEWS and VIEWS

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Harry N. Boone, Jr., Ph.D., Editor

Sitting on the Fence

Deborah A. Boone, Assistant Professor

Have you ever sat straddling a fence wondering if the grass was greener on the other side? I think we all have been guilty at one time or another in our lives. We have viewed our job as being better or worse than the next. Agriculture teachers and extension agents often find themselves on the proverbial fence, not understanding what the other does and assuming the grass is greener on the other side. So it is time to move off the fence and replace ignorance with humility.

Agriculture teachers and extension agents both work hard and face similar rewards and frustrations in their chosen professions. Both groups go through many of the same processes to develop programs/curriculum, they just use different terminology. In Extension, agents refer to needs assessment, volunteer development, program objectives and advisory councils. In agricultural education, teachers refer to a course of instruction, alumni, content standards, and advisory committees. Extension volunteers are often local 4-H club leaders. Many times agricultural education volunteers are FFA Alumni or boosters who help with leadership activities and training judging teams. Agricultural educators seek competency mastery of objectives. Both groups conduct needs assessments for both youth and adults.

There are many ways in which the two organizations can work together to the mutual benefit of both organizations and still place accountability on the shoulders of both agent and teacher. Both organizations are striving to teach youth

new agricultural knowledge, the importance of record keeping, and project completion in hopes that their new found knowledge will be linked to other commodities, local communities, and careers. There is a common desire to develop youth and adults and strive to make the local community a better place to live.

In Agricultural Education at West Virginia University, the similarities and differences between the training needs of agriculture teachers and extension agents are recognized. It is the goal of the department to provide a well-rounded education to all graduates regardless of their chosen career path. It is important for them to have the tools not only to succeed, but to excel in their profession.

Although Agricultural Education has always offered courses in extension education, there is now an increased emphasis on classes specific to the needs of Extension. Although designed for Extension, these courses are relevant to agriculture teachers as well. Several agriculture teachers who have taken my Extension program development course have expressed the opinion that the course opened their eyes to the complexity of extension program development and helped them see that agriculture teachers and extension agents navigate the same roads.

As a part of the transition, emphasis will be placed on courses in program development and evaluation for Extension agents. Agents are often trained in subject matter, but ill prepared

to develop and evaluate programs or to manage and develop volunteer leaders. For those agents in the field who wish to sharpen their skills, the department offers the option of distance education courses. Spring semester, 2004, AGEE 440, *Extension Program Development* will be offered via the Internet. *Program Evaluation* (AGEE 692R) will be offered live for those individuals on campus who desire to improve their skills in evaluating programs for impact not just inputs. In addition, a course in *Resource Management* will be developed that covers managing volunteers, conflict management, and fiscal matters. All Extension related classes are being redesigned and revamped as the department develops plans to offer a doctoral degree in Resource Management with a major in Agricultural Education.

Have you been a fence sitter and failed to get to know or understand your counterpart (agriculture teacher or extension agent)? If so, it's time to "get off the fence" and take the first step to understanding your colleagues. You can learn a lot from each other and working together the entire community will benefit.

Dr. Deborah A. Boone joined the West Virginia University Agricultural and Environmental Education Faculty on August 1, 2003.

Coming
in the
2003 November - December issue:
An Update on
Potomac State College

Editorial : Off the Fence

by Harry N. Boone, Jr.

This issue of *News and Views* brings another change. For the first time in the history of the publication, the document will be printed. Printing allows us to expand the use of pictures and other graphics. As you can see from the “centerfold,” this issue is filled with pictures.

In the feature article, Dr. Deborah Boone challenged us to get off the fence and get to know our counterparts in Extension or agricultural education. As you can see from this issue, we are “off the fence” with our expanded emphasis on Extension education. The Department has always played an active part in the preparation of Extension personnel. With the addition of Dr. Boone to the faculty, we will increase our efforts in this area. The expansion of the Extension focus, however, will not diminish

the efforts of the Department in preparing agricultural education teachers.

A number of agricultural education graduates have gone on to successful careers with the Extension service. This issue’s *Alumni Profiles* section focuses on two individuals in key leadership positions in the West Virginia Extension Service. Dave Snively and Jennifer Ours Williams are to be congratulated on their career achievements. There are many other individuals such as Gary Earnest, Mike Hogan, Lisa McCutcheon, Jeff McCutcheon, Edsel Redden, Dave Seymour, and Rodney Walbrown, just to name a few, who could have been included in the feature. All, graduates of the program, are enjoying distinguished careers with the Extension Service.

Dr. Boone mentioned the efforts underway to establish a doctoral degree in Agricultural Education. The efforts are in their infancy, however, if everything goes according to plan, the Division of Resource Management will offer a Doctoral degree in Resource Management with majors in Applied Economics, Natural Resource Management, and Agricultural and Extension Education. The degree will have options for both agricultural education teachers and Extension agents.

I am excited about the changes in Agricultural Education. I feel that West Virginia University can play a major regional and national role in agricultural education. As we move forward, however, we will not forget the department’s foundations established by Drs. Butler, Kelly, McGhee, and Lawrence.

Two years ago I wrote an article for *News and Views* that reflected my views of the Career Development Events as a teacher educator. This year I find myself compelled to write a similar article, this time with a different point of view. Thankfully the incidents that prompted this editorial reflect a very small number of individuals involved in the contests. (I will not specify if they were teachers, students, or supporters.)

The individuals in question approach the Events as if they were an “entitlement.” They express the attitude that the faculty, staff, and facilities at West Virginia University are there to serve them. The individuals were demanding and rude to AGEE faculty and contest coordinators.

I would like to remind everyone that the FFA members, advisors, and their supporters are “invited” guests of the Davis College for the CDE events. Just like unwanted guests in your home, the CDE participants can be asked to leave. There has been discussion in the College about the cost and time involved with the contests. Additional discussion has taken place

about the feasibility of conducting two major events in one year (FFA and 4-H). One major incident could jeopardize the entire series of events.

Some will argue that this is the largest group of high school students on the WVU campus at one time. That is true, however, there is no evidence to indicate how many of the CDE participants return as students.

Parking is a serious problem on the Evansdale campus. On a good day, everyone with a valid paid permit can find a parking space. You can image the problems that are created when you add a number of school buses and vans to the parking situation. Remember, contest coordinators have asked that school buses be parked at the coliseum. I don’t have the answer to the parking problem, but input from the teachers would be welcomed. Once a solution is implemented, everyone must honor the rules.

Finally, I suggest that teachers reflect on the purpose of the CDEs. In my opin-

ion, the CDEs are an opportunity for students to display the knowledge and skills they learned in the agricultural education classroom (an outgrowth of classroom instruction). What do teachers teach their students when they insist on videotaping contests, demand copies of tests, and argue with contest coordinators over minor details of the contests?

I would like to close on a positive note. The majority of the participants conducted themselves in a professional manner. They are to be congratulated on their accomplishments. Agricultural education in West Virginia is a tremendous program for high school youth. Do not let the actions of a few ruin the CDE events for everyone. I challenge you to take an active role in policing the actions of your profession.

The opinions expressed in the editorials are those of the editor and do not necessarily represent official positions and/or opinions of the Agricultural and Environmental Education program, the Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Consumer Sciences, or West Virginia University.

Agricultural and Environmental Education Alumni Profiles

David Snively, Assistant Director WVU Extension Service

As assistant director of the WVU Extension Service for county operations, David W. Snively works with the organization's 55 county offices, helping to ensure that local citizens have access to WVU resources. In addition, he collaborates with Extension's many key statewide and community partners, such as the Farm Bureau, West Virginia Department of Agriculture, 4-H All Stars, county commissions, county Extension Service committees, and boards of education.

He was appointed assistant director on Oct. 15, 2002, after serving five years with WVU Extension and nine years as a county agent in Lawrence County, Ohio. Dave has worked with agriculture, youth,

and community development programs, and he has extensive background in 4-H, including membership in the 4-H All Stars.

A native of St. Marys, he joined the WVU Extension Service in 1997 as Extension agent in Randolph County, where he worked in the areas of agriculture, natural resources, and community development. Dave also was associate director of the Program Center for Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Community Development for two years.

Snively, an Extension associate professor, earned B.S. and M.S. degrees in agricultural education from WVU in



1987 and 1988, respectively. While attending WVU, he worked as a program assistant in Pleasants County and as a graduate assistant with Extension.

Jennifer Ours Williams, Associate Director

Center for Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Community Development

Born and raised in Hardy County, West Virginia, Jennifer Ours Williams graduated from the WVU College of Agriculture with a BSA in animal and veterinary science in 1988. She received her master's degree in 1990, majoring in agriculture education. After three years serving the West Virginia Department of Agriculture as a livestock marketing specialist, she moved to Buckhannon to begin her career with the West Virginia University Extension Service as the Upshur County agricultural agent. Jennifer served in this capacity for 10 years, developing and implementing agricultural and natural resource programs at the local and state levels.

In January of this year, Jennifer moved to Morgantown to become the associate director of the Center for Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Community Development. She works closely with Extension agents throughout the state to assess needs and develop programming to meet those needs.

Jennifer received the WVU College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Science Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award in 1998 and the National Association of County Agricultural Agent's Achievement Award in 2002. She currently is serving a two-year term as president of the WVU Davis



College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Science Alumni Association.

Jennifer lives in Bridgeport with her husband, Bob.

Transitions

Individual

Wade Harsh
Willis Freeman
Aryln Haslacker
Richard McCrobie

Former Position

Ag. Ed. Preston County HS
WVU Student
Petersburg H.S.
Garrett County (MD) Extension

Current Position

Ag. Ed. Buckhannon-Upshur H.S.
Moorefield H.S.
Ag. Ed. Preston County HS

Personals

Leon and Deanna Ammons are the proud parents of Garrett Ashton Ammons, born September 2, 2003. Garrett was 22 1/2 inches long and weighed 8 lbs and 8 oz.

2003 West Virginia Career



Sweepstakes Winner -- Ripley High School



Dairy Cattle -- Ripley HS



Agribusiness Management -- Roane County HS



Dairy Products -- Taylor County Tech.



Agricultural Mechanics -- Ravenswood HS



Entomology -- Ripley HS



Agronomy -- Ripley HS



Equine -- Ripley HS

Career Development Events



Floriculture -- Roane County HS



Nursery Landscape-- Tyler Consolidated HS



Forestry-- Tyler Consolidated HS



Plant Pathology -- Ripley HS



Livestock -- Lewis County HS



Poultry -- Cameron HS



Meats -- Tyler Consolidated HS



7 & 8 Agriscience -- Ravenswood HS

Research Summary

Evaluation of Marketing Methods Used to Promote Extension Programs as Perceived by Master Gardeners in West Virginia

Tiffany D. Rexroad, S. A. Gartin, H. N. Boone and L. D. Lawrence

The mission of the WVU Extension Service (WVU-ES) is to form learning partnerships with the people of West Virginia to enable them to improve their lives and communities. To these partnerships we bring useful research- and experience-based knowledge that facilitates critical thinking and skill development. (West Virginia University Extension Service, 2000, n.p.)

Because the Extension Service is a non-formal educational system, participation in Extension programs is predominantly voluntary. Therefore, the problem arises on how to effectively promote awareness of the Extension Service and its programs. If potential clientele do not know of the Extension Service or a particular program, then they are not likely to participate in the program or programs, and the Extension Service cannot fulfill its mission or justify its continued existence.

This is especially true of non-traditional programs like the Master Gardeners program. The Master Gardeners program is a horticultural training and volunteer leader organization that operates under the guidance of the individual state Extension Service. This program allows gardeners to enhance their horticultural skills and then share their education and experience with others through community service (West Virginia University Extension Service, 2001).

While the Extension Service is a government-funded agency that, in theory, serves every person in the nation, a national study by Warner, Christenson, Dilman, & Salant (1996) found that only 45% have heard of Extension. Many Extension professionals have cited a lack of visibility and marketing of the Extension Service as a primary barrier in reaching the populace (Culp, 1997). Currently, Extension relies heavily on dissemination of information to clientele listed on mailing lists, usually through fliers or newsletters mailed directly to the client. Also public

service announcements for particular Extension programs can be seen or heard through local newspapers or radio stations. Recently, Extension professionals have developed and adapted mass media methods normally employed by the private sector, such as television and/or the Internet, for the promotion of the Extension Service.

There are many ways in which the Extension professional can communicate an awareness of Extension and its programs to the public. First, there are the commercial mass media methods, which include advertisements on radio, in newspapers, or on TV; press releases; fliers; and newsletters (Lionberger & Gwin, 1982). Newspaper articles or columns and radio or TV broadcasts delivered by an agent or the Extension Service are also included in mass media methods. West Virginia also has an extensive website to promote Extension and disseminate information to clientele.

In addition to mass media methods, clientele can find out about Extension programs through word of mouth from people with whom they come in contact. Word of mouth includes referrals from other public and private agencies, such as the Farm Service Agency, U.S. Forest Service, or Farm Bureau or referrals from privately owned businesses. It also includes referrals from a relative or peer who has participated in Extension programs previously or who has heard of the Extension Service from another source.

With the many methods to promote the Extension Service, it can become difficult and confusing for the agent to choose appropriate methods of promoting awareness of Extension that encourages participation in programs. Furthermore, there has been a great deal of research published on the lack of awareness of Extension, but little has been done to determine if this lack of awareness is due to the methods of marketing selected by Extension professionals.

Purpose and Objective

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the methods of advertising and marketing the Master Gardeners program that may help them choose methods to encourage participation in other Extension programs. The objective was to evaluate effectiveness of methods of promoting the WVU-ES based on experiences of current adult Master Gardeners in WV.

Methodology

This was a descriptive research study that collected data via mail survey. The instrument sought to identify how the target population became aware of the Master Gardeners program, methods by which the subjects became aware of other Extension programs, and their preferred methods of receiving Extension information. Demographics and availability of specific media channels were also gathered via the mail questionnaire.

Findings

The target population for this study consisted of all 819 members of the Master Gardeners Program in West Virginia listed in the 2001 State respondents, 58 (73.4%) were female and 21 (26.6%) were male.

Three-fourths of the master gardeners responding indicated that they are over 50 years of age and predominantly female. Nearly half of the master gardeners first became aware of the Master Gardener Program from friends and relatives. Master gardeners also indicated that word of mouth is the primary method by which they learn of other types of Extension programs. They have also learned more about other types of Extension programs since joining the Master Gardener Program.

While over 70% of the master gardeners have access to Internet, they still prefer to learn of Extension programs through newsletters and newspapers. Twenty nine

Robert Morris, WVAAE's 2003 Outstanding Teacher

Robert Morris was named the 2003 West Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators' Outstanding Teacher for 2003. Robert has taught at Clay Co. High School for 15 years. Over 170 students are enrolled in the program. He teaches courses in Agriculture and Natural Resources 1, Animal and Veterinary Science 1 & 2, forestry, agricultural mechanics and horticulture.

His classes feature practical hands-on experiences in the laboratory. His program has an aquaponics lab, greenhouse, forestry land lab, and a large agricultural

mechanics lab. Over 2/3 of his instruction is hands-on science. Student skills include the dissection of fish and fetal pigs, harvesting timber, raising and selling annual flowers and bedding plants, and creating tissue cultures.

Robert has an active FFA chapter. Student accomplishments include numerous state awards including state land judging and homesite champions the past two years and a 3rd place finish in nation competition. In his teaching career, over 100 students have earned their State FFA degrees and several students earned state

proficiency awards. His school recently received a grant for over \$125,000 to build a greenhouse, aquaponics lab, and a 60' x 100' livestock building for the Youth Fair.

He is married to the former Carolyn Pierson and they have two daughters; Hayley, 10 and Hayden, 2. Robert's accomplishments include: the WVAAE Outstanding Young Member Award in 1993, Clay County Teacher of Excellence, and the 2000 West Virginia Environmental Teacher of the Year.

Matthew Call, WVAAE's 2003 Outstanding Young Teacher

Each year the West Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators selects a teacher who has taught a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 5 years to represent the organization as its Outstanding Young Member. This individual represents the state in Regional NAAE competition.

The West Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators' Outstanding Young

Member for 2003 is Matthew Call. Matt received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture with an emphasis in Agricultural and Environmental Education from West Virginia University in 1998.

Upon graduation he accepted a teaching position at Gilmer County High School. His program consists of horticulture, forestry, aquaculture, agricultural mechanics, Agriculture 1-4 and animal

science. He is proud to have a growing aquaculture lab, a greenhouse, a saw mill and in class computer lab for his students use.

He is married to Moniqué (Dolan) Call, also a WVU graduate. She is currently employed as a 4-H Program Assistant in Gilmer County for the WVU Extension Service. The couple resides in Glenville.

Research Summary - (continued)

percent, of those indicating that they had Internet access, do not have email.

Respondents were nearly divided on whether participation in the Master Gardeners Program encouraged participation in other Extension programs. More respondents had heard of agricultural programs conducted by Extension and 4-H than other Extension programs.

Recommendations

In order to assist agents and specialists in choosing methods that will encourage participation in Extension programs, the following recommendations are made to WVU Extension professionals based on the review of the literature, the researcher's experience, and the results of this study:

1. This study should be replicated in its complete or modified form to Extension professionals nationally or locally to de-

termine if the findings differ significantly from those of this study.

2. Extension professionals should develop excellent writing skills that will both entertain and inform potential clientele while persuading them to participate in Extension programs.

3. Mass media methods that facilitate word of mouth methods should be chosen. Print methods allow for people to share the printed information with others.

4. Make sure that all mailing lists for newsletters are complete, accurate, and up-to-date.

5. Send an electronic newsletter to clientele who have e-mail.

6. Develop listserves for clientele groups for efficient e-mailing of pertinent information.

7. To encourage more people to access the WVU-ES website. The web address should be included with every newspaper article and advertisement.

8. Utilize radio and TV programs as opposed to advertisements in areas where local stations are available.

9. Develop more high visibility programs like Master Gardeners.

Tiffany Rexroad earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1999 and a Master of Science Degree in 2002 in Agricultural Education from West Virginia University. For a copy of the complete report, go to the WVU ETD project at: <http://etd.wvu.edu/templates/showETD.cfm?recnum=233>.

Important Dates

Oct 29 - Nov 1	National FFA Convention	Louisville, KY
November 1	Football: WVU vs Central Florida	Morgantown, WV
November 10	Ag Ed Program and Policy Meeting	WVU (AGS 2069)
November 15	Football: WVU vs Pitt	Morgantown, WV
November 29	Football: WVU vs Temple	Morgantown, WV

Email Addresses and Phone Numbers

WVU

Dr. Stacy A. Gartin	sgartin@wvu.edu	(304) 293-4832 ext. 4480
Dr. Harry N. Boone, Jr.	hnboone@wvu.edu	(304) 293-4832 ext. 4481
Dr. Deborah A. Boone	debby.boone@mail.wvu.edu	(304) 293-4832 ext. 4482
Mr. James Carr	james.carr@mail.wvu.edu	(304) 293-4832 ext. 4477
Dr. Graeme Donovan	graeme.donovan@mail.wvu.edu	(304) 293-4832 ext. 4477
Ms. Alice Compton	alice.compton@mail.wvu.edu	(304) 293-4832 ext. 4484
Office Fax		(304) 293-3752

WVDE

Mr. Donald L. Michael	dmichael@access.k12.wv.us	(304) 558-2347
Mr. Keith R. Burdette	kburdett@access.k12.wv.us	(304) 558-2347
Ms. Kim Honaker	khonaker@access.k12.wv.us	(304) 558-2347
Office Fax		(304) 558-0048/1149

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West Virginia University
Morgantown, WV 26506-6108