

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

April 2012

2 4-H Spirit Night @ Good Luck Grill
9 4-H Recordbook Workshop
11 Pesticide Application Training & Exam
14 Bird Friendly Landscapes Seminar
14 East Austin Garden Fair
19 How To Construct a Compost Bin Seminar

May 2012

17 Preparing the Landscape for Summer Seminar
24 Small Business Workshop
28 Memorial Day Observed—OFFICE CLOSED

June 2012

5-26 Healthy Food, Healthy Families (Tuesdays)
13 Beneficial Bugs in the Garden Program
18 4-H Food Challenge Workshop
30 Garden Photography Seminar

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
19 How to Build & Install Drip Irrigation Seminar
23-25 Youth Leadership Program

AgriLIFE EXTENSION

Texas A&M System

Extension Matters

in Travis County

SPRING 2012



Dolores Sandmann
County Extension Director
Texas AgriLife Extension
Travis County

Message from the Director:

April is National Volunteer Month! Volunteers are a valuable asset of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Our volunteers in Travis County help us:

- Ensure that are educational programs are relevant.
- Expand the delivery of our educational programs and activities.
- Interpret the value of AgriLife Extension to others.

In 2011, 1,269 Travis County residents participated as volunteers with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. It was estimated that they gave over 36,500 volunteer hours back to our communities. These hours were valued at over \$780,500 thousand dollars.

Our sincere thanks goes to our Leadership Advisory Board, Master Gardeners, 4-H Adult Volunteers, Financial Literacy Education Volunteers, Master Wellness Volunteers, Texas Extension Education Association members, and our many Program Area Committees and Task Force members that assisted with planning and conducting our many educational events throughout the year.

THANK YOU,

-Dolores Sandmann

Character Counts in 4-H

The 4-H Character Counts curriculum is being used in after-school programs in about 30 Austin area schools as part of the Travis County 4-H CAPITAL program. "This curriculum uses a framework centered on basic values called the Six Pillars of Character," said Lydia Domaruk, AgriLife Extension Agent for Urban Youth Development. "Those six pillars are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship."



Domaruk said each after-school class implements seven lessons annually -- one course at the beginning of the fall semester which presents an overview of the program, followed by six additional programs throughout the year, each focused on a different pillar of character.

In January and February combined, 4-H CAPITAL instructors taught 52 Character Counts sessions, totaling 62 hours of instructional time and serving 425 Travis County youths.

"I have seen evidence of the lessons from the Character Counts curriculum working on students in my after-school program," said Catherine Swan, a 4-H CAPITAL staff member who presented the program at Overton Elementary School. Swan said she saw how the lessons helped one of her students be less disruptive and argumentative and show more respect and caring to her fellow students.

Urban Animal Science Banquet Honors Students

About 120 students, parents, and school personnel attended the Travis County 4-H CAPITAL 2012 Urban Animal Science Banquet on the evening of March 8 at Sanchez Elementary in Austin.

"Our guest speaker was Guadalupe Velasquez, principal at Allison Elementary," said Julie Z. Ansley, Animal Science Coordinator for 4-H CAPITAL. "Mr. Velasquez has brought the animal science program to four schools and we have worked with him throughout his career with Austin ISD. He talked about his childhood and his own experiences and the lessons he learned while he was in 4-H showing animals."

AgriLIFE EXTENSION

Texas A&M System

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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Ansley said several awards and honors were presented at the banquet, including the first 4-H CAPITAL Urban Animal Science Scholarship – which was presented to long-time program participant Adelfo Carbajal. Recognition also was given to top-placing showmanship winners at the recent Travis County Youth Show.

Throughout Travis County, more than 100 youth are involved in the 4-H CAPITAL animal science program, which teaches leadership, teamwork and responsibility.

“The 4-H CAPITAL Urban Animal Science program not only makes science and math hands-on and fun, it also familiarizes students with the Six Pillars of Character curriculum.” she said. “Teachers and administrators are very enthusiastic about this program.”



Photo: 4-H CAPITAL student, Gwyneth Boyden, received the Reserve Champion Junior Showmanship award at the 2012 Travis County Youth Show.

4-H Youth Shine at Travis County Youth Show

A total of 286 4-H members participated in the 2012 Travis County Youth Show, exhibiting over 500 livestock or youth fair projects.

“All of these 4-H members put a lot of time and thought into their projects and should be commended for their efforts,” said Cory Tally, AgriLife Extension Agent for 4-H. “Many of the youth received ribbons and special recognition for their hard work.”

Listed are awards, along with the names and club affiliations of the 4-H members honored:



- Grand Champion Market Goat – Chris Taveirne – TCCC 4-H
- Grand Champion Turkey – Regan Gray – Creedmoor 4-H
- Reserve Champion Turkey – Jameson Tidwell – North Shore 4-H
- Reserve Champion Market Steer – Stephanie Lindgren – Wilbarger Creek 4-H
- Reserve Champion Market Barrow – Brooke Bishop - Wilbarger Creek 4-H
- Breed Champion Hampshire Barrow – Caden Crane – Wilbarger Creek 4-H
- Breed Champion Light Cross Barrow – T.J. Jackson – Oak Hill 4-H
- Breed Champion Yorkshire Barrow – Calle Wilkes – Cele 4-H
- Breed Reserve Champion Medium Wool Lamb – Chris Taveirne – TCCC 4-H

In addition, 39 4-H youth received Grand and Reserve Grand Champion honors for Youth Fair projects in the crafts, baked goods and art divisions.

Master Gardeners Dig In for Spring Presentations

“This late winter and early spring, Travis County Master Gardeners have been very busy responding to requests to give horticultural presentations at gardening clubs, civic clubs and to other community groups,” said Daphne Richards, AgriLife Extension Agent for Horticulture and Master Gardener Speakers’ Bureau coordinator.

Richards said after last summer’s extreme heat and drought, people are even more concerned about their gardens and landscapes.

“The spring season always sees a spike in requests for horticultural information, but we expect this spring to be extremely busy,” she said. “People are more worried than usual about what to plant, when to plant and how to care for what they’ve planted.”

During the month of February, Richards said, AgriLife Extension personnel and Travis County Master Gardeners provided 18 horticultural presentations to groups throughout the county.

“There were 638 participants at these presentations – 461 adults and 177 youth – and each presentation averaged one to two hours,” she said.

“Fifteen Master Gardener volunteers provided these public presentations to garden clubs, senior centers, public libraries and other venues.”

Richards said qualitative evaluation is given after every program, and reports uniformly indicate that participants find the information presented helpful.

“For example, 100 percent of participants at the February seminar on water-conserving landscapes responded they were mostly or completely satisfied with the program, she said. “And 100 percent said they would recommend AgriLife Extension to others and/or attend another AgriLife Extension programs in the future. Such positive responses are typical of almost all of our programs.”

In response to the question “What did you like most about this program?” Richards said one participant responded: “After the awful heat and lack of rain last year, I am really looking to make a change in my yard. This presentation on water-conserving landscapes gave me lots of great information that will help me improve my yard, and hopefully, use less water and still have pretty plants.”

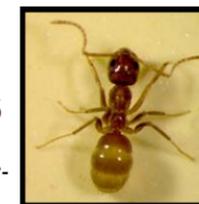
For more gardening news and information, check out the Central Texas Horticulture Blog at: <http://centraltexashorticulture.blogspot.com/>



AgriLIFE Task Force Addresses Crazy Ants

With the recent discovery of Raspberry Crazy Ants in Travis and Williamson counties, AgriLife Extension Integrated Pest Management Specialist Wizzie Brown has been asked to head up a task force to address this invasive species.

“Crazy ants don’t sting and to most don’t pose a real health risk, but they are extremely prolific,” Brown said. “For example, in areas around Houston where they have been discovered, crazy ant populations have grown into colonies of millions and millions,



displacing many native ant species.”

Brown said the task force already consists of integrated pest management experts from Travis County, the city of Austin, area universities and the local pest control industry.

“Our goal is to help educate people on how to identify these ants and where to report their sighting so we can know where they are and track the growth of these populations,” she said. “This is an invasive species and we’re still learning about their biology, behavior and control.”

Brown said the crazy ant population in Travis County was discovered by a local pest control operator who she soon will accompany to the Spicewood area near Lake Travis to provide any advice or control product needed.

“I discovered another colony of crazy ants myself near Round Rock off FM3406 when doing fire ant control in that area,” Brown said. “Now we’re incorporating crazy ants along with the fire ant control. We’re hoping to have the same success with crazy ant management as we’ve had with the fire ants, but they are a different species and require a different means of control.”

For more information, check out our website at: <http://urbanentomology.tamu.edu/ants/raspberry.html>

MEET THE STAFF: Amy Harris, County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences



Amy Harris joined AgriLife Extension - Travis County as the Family & Consumer Sciences Agent on March 1, 2012. Before taking this position she worked for Texas AgriLife Extension as FCS Agent in Guadalupe County. Amy has worked in the area of Nutrition and Education for over 20 years. Her experience includes work as a Community Dietitian, Facility Director, and Corporate Weight Loss Manager. Amy is also proud to be a veteran of the United States Army. She holds a B.S. in Dietetics from Iowa State University and obtained a master’s degree in Agricultural Sciences from Texas A&M University, Kingsville.