Welcome Cynthia Pierfax

Dallas County welcomes the new CEP/4-H and Youth Development Agent, Cynthia Pierfax. Cynthia is from DeQuincy and Lake Charles, LA. She graduated from Tuskegee University in 2006 with a B.S. in Animal Science, and a M.S. in Animal Science from TN State University in 2008 with concentration in ruminant nutrition.

Cynthia worked for LSU Ag Center as an 4-H Agent in 2010-2012 and joined Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service-Dallas County in June of 2012.

Cynthia Pierfax provides practical education you can trust to help limited resource youth solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future through programs in science, healthy living and leadership in Dallas County.

Landowner’s Workshop

On July 27, 2012 one hundred and ten area residents attended a Landowners Workshop. The workshop was held at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Dallas.

The Landowner Workshop was sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and the North Texas Master Naturalist. The thrust of the workshop was to provide researched based information and education to landowners interested in improving wildlife habitat, wildlife tax valuation, prescribed burning, erosion control, drought management and controlling aquatic weeds.

Presenters included Dr. Dale Rollins, Wildlife Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension & Research in San Angelo, Texas. Dr. Rollins is a quail expert and founder of the Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch in Roby, TX. Dr. Rollins instructed participants with his expertise and experience managing habitat for wildlife. Dr. Billy Higginbotham, Professor and Extension wildlife and fisheries specialist headquartered at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center at Overton, presented pond management and aquatic weed control. David Sierra of the East Texas Ecological Education Center in Tyler, TX covered techniques for prescribed burning. Michael Brooks, District Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS/USDA) spoke on drought management and erosion control. Brett Johnson, Urban Biologist, Texas Parks & Wildlife presented the fundamentals of Wildlife Tax Valuation.

In addition to the training, participants received a DVD of the proceedings and received two hours continuing education credits for licensed pesticide operators.

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EFNEP Mayor’s Back to School Fair

On Thursday, August 2, 2012 the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program participated in the Mayor’s annual back to school fair which was held at Fair Park in the Centennial building. Many of the attendants stopped by to register for the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, participated in nutrition, fitness & research information and activities.

EFNEP at K.B. Polk Elementary Back to School Fair

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Youth & Adult programs participated in K.B. Polk Elementary back to school fair. This event was held on Thursday, August 23, 2012. Attendees who stopped by to register for the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program received information on packing a healthy back pack, kid-friendly veggies and fruits, meats for healthy kids and 10 tips to creating healthy active events. Participants also participated in physical activities.

Diabetes Education

While attending the 4-lesson Cooking Well with Diabetes program, senior citizens at the Farmers Branch Senior Center learned how to manage their blood glucose by making wise food choices and planning healthy meals. The Cooking Well with Diabetes curriculum was developed by health specialists with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension as a companion program to the Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes program. Participants who completed the Cooking Well program indicated that as a result of the program, they were making healthier mealtime choices, adapting recipes and cooking methods, and felt more confident about keeping their blood glucose in the recommended range. Extension agent, Lexie McGrane, presented Cooking Well, and will present Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes, at the Farmers Branch Senior Center in September.

Earth Camp

The Dallas County Family & Consumer Science agent joined forces with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Program Assistants, and Campfire USA to present a “Social Etiquette” course for 26 area youth at Hebron Trails and Valley Ridge Apartment complexes on July 24, 2012. The focus of the program was to help teach young people the importance of appropriate social behavior as it relates to diversity, self-esteem, and effective communication skills. Games and hands-on activities included: The Label Game that teaches how it feels to be included and excluded: Non-verbal vs. verbal communication and what they say about us; Cultural Poems; and various other activities to promote self-esteem.

As a result youth and adults were treated to educational experiences that will assist them in living and working together to improve our community, city, and country. One student said he understood that the program taught him that, “No matter what color our skin is, we can all live, work and play together in a happy way”. 
**CEP 4-H Character and Leadership Development**

On July 17th and 31th, students at Voices of Hope, Thurgood Marshall Community Center and West YMCA were introduced to Prairie View A&M University’s 4-H Youth Development Program. Seventy students learned the Character Counts curriculum made available to them by CEP 4-H Agent Cynthia Pierfax. Students acting skills, public speaking skills, and impromptu skills were improved by practicing role playing to test their decision making skills.

Local architect with the EJES firm in Dallas, TX and published poet, Terri Odis, did a workshop with Voices of Hope and West YMCA. He taught them the art of poetry and how poetry is a form of expression. Students created their own “concrete” poems and recited them in front of the class. Emphasis was placed on how communication is an important skill to have to be an effective leader. Public speaking skills and confidence building was also improved during this workshop.

**CEP/4-H STEM and Bullying Prevention Program**

In the month of September, 100 4-Hers experienced hands-on learning via STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), and bullying prevention programming offered through Prairie View A&M University’s 4-H program. Students learned how to make ice cream, (in a bag), is actually a fun way to learn about freezing points, chemical compounds, and the many uses of salt.

Students also earned the different types of bullying, what bullies look like, how bullying affects everyone, and how to stop and prevent bullying. The student’s role played different scenarios depicting different outcomes when being presented with bullies, and expressed how they felt during the different scenes. The youth got in touch with their “inner actor/actress’ ability. The scenarios were a great way for the youth to build self confidence and practice public speaking. It was also very entertaining for the adults to watch as the kids were performing. Students also learned about parliamentarian procedures during the club meetings. Candidates for office were required to write and then present their speech in front of other club members. The members then voted for officers.

**4-H Pledge**

I pledge

my HEAD to clearer thinking,
my HEART to greater loyalty,
my HANDS to larger service,
and my HEALTH to better living
for my club, my community, my country, and my world.
Dallas County Extension Agent, Lexie McGrane, prepares to record a radio program with Adell Campbell, the host of The Eyes of North Texas radio show. This program, which provided information about cooking food safely outdoors, was broadcast on Reading and Radio Resource, reaching 5000 listeners in Texas, and was streamed nationally. The program aired for the first time on August 25th, will air two more times in August, and will be followed by additional programs in the future.

NTRB radio is part of Reading & Radio Resource, a non-profit agency serving those who cannot read because of vision or physical impairments, learning differences or for students who are learning English as a second language. Radio programming is provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. NTRB programming includes daily news stories both local and national, serialized books, self-help programs, and specialty programming: cooking for the blind, blind handyman, employment. Programming is broadcast on a sub frequency of KERA. RRR has begun "streaming" our radio programming through our internet site making our radio programming available to eligible clients anywhere in the US for $60.00 a year! For those needing financial assistance for service in North Texas, special radio receivers are loaned at no charge. Financial assistance is available for out-of-area listeners. Underwriting and sponsorships of radio programming is available for a low cost to businesses and organizations.

RRR also provides Recorded Books for children and adults from a catalogue of over 3900 titles with over 230 new titles added each year. Recordings are sent to our clients and are theirs to keep for a small fee. Audio recordings are on MP3CDs, but cassettes and audio CDs can also be requested. Soon eligible clients will be able to order and download audio books directly from our website. Scholarships are available to those needing financial assistance for services.

Audio Descriptive Service is a service provided to clients who are blind or visually impaired and their families so that they may enjoy live theatre events. A trained RRR volunteer attends a theater performance to describe through headsets what is happening on stage during the natural pauses of dialogue. There is no charge for this service, but is limited to specific Dallas performances arranged by RRR.

In September 2012 Dallas County Cooperative Extension Program’s Family & Consumer Science Agent started an exciting parenting program called “Parenting Matters” for the ladies who attend the HOPE Women’s Center in Dallas County 75201. HOPE Center Director, Ms. Yolanda Marshall indicated the ladies would benefit greatly from a parenting program and the “magical moment” happened. And, it has been just that, a “magical moment”.

According to Mr. Young, the ladies faces said it all when he informed them he would be instructor for the parenting program. They just stared and said little. They would sit back in their chairs and listen as he did all the talking. He would ask questions and no one would want to respond.

As the sessions progressed and comfort levels increased, the ladies became more and more involved and interactive in sessions. And, by the second session the ladies were so indulged that they would get upset when it was time for sessions to end.

Now the ladies of HOPE express just that, HOPE, when speaking about the new options and empowerment they feel from what the Parenting Matters program has helped to offer in their lives and the children they love so much. They also state they love hearing and learning from the male perspective.

Parenting Matters is an eight-session curriculum designed to be easily implemented by parent educators. The goal is to assist court-mandated or referred parents gain the knowledge and skills needed to enhance their parenting skills.
North Texas Master Naturalist

On Saturday, September 22nd, the North Texas Master Naturalists had their Entomology Specialist “Bug Booth” at Texas Discovery Gardens to celebrate the 3rd Annual Butterflies ‘n’ Bugs Festival. Close to 100 people stopped by the booth manned by Elaine Ackley and Judy Meagher. The public had a chance to inspect Cactus Leaf-Footed Bugs, a Caterpillar Hunter and other insects using magnifying glasses and microscopes. They also learned how to tell a male from a female Monarch butterfly and how to tell the difference between a dragonfly and a damselfly. In addition, they were made aware of the fact that the overwhelming majority of our insects are benign or beneficial. Several children, potential entomologists themselves, spent hours at the booth. A great time was had by all!

For more information, contact:

Dale Groom
Dallas County Coordinator
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
10056 Marsh Lane, Ste. B-101
Dallas, Texas 75229-6071
Telephone: 214-904-3050
Fax: 214-904-3080
Email: dalegroom@ag.tamu.edu
Website: http://dallas-tx.tamu.edu

Pesticide Re-Certification Training

On September 20, 2012 Dallas County Extension Agent, Fred D. Burrell Jr., in conjunction with the Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Specialist and resource specialist partnered to conduct a pesticide re-certification training course at the Dallas County office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The pesticide re-certification course provided continued education units (CEUs) for fourteen (14) pesticide applicators who hold certified private applicators, non-commercial or commercial applicators license with the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Presenters and subject matter included; “Protecting Water Resources from Pesticide Contamination” Dr. Dottie Woodson, Water Resources Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; “Insect Pest Management for Pecan & Peaches” Dr. Allen Knutson, Professor and Extension Urban Entomologist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; “Mosquito Control Update” Dr. Mike Merchant, Professor and Extension Urban Entomologist Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; “Right-of-Way Weed and Brush Control” T.V. Smith, Agricultural Consultant, DuPont Agricultural Products; “Pesticide Laws & Regulations” Mark Evans, Texas Department of Agriculture.

The workshop provided pesticide applicators with research-based information and best practices that will assist them in making more informed decisions when applying pesticides in schools, homes, businesses, landscapes and on food crops to better protect human life and our natural resources to include water, soil, air and wildlife.

In cooperation with....

Dallas County Commissioner’ Court
Clay Jenkins
County Judge

Maurine Dickey
Commissioner, Pct. 1

John Wiley Price
Commissioner, Pct. 3

Mike Cantrell
Commissioner, Pct. 2

Dr. Elba Garcia
Commissioner, Pct. 4