

# EDUCATING FORT BEND COUNTY

## AgriLife Extension Education

Educational programs, provided by Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M University, in conjunction with Fort Bend County Commissioners' Court in this second quarter of 2010, are in direct response to the needs of our clientele. Despite the size of the audience or subject matter interest, Extension's vision as an outreach organization focuses on attitude, skills and/or knowledge gained to improve the lives of our Fort Bend County citizens, businesses and communities across this county and this great state. We are pleased to provide you with this edition of *Educating Fort Bend County* as a snapshot review of our educational activities here in Fort Bend.



County Extension Director, Fort Bend

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## FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

### Quarterly Clientele Contacts for Jan.-March:

- 242 Educational Sessions
- 6,988 Session Contacts
- 339 Office Visits
- 140 Site Visits
- 32,568 Mail, Email Contacts
- 797 Volunteers Involved
- Demographics:

White—35%  
Black—31%  
Hispanic—31%  
Asian—3%

Female—37%  
Male—63%

Youth—65%  
Adults—35%

**Senior Citizens Educational Programming** - During the summer months the Cooperative Extension Program has continued to spread educational programming to target health issues affecting senior citizens. Forty-five members Texas Extension Education Association were provided a presentation focused on the importance of "Fiber." Topics included the history of fiber, the benefits of consuming more fiber, and different sources of fiber. In addition, 15 residents of the Fort Bend Gardens Senior Housing Complex enjoyed a very interactive presentation concerning diabetes complications. The participants played several rolls of "Diabetes Complication Bingo" which provided a reputation of some possible complications for the participants to become familiar with these problems. Some residents expressed that a game of BINGO, always makes me happy, and it's wonderful to play and learn at the same time.



**Youth Educational** - Fifty-five young ladies participated in an Etiquette Session provided by the Cooperative Extension Program conducted for the Majestic Girls Summer Camp held in Missouri City. The session provided the young lady with information about fashion, conduct, self-image, and self-esteem. A wardrobe presentation was used to give the girls an opportunity to understand to importance of good first impressions. During a fun activity the ladies used their creativity to design and model "trash bag" dresses they created. The ladies also engaged in a "Tea Party" in which proper table manners were demonstrated. Many young ladies expressed positive feedback about the information that was presented during the session.

**Improving Lives,  
Improving Texas!**

**Quilt Challenge for 4-H Youths** - Nine Fort Bend County youth joined more than 50 others from across the state in the Annual Quilt Challenge. The managers were Sandra Fry from Fort Bend and Katie Phillips from Kaufman County—both County Extension Agents in Family & Consumer Science with Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Sixty uniquely designed and pieced quilts were judge at the state level then donated to non-profit organizations to benefit individual in need. This year’s judges included officials from Quilt Inc. Winners as well as all other participants were invited to attend the 2010 Quilt Market and Festival to be held in the fall of 2010 in Houston.

**Fort Bend Senior Fraud Expo** - A Senior Fraud Expo was presented on May 12th at First Colony in Fort Bend with six-three seniors in attendance. The purpose of the expo was to create an awareness of common fraudulent schemes that will cost them money. Topics included Medicare Fraud, How to Identify Theft & Mail Fraud, and How to Protect Yourself Against Fraud. Presenters were from Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Better Business Bureau and the Securities & Exchange Commission. Fourteen exhibitors from as many agencies took part to supply additional information and re-courses.

## 4-H / Youth Development / Urban Youth Development

**Anti-Bullying Workshop** - Prairie View A&M University, Cooperative Extension Program held an Anti-Bullying Workshop entitled “Not Cool to be Cruel”, for an group of teens at Boys and Girls Club of Greater Houston Fort Bend Unit. The curriculum was geared to help students understand the importance of positive communication, consequences of violence, showing respect and developing a strong professional self-image. The workshop allowed the participants to engaged four active sessions which included several team-working, communication, and self-awareness activity to aid in decreasing acts of bullying. The participants completed a School Bullying Survey. The survey revealed that 95% of the participants witnessed bullying while in school and 45% bullied because, “I want people to leave me alone”, 20% bullied because, “I was taught to stick up for myself”, another 20% expressed, “I don’t bully, and 15% bullied because, “My friends and I think it is fun.” Stated in the Anti-Bullying Post Test, 100% of the participants can identify acts of bullying, and expressed a plan to help themselves and peers decrease bullying actions.

**Career Awareness Youth Leadership Laboratory** - Fort Bend County boasted 14 youth and 2 volunteers in attendance at the Cooperative Extension Program’s annual CAYLL held on the campus of Prairie View A&M University. With the theme “Full S.T.E.A.M Ahead” youth became more knowledgeable about science, technology, engineering, agriculture and mathematics first hand.

**Cooperative Extension Program’s Archery Education** - Also, throughout the month of June, Archery has been a big hit. 189 youth from the Four Corners Community Center, Fort Bend YMCA and the All American Rodeo Association have enjoyed being engaged in Archery Education. During the classes students learned basic archery shooting techniques and archery safety procedures and precautions. Students were taught International Style Target Archery as taught by the National Archery in Schools Program.

**Career Quest** — The 4H & Urban Youth Development programs in Ft. Bend and Harris Counties collaborated for the 2nd Annual Career Quest, on May 18, 2010 at the University of Houston Downtown with 283 eighth and ninth graders present. The goal of Career Quest is to provide students information on careers that will be available to them when they enter the workforce, and to expose them to educational opportunities that will help them prepare for their chosen career path. The 16 broad career clusters adopted in Texas as part of the Achieve Texas initiative were used in identifying exhibitors and career representatives to participate. Students from school districts in both Fort Bend and Harris Counties were invited to attend.

The uniqueness of Career Quest goes beyond the typical College Career Day in several ways. First, not only are the admission’s departments from participating colleges, universities, junior colleges, and technical schools invited to attend, but also specific departments within those schools. This allows students to see beyond simply getting into the school of their choice, but provides them with information on their options once they’re admitted. Second, business and industry representatives from the community along with business partners unique to the educational institutions attending are also in attendance. The purpose here is to have the businesses representatives at the event in order for students to make a clear connection between completing their degrees in a chosen field and the companies who will be hiring them. Finally, students attended 2 break-out sessions on topics outlining the preparation process for education after high school and another explaining the difference between the various degrees, certificates, and schooling options available to them. For example; Associate’s Degree vs. Bachelor Degree and Junior College vs. University are explained in the sessions. These sessions offer the students a road map for planning for their future.

## Agriculture / Natural Resources / Horticulture

**2010 Earth-Kind® Kids Kamp** - What makes for a great summer camp? How about 30 third, fourth and fifth graders, and a bunch of birds, snakes, frogs, toads, insects and a lot of Master Gardeners! Fort Bend County Master Gardeners hosted the Earth-Kind® Kids Kamp for the second year in a row. This week long Junior Master Gardener camp held June 14 – 18<sup>th</sup> focused on Conserving Habitats. The campers were enthralled by several presenters on various topics relating to wildlife and the loss of their habitat and the importance of insects to our environment.

Campers enjoyed seeing snakes from Brazos Bend State Park, birds from the Houston Audubon Society, frogs and toads from Texas Parks & Wildlife and many interesting insects from the FBC Master Gardener Entomology Group. All the presenters talked about the importance of each animal to our environment and how to help conserve the natural habitat for the future. The campers promoted habitat conservation by participating in a community service project. They built six Bluebird houses to be distributed at the Texas AgriLife Extension Service Demonstration Gardens and other Community Gardens in Fort Bend County. The campers also learned how to identify snakes by making models out of old neck ties and painting them to resemble local snakes. The campers enjoyed learning about the habitats of different animals and even searched for habitats in the Demonstration Gardens. The hands on activities provided the campers the ability to see these habitats in action.

The 2010 Earth-Kind® Kids Kamp was hosted by the FBC Master Gardeners under the direction of Dr. Sharon E. Koch, CEA-Hort. Every day the kids left with enthusiasm and gusto about the topics covered and they returned the next day with enthusiasm for the topics on the agenda. At the end of the week, the kids were awarded a Junior Master Gardener Wildlife pin for their completion of the activities at camp. Several parents and kids expressed their gratitude and left with enthusiasm for next year's camp.

The **Coastal Prairie Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists** have teamed with City of Rosenberg to further develop Rosenberg's Seabourne Creek Park by restoring 164 acres with forbs, trees and wildflowers, including little and big bluestem, Indian grass, aster, coneflowers, epazote, gayfeather, goldenrod, sprangletop and more. Modern farmers have begun to see the value in going native. Chapter Pres. Karl Baumgartner stressed the cooperative nature of the restoration project, with a tractor loaned by Gary Allred with Rosenberg Tractor pulling a no-till drill loaned by the Wildlife Habitat Federation, and the help of many of the group's members a 20 acre plot was established.

In addition, 50 trees were planted by church volunteers in an area surrounding a 8-acre lake. The city of Rosenberg provided \$20,000 for the group's tree-planting efforts. Master Naturalist Jim Butcher ordered and recently planted 100 osage orange, also known as Bois d'Arc or Horse Apple to grow into a rectangular "natural corral" as the settlers of this region once did. The group recently started tracking the various bird species seen at the park. The list is up to 62, with species as varied as the stilt sandpiper, blue grosbeak and black-necked stilt joining loggerhead shrikes (a pair is nesting in a newly planted live oak), sparrows, mockingbirds and the like.



Photo by John S. Mercurief II  
Fort Bend Herald

**Summer Basic Horsemanship Clinic** hosted by the FBC Horse Task Force was held on June 22-23 at the Fort Bend Fair-grounds with twelve youth participating. This 2-day, hands-on, one-on-one horsemanship clinic was for youth and presented by students from Texas A&M University. They cover the basic skills from equipment usage, safety and showmanship at halter to more advanced maneuvers. Some of the advanced skills include horse response to bit pressure, gait transitions and specialized event advice. The Fort Bend Horse Task Force sponsors the lunches and refreshments for both days.


**Fort Bend County Crops Tour** was held on June 24 with twenty-four local farmers attending. Topics included: TDA Laws & Regulations presented by Melissa Barton with TDA; Cotton Crop Updates presented by Dr. Gaylon Morgan, Associate Professor & Cotton Specialist; Corn Disease Updates presented by Dr. Tom Isakeit, Prof. & Extension Plant Pathologist; and a Crops Tour at Stasney Farms hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Alan Stasney and lead by Dr. Roy Parker, Prof. & Extension Entomologist.

**AgriLife Expo** was held for the second time on May 4-6, 2010 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. This multi-disciplinary Ag Literacy event was supported by Extension Agents from Agriculture/Natural Resources, 4-H & Youth, Urban Youth Development and Horticulture. The Expo targeted 283 second, third, fourth and fifth graders as well as 21 teachers and parent helpers. The four major commodity groups were highlighted: Beef - Had assistance from Texas Beef Council. Covered aspects of beef from the farm to the market which included auction, feed lot, processing and then finally the products you find at the grocery store. Dairy - Presented by Southwest Mobile Dairy; Row Crops including rice, cotton and corn - Presented by Farm Bureau with the help of the Mobile Classroom; and, Horticulture including vegetables and herbs - Presented by Fort Bend County Master Gardeners. Collaborators included Fort Bend County Fair, Farm Bureau, Frito Lay, Food Town, Frost Bend, Rosenberg Tractor, Needville Feed & Seed, Brehm's Feed Store, TDA and HEB.

*Extension's Vision: To be the premier 21st Century outreach and continuing education organization in Texas responding to the needs of the people.*

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**Fort Bend County Commissioners' Court  
 County Judge Robert "Bob" Hebert**

Precinct 1 Commissioner Richard Morrison  
 Precinct 2 Commissioner Grady Prestage  
 Precinct 3 Commissioner Andy Meyers  
 Precinct 4 Commissioner James Patterson

*Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.*