

Perspectives

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Dear Tarrant County Friends and Partners,

Hello fall and not a day too soon! We have had quite a hot summer and I am sure we are all looking forward to cooler days! You'll be pleased to know that the Walking School Bus is in the planning stages at multiple FWISD campuses! The Urban Development Program Area Committee's (UD-PAC) first ever C-LEC Conference has been planned and scheduled for September 21, 2010 and has a diverse set of registrants from throughout the county! A new program partnership is underway with the Christian Women's Job Corps in Arlington and your UD-PAC has met to establish goals and programming foci for the year 2011! It is definitely quite apparent that the end of the year is fast approaching, but the work continues! This issue greets you with a continuation of the "Discovery and Development: An Eye on Potential" educational series in print, as well as some articles touching on some timely issues pertinent to our communities. Enjoy your Perspectives!

Please remember to visit us at our new and improved web site found at <http://tarrant.tamu.edu> under the Urban Development section to find regularly updated information, including a community calendar of events and a link to "Access Tarrant's Urban Scene", a blog brought to you by your Urban Development CEA (<http://tiny.cc/urbanscene>).

To join our mailing list, receive more information, make an appointment to meet with your CEA, request an event to be placed in our community calendar, or express interest in our programs, contact:

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Websites:

- <http://tiny.cc/urbanscene> (UD-BLOG)
- <http://Tarrant.tamu.edu> (COUNTY WEB PAGE)
- <http://buildingconnections.tamu.edu>
- <http://www.tcre.org/>
- <http://www.texasleadership.org>
- <http://communityeconomics.tamu.edu>
- <http://nacdep.net>
- <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eTCRI/site/default.asp>

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Tarrant County

Understood?

Who's Taking Care of Them and You?

Habit Number 5 & 6!

It's amazing how the year has simply flown by as we have touched upon the various characteristics of effective individuals, both personally and professionally. It is with great excitement that I touch upon Covey's next two habits as we engage various community leaders in a conference highlighting the need to collaborate, partner, and seek these "win/win" situations we spoke of in the past issue! These "win/win" situations can be increased and experienced more regularly when we embrace a practice where we seek to "understand others before we are understood" and seek to create an atmosphere where synergistic principles can thrive and push mutual gains forward.

Normally, many can agree that, in conversations that take place in normal "partnership" situations, we are either speaking or waiting to speak. Very rarely are we completely present and focused on understanding what we are hearing from others. Consider this...we spend years learning about three of the four forms of communication: we practice reading, writing, and speaking formally within our years of education, both at home and in school. But, how many can say the same about listening? Are we able to boast of various strategies to listen effectively as we would the ability to read various genre of text, write a variety of messages for a multitude of audiences, or speak publicly about our ideas, whether personal or professional? Most of us would say no. Seeking to truly engage in communication with others where our primary focus is understanding their message (thoughts, opinions, ideas, etc.) is termed "empathic communication" by Covey. However, it is also necessary to be willing to communicate in such a way that we can also be understood. We may often experience speaking for long periods of time and having no one truly understand our message. How effective is the process of this communication if both cannot be completely understood? If there is misunderstanding, how can a "win/win" situation result? Therefore, seek to not only practice



Career Builder Toolbox

In keeping with the recent trends and in response to your feedback and requests, the Urban Development Department is now offering a job readiness series of three sessions with an optional fourth entitled "Career Builder Toolbox" and includes the following mini-sessions:

- **Your Resume** – The First Introduction
- **Your Interview** – The Grand Opportunity
- **Your Workplace Lingo** – Once You're In!
- Optional sessions include topics such as time management, attitude, responsibility, applying online, your work ethic, and negotiating your salary.

Call your Urban Development Department today to learn more or request a series for your group!

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Understood? Who's Taking Care of Them and You?

Habit Number 5 & 6! Continued...

the art of listening for understanding, but that of learning how to properly convey your own message to aid others in understanding you.

Now, we must consider the excitement that can result when we have embraced the use of these habits in our every day lives and how the knowledge and practice of them can lead to synergistic environments where creativity runs rampant and everyone is engaging in innovative thinking and practice. The world will continue to move forward whether we move with it or not! Consequently, successful people can thrive in times of change, uncertainty, and challenge because they understand the power of synergy, which, simply put, means that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Covey gives a wonderful example of how one "2 x 4" can hold a certain weight, but two "2x4's" placed together can hold more weight than the individual "2x4's" combined. If we embrace this reality, we begin to see how two agencies who would normally service 500 clients each can service more than 1000 together if they pooled their resources. Two cars may comfortably hold four people each, but if each person contributed to the rental or purchase of a van in place of the two cars, that van could easily accommodate more than eight people. In essence, we have a lot more to offer when we engage in thoughtful, purposeful, dynamic, and creative partnership so that we can create a whole that far outweighs the individual parts! In order for this to happen, however, we must allow synergy to thrive by not being afraid to welcome the uncertainty and engaging in creative solutions for some very long-standing situations understanding that, only this, can result in some amazing outcomes!

As everyone engages in this first UD-PAC C-LEC Conference and as everyone else seeks to meet these uncertain times with force, I invite you all to embrace these habits when engaging in thoughtful conversations and in seeking to collaborate for the greater good! Learn more in Covey's "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" chapters 5 and 6.



Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.



Walking School Bus Implementation Guide

We've seen the pilot project take form, be implemented, and achieve favorable outcomes! With over 100 participants at one site, over 20 volunteers, and countless partners and collaborators, we saw families engage in healthy choices as they incorporated physical activity into their daily routine by engaging in organized walking routes as they helped children arrive safely to school.

As a result, multiple campuses have inquired about starting a Walking School Bus for their students and families. In preparation for this interest expressed, I have worked diligently on preparing an Implementation Guide for interested coordinators and am ready to receive requests for consultation and guidance in the development of your own unique Walking School Bus program!

Call today to learn more!

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National Hispanic Heritage Month 2010

(September 15 – October 15)

September 15th marks the beginning of National Hispanic Heritage Month here in the United States. What once began as a one-week celebration during President Johnson's term of office was expanded to a full 31-day celebration under President Reagan's Administration. Many often question why this date for the beginning of the celebration month, rather than a calendar month which begins on the first of any given month. You may be among one of those people. Let me help shed some light on that question.

September 15th marks the anniversary of five Central American Countries' proclamation of independence from Spain (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua). Mexico celebrates its independence day on the 16th of September, although the Cinco de Mayo Celebration is better known in the United States (Cinco de Mayo celebrates the Mexican army's unlikely victory over French forces in the Battle of Puebla in 1862). In addition, Chile celebrates their independence day on the 18th. There are many other historic dates that take place during (or close to) this month including:

- Argentina – deposition of Juan Perón on September 19, 1955 and his return to office on September 23, 1973.
- Spain – rise of General Francisco Franco's insurgent government on October 1, 1936
- Cuba – execution of revolutionary Che Guevara in Bolivia on October 9, 1967

We cannot possibly include every event that can be dated to within this month, but this can serve to shed some understanding on the decision to have a National Hispanic Heritage Month that spans from the middle of one month to another.

According to the US census estimates in 2007, Hispanics/Latinos totaled approximately 45.5 million (approx. 15% of the entire country's population), not including the 3.9 million residents of the island of Puerto Rico.

However, it is a very common occurrence that many would see the terms "Mexican-American" and Hispanic/Latino as synonymous. Although, in the state of Texas, "Mexican-Americans" are the vast majority of Latinos/Hispanics and "Mexican-Americans" make up a vast majority of the nation's population of Hispanics/Latinos, they are by no means the only group that comprises the



"Hispanic/Latino" population of the United States and world as a whole. There are many countries that comprise this "Hispanic World" and their descendants among us make up the Hispanic/Latino population of the United States. These countries include:

Argentina		Ecuador		Mexico	
Dominican Republic		Bolivia		El Salvador	
Nicaragua		Uruguay		Chile	
Spain		Panama		Venezuela	
Colombia		Guatemala		Paraguay	
Costa Rica		Equatorial Guinea		Peru	
Cuba		Honduras		Puerto Rico	

So, as we work toward understanding one another, learning to work and live with the diverse population of neighbors, and seek to understand each other in respect, this can help to increase our knowledge as we engage in working with, serving, and living among our Hispanic counterparts here in Tarrant County, and beyond.

Happy National

Hispanic Heritage Month!



AND Just for fun!!!!!!

As we prepare for the holidays that are fast approaching, I want to share a favorite Puerto Rican dish with all of you (Yes, I am Boricua!). Now, I will not divulge my own secrets of the Puerto Rican cuisine, but I can share a recipe that may come quite close to my own cooking expeditions as I prepare goodies for my family. This recipe is for my favorite holiday dessert (Not necessarily the healthiest, but one of the tastiest in my book....maybe that's why we usually wait until the holidays!).

Arroz Con Dulce

(Arroz con Coco)

"Candied Coconut Rice"

(Serves 12)



1½ cups rice
4¼ cups coconut milk
1½ teaspoons salt
3 cinnamon sticks
2 ounces ginger
6 whole cloves

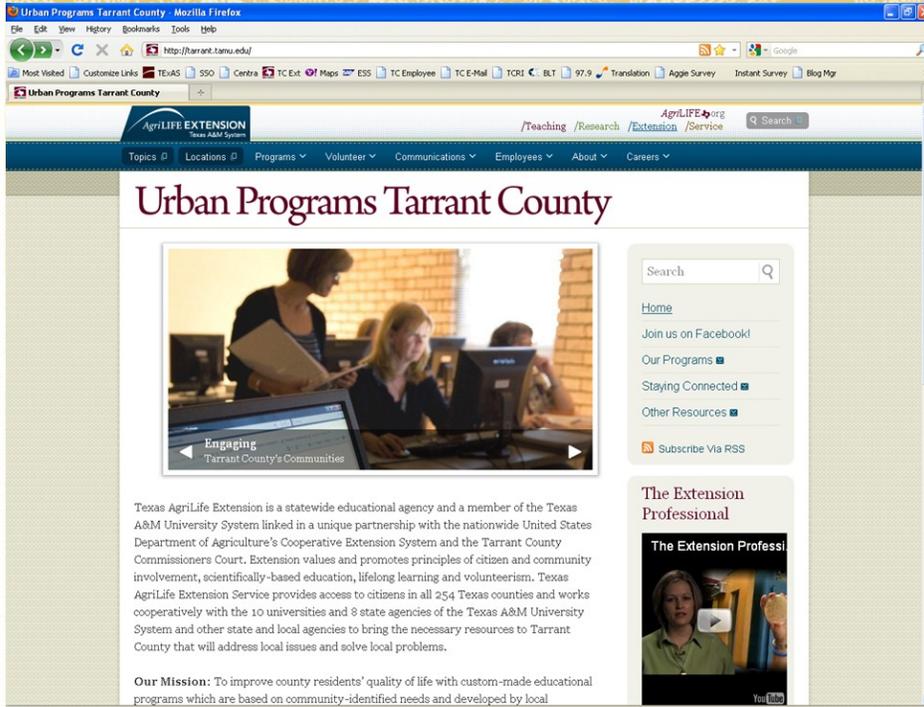
Pinch of nutmeg-optional
1½ cups sugar
½ cup raisins
¾ cup coconut milk (reserve to use at the end)

1. Wash rice and soak in water to cover, generously, for 2 hours. The rice will soak up the water so use plenty.
2. About twenty minutes before rice is finished soaking combine the 4½ cups of coconut milk, salt, cinnamon, ginger, cloves and nutmeg in a medium size caldero.
3. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to moderate, cover and boil for 15 minutes.
4. Drain rice thoroughly and add to caldero. Mix and bring to a boil over moderate heat. Reduce heat to low and cook until rice is completely dry, without stirring.
5. Add the sugar and raisins, stir, and bring to a boil over moderate heat. Reduce heat to low and cook for another 15 minutes, without stirring.
6. Add reserved ¾ cup coconut milk and stir. Turn heat to moderate and boil for about 30 minutes, or until rice dries again. In this cooking period, turn rice over occasionally and scrape bottom of caldero.
7. Remove spices. Spoon rice into a flat serving platter. Allow to cool at room temperature.
8. This is served cold.

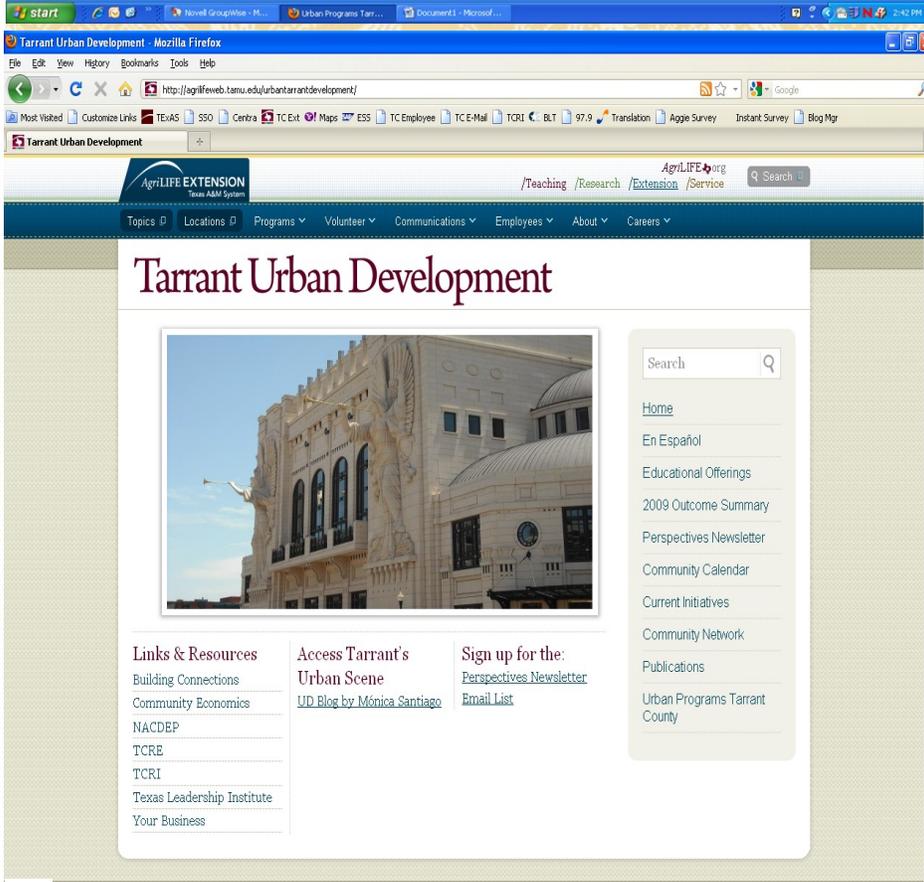
Recipe Source: <http://www.elboricua.com/recipes.html>

Article Sources: "National Hispanic Heritage Month" by Mike Paalz and *The Hispanic World* online

Extension in Tarrant County has a brand new virtual look!



Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Tarrant County has a new virtual look! You'll see an updated and modern appearance that appeals to a diverse set of audiences. You'll also notice a link that will help you become a fan of Extension-Tarrant County on Facebook. Access us at <http://tarrant.tamu.edu> as you did before, but now include the following, if looking for Urban Development program area details: On the right hand side, click on **"Our Programs"** and then choose **"Urban Development"**. You should then see the following screen:



Here, you can continue to access all of the UD Department's related information including your friendly community calendar, a link to access your "Access Tarrant's Urban Scene" blog site, educational materials, information on current initiatives, ongoing educational program offerings, and more! Have fun navigating and becoming familiar with the new site. You'll notice the following new features to facilitate your staying informed:

- "Sign Up for the Perspectives Newsletter" link. Click on this to help make the process of letting us know you'd like to be added on to the direct recipient list.
- The "Urban Programs Tarrant County" link at the bottom right hand side of this screen will take you to our new homepage.

Also, be aware that the new format necessitates the use of Internet Explorer if seeking to be connected to the blog directly from our county UD web page. Enjoy familiarizing yourself with Texas AgriLife Extension Service online once again!