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News from the Field and Campus for Extension Council Members

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Welcome Council Members

By Tony DeLong

Welcome to all new and returning council members! According to state law, you started your two-year term on March 1, 2005. If you are a returning member, you have seen some changes over the past year. For those who are new, I know you are excited about the chance to help make a difference.

Let me ask you to review the following questions (There are no right or wrong answers-- just guidance):

1. Why am I here?

Answer: To support the programs and services Extension provides. The programs help empower citizens to become more effective in whatever endeavor they are engaged.

2. How much time am I willing to commit as a board member?

Answer: I am sure when you were recruited, you were told it would require many hours for meetings and planning. As I travel and ask the question, "How much time do you give to Extension?" I receive varying answers. I have asked this question of about 150 council members. Here are their averages: For each meeting, one hour travel time one-way; two hours for the meeting; and then travel back home. Additional time is required for reviewing the minutes, agenda, handouts and treasurer's report and for committee meetings, discussions with other council members and follow-up for additional information about programs. The time per year a volunteer spends as a county council member averages 84 hours or seven hours per month. That does not take into account additional time to serve on the regional or state council. It does not include time to attend meetings such as Legislative Day, Council to Campus or a program given in their own county to better understand the work a specialist does.

There are many questions you should ask either before or after becoming a council member. To help you prepare for your role on the Extension council, please review the leadership modules on the Web at:

<http://extension.missouri.edu.extcouncil/index.html>.

The modules were developed by council and staff members to support your role as required by state law. The roles are divided into three categories: programs, governance and membership.

Thank you for your valuable time and service in fulfilling the mission of Extension--
"IMPROVING PEOPLE'S LIVES."

Committees Are Essential to Work of Council

Following is some timely information on effective county council committees, provided by Karma Metzgar, Northwest Region director. When choosing membership on a committee, each council member should know what each committee does and what is required of members. Councils may want to make some changes in committee descriptions to suit their county. I personally never mind doing a job if I know what is expected of me and of others serving. Tony DeLong

Sample Council Committees

Committees are extremely important in accomplishing the council's objectives and handling business promptly. Most committee meetings are in conjunction with regular business meetings. In the Northwest Region, council members are encouraged to sign up for:

At least two council committees and one program advisory team.

Following is a short description of the committees and the time the committee is active.

Policy, Working Rules and Bylaws: Reviews the county policy, working rules and bylaws, recommending revisions or new policies to remain consistent with University policies and recommendations. Hears grievances about policies and recommends action to the council. (Ongoing)

Recognition: With the council's assistance, identifies and recommends recipients for the county State Fair Farm Family. (April-May)

Gifts and Endowments: Acknowledges gifts and encourages endowments to University of Missouri Extension. (Ongoing)

Council Elections: Identifies candidates for the January council elections and recommends election procedures. (November-February)

Budget: Reviews the financial condition of the council, prepares the budget for the coming year, presents the request to the county commission and recommends the final budget. (October-February)

Officer Nominations: Prepares the slate of officers to recommend at the annual meeting. (February-March)

Public Relations: Identifies marketing and stakeholder relation strategies and opportunities for University of Missouri Extension in the county. (Ongoing)

Audit: Includes a non-council member to review fiscal procedures and records; responsible for a general accountability audit. (February-April)

Program Advisory Teams: Provide input to staff; complete the council's input into performance evaluations and other needs regarding programming and performance. Can include non-council members. (Ongoing)

Guess This County!

The county featured in the last issue was Dent County.

As you look around this state, you can see how very different counties are but also how much they have in common.

- This county had a population of 69,242 in 2001 and is growing at a rate of 4.6 percent per year.
- It is ranked 15th in the state in population.
- The county is 586 square miles and has a population density of 117 people per square mile.
- The average household size is 2.4 people.
- The annual per capita personal income is \$25,906 compared with the state average of \$27,932.
- This county had 1,204 farms in 2002, down from 1,298 in 1997. A surprise here is that the average farm size was 217 acres in 2002, up from 212 acres in 1997.
- Of the farms' principal operators, 12.67 percent are female. Almost 1 percent of all farms are operated by someone of Latino origin.
- There are 26 elected or appointed members on this council. Five specialists are housed in this county. The county extension council owns its building.

When the commission was asked about the work provided by University of Missouri Extension, members stated, "They are like superheroes; cape and all."

Timeline Set for 2007-2011 Plan-of-Work Process

By Tony DeLong

The Plan-of-Work process for 2007-2011 is moving forward. The timeline was created to meet the deadline of submitting the State Plan of Work to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, April 15, 2006.

USDA has requirements regarding what must be in the report. The process of getting GRASS ROOTS input from councils and stakeholders is up to cooperative extension in each state.

During the plan development process, many people were asked to give input regarding the collection of program and service needs for the counties. Thoughts and recommendations were received and weighed carefully. One major factor was how much time and effort county councils can give. Another factor considered was which format of reporting those needs would work best. This is all under review, and more information about the process will be forthcoming during the next few months.

As for now, here are some key dates for you to remember:

- Late August/September: County councils will come together for a two-hour session. They will discuss the needs of the counties in regard to programs and services and then will form a statement about the people to be served. They also will discuss what results the county councils hope to see the programs and services provide.
- October: Regional councils will meet to receive and discuss the input from all counties in the region. Regional councils then will give input as to how they view their role in supporting and providing resources to help the counties fulfill the Plans of Work.

Please watch for more information about the Plan-of-Work process. The Council Leadership Development Committee also recommends that, over the next few months, councils review and study the program modules. These modules describe the role councils play in meeting the needs of programming in the county.

What is Your County's Diversity?

By Tony DeLong

When you go to the OSEDA Web site: <http://oseda.missouri.edu/countypage/> and look at the demographics of each county, it is surprising to see how much the face of some counties is changing.

As the Diversity Catalyst Team developed a plan for Extension, they discussed at great length what constitutes the diversity of this state and its people. The following definitions may help you look at diversity in your county or region.

Definitions:

Diversity: Differences among people with respect to **age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation and other characteristics, which make us different.**

Culture: The sum total of the ways we think and do and everything we have as members of a society; acquired through the process of learning, much as the layers of an onion.

Pluralism: An organizational culture that incorporates mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork and productivity among people who are diverse in the dimensions of human differences listed above.

Stereotype: A preconceived and/or oversimplified generalization about an entire group without regard for individual differences.

Prejudice: A set of negative beliefs generalized about a whole group or category of people.

Discrimination: Restrictive/differential treatment of a person or group based on prejudiced assumptions of group characteristics.

Each of us has some type of diversity challenge. It may be directed toward us or someone else.

We must see value in every person for what he/she can contribute to society, and if needed, find ways to give a hand up to ensure inclusion in our communities.

As you start your Plan-of-Work process, please ask yourselves, "Who have we not been able to reach and include in the programs provided by Extension in our county? What are the resources needed to reach them, regardless of who they are in the definitions covered above?"

Legislators Offer Perspectives on Communication

By Sandy Stegall

More than 230 University of Missouri Extension supporters participated in the annual UM Alumni Alliance Legislative Day, March 16, in Jefferson City. The volunteers, including county council members, EXCEL graduates and 4-H members, called on legislators to discuss the University's economic and social contributions to Missourians.

"I want to thank all those who took the time to participate in Legislative Day," said Tom Henderson, interim vice provost and director of cooperative extension. "Extension continues to be well positioned in the eyes of the University and the General Assembly."

At a morning rally, Senate President Pro Tem Michael Gibbons said the Governor intends to hold to last year's funding level -- "a position not enjoyed by nearly any other aspect of government."

House Speaker Rod Jetton said he hoped tort reform and an overhaul of worker's compensation would "keep the state productive," resulting in more money for higher education and other needs.

During an afternoon meeting organized by the state extension council, Louise Diender, chief of staff for Rep. Jim Guest, tied education to economic development. "Education is a high priority to our office ...and you guys are the forefront," she said. "You help us find resources, you fuel young minds, and hopefully they come back to our regions to stay."

Diender said education is a factor in determining whether people are "low income, middle class or upper income. Without education, you will be on the bottom rung."

Participants also heard advice on communicating with state legislators. Rep. Wes Shoemyer said: "Never be afraid to approach your legislator. We don't bite; we're just like you."

Diender said those communicating with legislators need to be specific in answering, "How can we help you do your job?"

Rep. Therese Sander said legislators deal with many complicated issues and want to know something about the people behind those issues, so personal stories help them understand. Sander said face-to-face meetings are ideal, followed by phone calls and letters.

Shoemyer said communications should go beyond just legislators. A major challenge is getting people outside mid-Missouri to understand the importance of the University. "You're the key ... because you're out there," he said. "You have a presence in every county."

DeKalb County Implements Toll-Free Number

(Written in collaboration by John Murphy, DeKalb County council chair; Ron Walker, county program director; and Karma Metzgar, regional director)

Often when someone goes on a diet, they give up something. When you give up something, the desire for that item only grows stronger.

DeKalb County, due to loss of funding, was without an office and Extension programming for nearly 18 months. When the funding stream looked more promising, programming was on the minds of council members. How could they make programming accessible and visible on a shoestring budget?

For starters, the council used the council leadership development modules on *Program Development* found at <http://outreach.missouri.edu/extcouncil/training/programs/index.html>. They became informed about the diversity of Extension programming. Then the budget committee set priorities. Keeping in mind that programming was a priority, the council members generated a list of ideas to support programming.

Karma Metzgar, regional director, recalls being in a council meeting when a council member suggested he would like a toll-free phone number that DeKalb County residents could use to call other specialists. His example was that if he wanted to reach the agronomist, there would be a number. If citizens wanted to reach the 4-H specialist, there would be a number. Before the end of the meeting, council members had identified this option as having potential, but they needed more information.

Through local contacts, checking with other counties using toll-free numbers and an Internet search, an acceptable option was located. This is how it works:

The council applied for its “old” number in the toll-free format--1-888-449-2101-- and was approved. Through the online virtual office service, up to 25 extensions can be used to call direct to specialists in the region. The council used the service for a couple of months before going public with the number. John Murphy, council chair, reports he likes the phone service and has had several council members comment that it is working just as envisioned.

To publicize this service to DeKalb County residents, 5,000 magnets with the phone number and extension numbers were distributed. The number also appears in news releases and on their Web site.

Following is the message residents hear when they call the number. Once the extension number (7xx) is entered, the call automatically transfers to the office where the specialist assigned to the county is headquartered.

Hello, this is the DeKalb County University of Missouri Extension phone directory.

If you know your party's extension number, enter it now. For the

- county program director, press 701

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DeKalb County Implements Toll-Free Number, cont.

For the following specialists, press the appropriate number:

- Ag Business, 702
- Agronomy, 703
- 4-H Youth, 704
- Business Development, 705
- Community Development, 706
- Consumer and Family Economics, 707
- Housing, 708
- Horticulture, 709
- Human Development, 710
- Information Technology, 711
- Livestock, 712
- Natural Resource Engineering, 713
- Nutrition, 714
- Northwest Regional Director's Office, 715
- Council Chair, 716 (used internally)

Additional features to toll-free service can be implemented if the need arises. For example, if the CPD is not at the office but on a cell phone, the CPD can update the phone number to ring the mobile number.

Along with the service, the council received analysis software to monitor the most frequently called numbers as well as number of callers using the number, length of calls, time of day most calls are received, etc. With more use, this software will help the council analyze the service.

What does the toll-free service cost? Currently, it is \$29.99 per month for 1,000 minutes. Additional minutes are 3.9 cents per minute. For \$29.99 a month, the council has made a diversity of specialists accessible to DeKalb County residents.

Toll-free access is connecting residents with numerous programs in the county. Check them out at <http://extension.missouri.edu/dekalb/>.

DeKalb County Program Director Ron Walker offers these additional comments:

In addition to the magnet program, we have intensified our programming efforts from the region to DeKalb County, including 4-H fun night, 4-H officers' training, creation of a 4-H literature library system (one master file of all 4-H literature from all projects offered in Missouri and smaller literature collections distributed for each 4-H club's volunteers' use). The local library is handling the master library similar to the book checkout system. This gives project leaders and members accessibility to the literature locally. We also are having a 4-H FFA livestock judging clinic in July. The new county commissioner is donating his personal funds for this project of \$50!! We have had pesticide certification in DeKalb County and have held genealogy classes. Our goal has been to have Extension publicity in the newspaper as often as possible. There have been photos in each weekly newspaper about Extension programs and council awards for completing modules, leaders honor roll, etc. More articles and pictures will come out for the Water Festival held last week; 100 kids from the DeKalb County schools attended. We are pushing hard to get Extension back in the public eye and restore programming that was there before the office closed two years ago."

Plan of Work and Working to Plan

By Tony DeLong

On April 15, 2006, the University of Missouri Extension State Plan of Work must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The last Plan-of-Work process took place in 1999 when county plans were submitted to the state to become part of the overall State Plan of Work. Now it is time to start on the 2007-2011 Plan of Work. For the past six months, I have been involved in the brainstorming, reporting and development process of this plan.

One of the topics brought up during discussion was that we are all so busy in our daily lives and jobs that there is limited time to do such a plan on the local level. I must say that the county Plans of Work are the backbone of the State Plan of Work. Extension programs and services provided to citizens are from the BOTTOM UP and not from the top down. Who knows the needs at the local level better than those who have firsthand knowledge and live in the community every day?

Some questions asked during brainstorming discussions were, “What resources are available to assist the county council in the process? How much time can be committed to the process? Who will provide support to councils?”

Councils and staff members indicated that time needed will be “about a two-hour council meeting.” They also said they would need a pre-packet of information regarding census data and trends and trained personnel to help lead the discussion and record what is said. Councils and staff requested a standard template to report the priority needs and regional discussions to be sure there is collective input and understanding of the needs and resources for programs.

Development of these items is under way, and timelines to meet the required reporting deadline have been set. Please plan to conduct your needs assessments and council discussions in late August or early September.

More will follow in Weekly News, at staff meetings and at regional council meetings. If you have questions or comments, please e-mail or call me at delongt@missouri.edu or 417-272-8707.

**News from the Field and
Campus for Extension
Council Members**

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The mission of University of Missouri Extension is to:

Improve Missourians' lives by addressing their highest priorities through the application of research-based knowledge and resources.

As an integral part of the land-grant mission, University of Missouri Extension is a joint venture of:

- University of Missouri campuses;
- Lincoln University Cooperative Extension;
- The people of Missouri through county extension councils;
- Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture;
- Other stakeholders and partners.



Congresswoman Honors SE Region Faculty, Councils

By Eileen Yager

SE Region faculty and council members were honored for their part in development of the Southeast Missouri Transportation System, a multicounty transportation system. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson of Cape Girardeau presented the Transportation Cooperation Awards March 30.

Rick Polete, Madison County Extension Council chair; Raymond Skaggs, a local extension supporter; and Celeste Vanderbrugen, SE community development specialist; accepted the award.

