

APRIL 2019

4-H CAPITAL NEWSLETTER

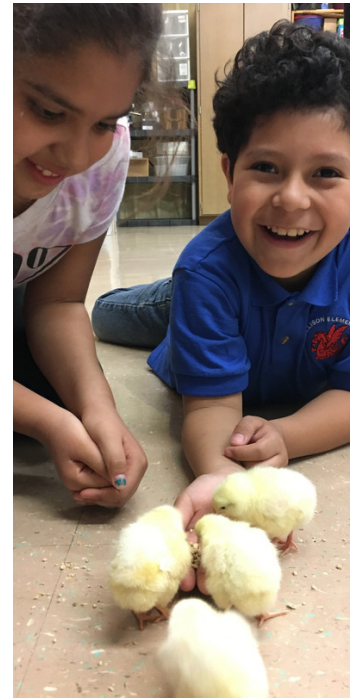


ANIMAL SCIENCE

BY KATIE THOMPSON

Spring has sprung! As the days get longer and warmer, Animal Science instructors have been focusing on lessons that give our students a chance to be outside and enjoy the sun and fresh air.

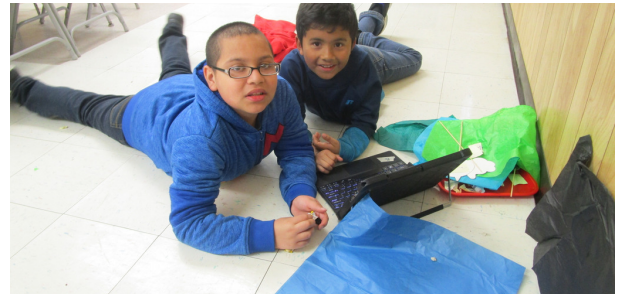
We have been doing a lot of interdisciplinary science through scavenger hunts, filming music videos, Makey-Makey circuit games, growing wheatgrass, plotting constellations, and learning how to be a vet by taking care of stuffed animals. Classes at T.A. Brown and Wooten Elementary have been preparing for their rabbits buy making wrist cuffs and practicing handling Hector, a Lionhead that lives here at the office. The first batch of many chicks hatched this month, and they are busy visiting 4-H classes. In just a few short weeks we will be hatching more chicks, getting our market rabbits set up at their new schools, and preparing for a fast approaching rabbit show!





NATURAL RESOURCES

BY MILES KELLEY



Here on the Natural Resource team we've been enjoying the nicer weather as we take students out for a menagerie of hands-on nature-focused lessons. At Houston Elementary, Taraja and River have had a blast hosting composting lessons and teaching students the engineering design process behind making mobiles out of natural materials. Students are quickly becoming experts at investigating red wiggler worm habitats and becoming critical thinkers about our relationship with the natural world. At Baty Elementary, teachers Oona and Evan are making kites and catching bugs. Students have been learning how to become wind-wise engineers and advanced bug sleuths. In Jerid's classes, at Collins Elementary, he's bringing the peaceful approach of mandala art – exploring the natural world as a medium to make them. Students have loved bringing Austin's natural beauty into the classroom as they work with pink evening primrose and Indian blanket. As the weather continues to improve many of us on the natural resources team are excited to break out the dusty tents and start teaching camping and survival skills!



ENGINEERING & TINKERING

BY EMILY WEERTS

"MS. CHELSEA,
I'M A
SCIENTIST."

We're excited about Spring in all of our classes! The warmer weather and longer days means we can get outside to explore science and nature all around us. Over at Ortega Elementary, students in Kryssie's Outdoor Explorers class learned about magnetism and made their own compasses. Dani's Engineering and Tinkering class explored force and motion by making wind vehicles and balloon cars. Students in Oona's Natural Resources class at Hornsby-Dunlap Elementary learned about natural disasters and made Earthquake Shake Tables. Later in the week, they learned about digital photography on a Nature Photography Scavenger Hunt. Everyone especially enjoyed selecting photos to print and take home using our mobile photo printers.

DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK SCIENCE IN NATURE IN YOUR BACKYARD? TAKE YOUR PHONE OR CAMERA OUT FOR A WALK AND FOLLOW THESE PHOTO SCAVENGER HUNT PROMPTS:



Take a photo of:

- Something yellow
- Something flying
- An interesting leaf
- A spider or web
- Something from an ant's perspective
- A piece of trash (then throw it away)



Toma una foto de:

- Algo amarillo
- Algo volando
- Una hoja interesante
- Una araña o telaraña
- Algo desde la perspectiva de una hormiga
- Un pedazo de basura (luego tirarlo)



GARDEN SCIENCE

BY MEREDITH O' REILLY

Spring plants are in the ground! Students at our garden schools, Widen, Rodriguez, Hillcrest, Perez, and Pecan Springs planted tomatoes, peppers, squash, and more. Some of these we grew ourselves, and others came from the Sustainable Food Center's Spread the Harvest program. Thanks to the City of Austin, we were able to harvest invasive bamboo from a park and put it to use in our different classes. For example, Hillcrest has been making wind chimes and tomato cages from bamboo. Mari at Widen Elementary brought in a beekeeper guest speaker, and students were able to try on the gear and see a model hive. Perez Elementary made a healthy cinnamon carrot crunch and continues different mindfulness projects. Perez's tech class has been learning to code different robots such as Sphero and Wedo and setting challenges for them. Wooten used fruit as the controllers for their Makey Makey bands and engineered cool forts from cardboard. Smith Elementary and Collins Elementary experimented with wind tubes and wind vehicles, and they made STEAM nature mandalas with wildflowers! Our team has been preparing for the **East Austin Garden Fair on April 13th from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at Parque Zaragoza**. We hope to see you there!



COME JOIN US!



EAST AUSTIN GARDEN FAIR

LEARN. TEACH. GROW.



PARQUE ZARAGOZA REC. CENTER
2608 GONZALES ST.
AUSTIN 78702



APRIL 13, 2019
9AM TO 2PM



ALL FREE!
PLANTS & SEEDS
ADVICE FROM MASTER GARDENERS
SOIL SCREENING (BRING A 2 CUP SAMPLE)
FUN KIDS ACTIVITIES

RAINWATER HARVESTING, TOOL CARE, BEEKEEPING, RABBITS, CHICKENS, VEGETABLE & FRUIT, FOOD PRESERVATION, TEXAS SUPERSTAR PLANTS, COMPOSTING & MUCH MORE...

APRIL 13TH

FOR MORE INFO: 512-854-9600
EXTENSIONHORTTRAVISCOUNTY@GMAIL.COM

<http://bit.ly/estaustingardenfair>




THE TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE WILL PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. EDUCATION, AND EMPLOYMENT TO ALL PERSONS REGARDLESS OF RACE, COLOR, SEX, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, DISABILITY, GENETIC INFORMATION, STATUS AS A VETERAN, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, OR GENDER IDENTITY. THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURTS OF TEXAS COOPERATING.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WHO PLAN TO ATTEND A MEETING AND WHO MAY NEED AUXILIARY AIDS OR SERVICES ARE REQUESTED TO CONTACT TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE, TRAVIS COUNTY AT 512-854-9600 TEN WORKING DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING SO APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE.



AMERICORNER

BY CASEY BRANTHOVER

4-H CAPITAL has been busy in the community talking about our AmeriCorps Program this month. We attended at least three local recruitment opportunities this month: The Del Valle HS Career Fair; a discussion at ASPIRE Family Literacy; and at the Park Ranger Cadet Summit. First off, we had the pleasure to attend the Del Valle High School Career Fair, where we discussed the benefits of taking a gap year. Not only would high schoolers earn up to \$6,000 they could use for college, but taking a gap year gives them an opportunity to learn real job skills and give them some time to explore hands-on career opportunities before committing to a major in college. And they get paid throughout!

Next, we were able to attend a discussion at ASPIRE Family Literacy, a program that breaks the cycle of illiteracy and poverty within families by providing comprehensive, integrated literacy services for the entire family. We went and talked with the Adult Education ESL Program, discussing the benefits of having their kids attend 4-H CAPITAL Science Programs. We even heard from one mom who's kids attend our Program at Smith Elementary. She stated that her daughters love learning about science, and that even one of them got to go on a fishing field trip with our program. On top of this, we discussed the opportunity for these adults to become an AmeriCorps member with our program, giving them valuable teaching experience that they could use to help with their own aspirations of teaching certification.

Finally, we ended the month on a high note, by participating in the Park Ranger Cadet Summit. The Ranger Cadet Program, based in Akins HS, helps provide High School students with an opportunity to participate in a Wildlife/Natural Resources Pathway. We had the privilege to listen to their final projects, participate in a Bioblitz, and show high school juniors and seniors the fun, natural resource related jobs they could have as soon as next year. I've attached a picture of one of our currently serving AmeriCorps members, MK, who helped out with the event and participated in the Bioblitz! We even heard from a few Ranger Cadets who attended our 4-H CAPITAL program when they were at Widen Elementary. Overall, our recruitment this month has been focused on local communities, in hopes to find more local, diverse applicants to participate in a Service Year in the Austin Area.



If you are interested in finding out more about recruitment and becoming a science superhero today, go to our website:
<https://agrilife.org/capital4-h-new/join-us/>

**“I WANTED TO
GET KIDS WHO
OTHERWISE
MIGHT NOT HAVE
A CHANCE TO
EXPLORE THE
OUTDOORS!”**

TALKING ABOUT DEI AT 4-H CAPITAL

BY WILLIE GARZA

Four of our staff completed a series of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion workshops earlier in the month of March. These workshops were coordinated by the Serve Austin Collaborative and facilitated by Promise 54 and took place over the past 3 and a half months. As we started the workshops our entire organization took a survey to gain an understanding how our staff and members experience diversity, equity and inclusion at work. These survey responses have helped drive the work we have done at each of the workshops and beyond. We had the opportunity to examine explicit and implicit bias that permeates American culture in order to understand how it may show up in our workplace. We identified ways in which we can improve our organization through the lens of DEI and formed a list of actions items. One of the very first actions items was to review all survey responses with our entire organization. This step was completed in March and generated good conversation in regards to the formation of a DEI Committee. As a second step we are reviewing applications to form a DEI Committee that will meet every two weeks. While this meeting will be open to all who wish to attend, the committee will be responsible for defining diversity, equity and inclusion for our program. These definitions will drive the updating of our organizational mission, values and beliefs. Through this lens we will examine our recruitment and hiring practices along with the policies and procedures that guide our organization. We aim to be more intentional in honoring the the diversity represented by our staff, members, and the students and parents of the community we serve. We have a responsibility to commit our time, energy and resources to examine our organization and continue our growth.



MEET COPPER!

What is a Lion Head Rabbit?

Lionhead Rabbits are small bunnies with compact, rounded bodies and are considered to be a fancy breed. The distinguishing factor between Lionhead bunnies and other breeds is that this breed has a "wool mane". The similarity they share with the king of the animal kingdom, the Lion, is the reason that they were given their breed name. Normally, their mane is around 2 inches (5 cm) long. Lionheads are not only cute and perky, they are very good-natured bunnies who are also tolerant of children as well, and as such, they make wonderful pets for kids and adults alike. They also tend to be well-mannered, friendly, and easily trained.

Source: <https://lionheadrabbit.com>

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