

Bibb County Improves Hospitality and Tourism Capacity

Through partners at Auburn University (AU), The University of Alabama (UA), University of West Alabama (UWA), and the Alabama Black Belt Heritage Area (ABBHA), Bibb County residents had the opportunity in 2011 to define a problem and solve a community issue.

That issue was the need to prepare local residents in the service and retail sectors to better serve customers and boost the local economy through tourism. The problem was to identify an approach to training, based on local needs, to address the issue.

Leadership Bibb County 2011 adult class members and Leadership Bibb County Alumni identified the problem by using customer service surveys developed by UA to visit and evaluate local governmental entities, cultural attractions, restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores, drug stores and other retail outlets. Class members also compiled data on the entities for printed information sheets.

Survey results revealed that Bibb County's establishments were accessible and staffed by friendly people who tried to be helpful, yet personnel, as a whole, did not have extensive knowledge of local tourist attractions, or how to direct customers to them.

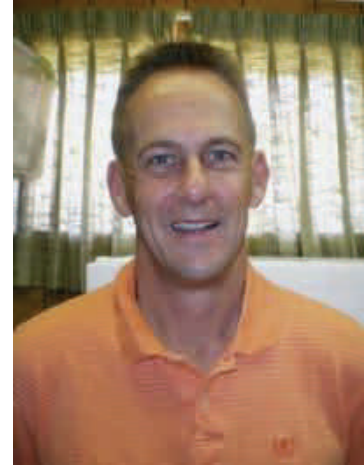
So, the University of Alabama's Center for Economic Development (UCED), assisted by the leadership participants and the Bibb County Extension Office, conducted two interactive training sessions in April 2011 for 34 Bibb County customer service representatives that emphasized good hospitality and local knowledge.

The final phase of the project was to use contact information compiled by leadership participants to develop and distribute legal-sized padded information sheets to public establishments. These information sheets highlight dining and lodging locations, emergency contacts, libraries, places to visit, and things to do in Bibb County.

To date, over 40 locations in Bibb County have received the sheets, enabling staff to direct customers to local resources. A Centreville bank teller says the training was invaluable:

"The training has helped me with a couple of things. For one thing, I know more about the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge, where it is, and things to do there. Also, the training and information provided are helping us to better direct our customers to any location they may ask about."

Another expected outcome of the project is increased reve-



Matthew D. Hartzell
County Extension Coordinator
Bibb County Extension Office

revenue through positive word-of-mouth advertising. Based on Alabama Tourism Department estimates, if 500 additional people stop and spend money in Bibb County annually based on a perception of friendly, knowledgeable frontline staff, the county will gain an additional \$36,300 per year in revenue.

Funding for the hospitality project consisted of a \$500 County Partnership Award from UWA through its Center for the Study of the Black Belt and the ABBHA.





Joy Maxwell
4-H & Youth Development
Regional Extension Agent

Moving and Grooving into Great Health

As we all know Alabama is ranked number 2 as one of the heaviest states. With childhood obesity rising in Alabama it is time for a change. In April and May youth from Woodstock Elementary learned about the importance of eating healthy and getting in at least 60 minutes of exercise in daily. Over 300 youth had the opportunity to engage in physical fitness activi-

ties such as jump rope, volleyball and Frisbee golf through the 'Just Move Alabama' program. The youth also learned the importance of eating breakfast, eating healthy snacks and working out. During the program the youth had the opportunity to track their exercise on a physical fitness calendar. The youth were also provided with songs that could be sung while

jumping rope. The teachers and summer program leaders addressed that the youth truly enjoyed the Just Move Alabama physical fitness program. The youth also mentioned that they started playing outside more and begin eating more fruits and vegetables.



PROSPER- Strengthening Families Series

Regional Extension agents Valerie Conner, Diet Nutrition and Health, Joy Maxwell, 4-H & Youth Development and Sharon Golden, Personal Finance worked together with volunteer facilitators Carrie Hetzel, Dorothy Grimes, Kenina Lynch to present a seven-week long program to Centreville Middle School 6th graders. The Strengthening

Families Program is for parents and youth (10-14) and helps to develop family skills. It's designed to prevent teen substance abuse and other behavior problems, strengthen parenting skills and to build family strengths.

Bibb County was one of 5 counties that was awarded a grant to present the series for the next 5 years.

The 2012 program will begin January 17, 2012 at Centreville Middle School and will be presented to families of 6th grade students. Please call Joy Maxwell at the Bibb County Extension Office (205-926-3117) or email her at maxwesj@aces.edu or more information about the Strengthening Families Program.



Valerie Conner
Human Diet & Nutrition
Regional Extension Agent

'My Plate' & 'Just Move'

Valerie Conner conducted 'My Plate' and 'Just Move' during the summer day-camp at Brent Elementary School. She also assisted with the PROSPER- Strengthening Families program which is a seven week program for parents and youth conducted at

Centreville Middle School. The objectives for PROSPER are to help parents learn nurturing skills, teach how to effectively discipline, give youth a healthy future orientation and to help youth deal with stress and peer pressure. Bibb County was

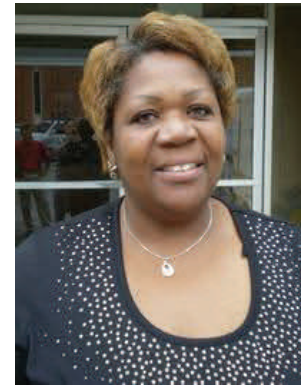
one of five counties in Alabama to be chosen to participate in the PROSPER program for the next five years. Congratulations to all of the participants!

Bibb County Senior Olympics

The inaugural Bibb County Senior Olympics were held on August 6, 2011 at the Centreville Baptist Church. Event coordinator, Eloise Temple-Hogsett, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Agent Assistant scheduled basketball free throw contest, one mile walk, softball throw, horseshoes, dance/hula-hoop and other activities for adults over the age of 55. For those with more sedentary life-

styles activities like dominos, checkers, bingo, cards and condogolf were offered. The Bibb County Senior Olympics align nicely with a very important Strategic Program Initiative adopted by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) in the past year-Health and Wellness Across the Lifespan. Obesity and numerous other health issues are chronic conditions for many people. The negative effects of those condi-

tions can be minimized by a healthy diet and exercise. Therefore, helping clients adopt a healthy diet and exercise routines are the focal points of Temple-Hogsett's EFNEP programs in Bibb County. The committee is planning for the 2012 Bibb County Senior Olympics and the 2012 Miss Senior Olympics program. Call Eloise Temple-Hogsett at the Bibb County Extension Office 205-926-3117 to volunteer and for more information on either program.



Eloise Temple-Hogsett
EFNEP Agent Assistant

Brent Elementary Piggy Bank Pageant

America Saves is a national campaign involving more than 1,000 non-profit, government, and corporate groups that encourages individuals and families to save money and build personal wealth.

In collaboration with local banks and the Bibb County School System, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System held Piggy Bank

Pageants for elementary school students in Centreville. This event was held in conjunction with a national celebration for Alabama America Saves week which encourages youth to add to or open a savings account.

More than 50 5th graders at Brent Elementary School and Cahawba Christian

Academy participated in the event. Students decorated containers that can be used for holding money for savings. All participants received a certificate of appreciation. A group of volunteers served as judges for the event. First United Security Bank awarded first place prizes of a \$50 Savings Bond.



Sharon Golden
Consumer Science & Personal
Financial Management
Regional Extension Agent



Body Quest: Food for the Warrior



Kimmy Gentry
NEP Agent Assistant



Body Quest: Food for the Warrior is a unique, cutting edge, comprehensive, partnership program in Alabama. Funded by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Department of Human Resources, the childhood obesity prevention program is a high priority for Alabama's youth.

This fall, Body Quest classes are being taught to third-graders in schools with 50 percent or more students receiving free or reduced-price lunches. That is about 65 percent of Alabama schools, according to Dr. Barbara Struempler, an Extension specialist and professor with the Nutrition Education Program.

In Bibb County, the Body Quest program is well underway at Woodstock Elementary School. Extension staff members delivering the

program to the Woodstock Elementary 3rd graders are Shnovia "Joy" Maxwell, Regional Extension Agent for 4-H and Youth Development for Bibb and Shelby counties, and Kimberly Gentry, Nutrition Education Program Agent Assistant for Bibb and Chilton counties. Body Quest is technology-driven.

One teaching method is through iPad education, with more than 500 iPads teaching Body Quest to youth in rural Alabama. Each team of Extension educators has a mobile iPad laboratory that they take into the classroom to teach Body Quest.

Characters such as Shining Rainbow and Body Doctor help elementary students demonstrate bravery by trying new fruits and vegetables. Students also train for the quest of becoming more physically fit and im-

proving sleep habits.

Body Quest warriors view health as a personal choice, requiring good decision-making skills and critical thinking. It is an exciting adventure, developed as an interactive application for iPads and supported by an array of engaging activities and resources.

Evaluation data are collected every week for 17 weeks via clickers. Clicker data are uploaded and sent to Auburn University immediately following a Body Quest class. Body Quest can supplement elementary curricula or be incorporated into after-school programs. It can be used by SNAP-Ed educators, 4-H educators or volunteers, teachers, after-school program leaders, or through other youth-serving organizations.

Backyard Gardening Workshop



Nelson Wynn
Home Grounds, Gardens
& Home Pests
Regional Extension Agent

A Backyard Gardening Workshop was conducted in Centreville in the spring of 2011. Master Gardeners and local citizens came armed with numerous questions about gardening, grass, trees, plants and pests. Participants learned that providing a soil sample to Auburn University Soils Lab is one of the

keys to having a successful garden. The Soils Lab provides an unbiased and economical fertilizer and lime recommendation service to Alabama growers. Soil sample boxes are available at the local Extension Office located at 175 S.W. Davidson Drive in Centreville.



Extension Promotes Prostate Cancer Awareness

Bibb County Extension hosted a Prostate Cancer Awareness Blue Seminar in 2011. Sponsored by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Alabama Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition, and Alabama Department of Public Health, this seminar provided educational information to the men and women who attended. They were given information on the importance of prostate screening, in-

cluding both blood tests and a digital exam; the age at which to begin these screenings, 40 for African American and 50 for others; the importance of diet related to cancer, risk factors including ethnicity, diet and family history; as well as dispelling myths related to prostate cancer. Jatunn Gibson secured grant funds for the program which was

facilitated by Regional Extension Agent Valerie Conner, Human Nutrition Diet and Health, and Sallie Lide Hooker, Regional Extension Agent, Family and Child Development. County Coordinator Matt Hartzell and his staff assisted with this program. Sixty of the sixty-six counties across the state provided such programs for Alabama citizens.



Sallie Lide-Hooker
Family & Child Development
Regional Extension Agent

Regional Commercial Horticulture Meetings Held

Regional meetings:

Gary Gray is the Bibb County Regional Extension Agent in the area of Commercial Horticulture. He assists the local Farmers Markets with farmer recruitment and other management issues.

- Tuscaloosa/Bibb Vegetable Production/GAP Mtg
- Regional Peach Production Mtg
- CREC Farm, Home and Wildlife Expo
- Alabama Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference (AFVGA)
- AL Food Summit / Organic Conference
- Greater Birmingham Area Landscape Professionals Conference
- Chilton Food Innovation Center is now open and processing food products for clientele
- Assisted County Agents Kitchen at County Commissioners' Annual Conference



Gary Gray
Commercial Horticulture
Regional Extension Agent

Home Visits Help Cattle, Horse and Goat Producers

Home visits to cattle, horse and goat producers by the Animal Sciences and Forages REA Jack Tatum, are made to help producers weigh cattle for board sales and purebred documentation. Purebred breeders participated in the BCIA sale and also home sales.

The Central Alabama Feeder Cattle state meeting was held in Brent, and the Central Alabama Feeder Cattle Board Meeting was held in Centreville in 2011. An on the farm nutrition meeting was also held in Bibb County in 2011.

For more information about Animal Sciences and Forages contact the Bibb County Extension Office 205-926-3117.



Jack Tatum
Animal Sciences & Forages
Regional Extension Agent

“Horrible House of Germs”



Janice Hall
Food Safety, Preparation
& Preservation
Regional Extension Agent

Janice Hall presented ‘**House of Horrible Germs**’ – Hand washing illness prevention program to students at both Cahawba Christian Academy and Woodstock Elementary Schools. The program is designed to teach the importance of how to properly wash hands.



ServSafe & Food Safety Workshops

For more information about Food Safety, Preparation & Preservation contact REA Janice Hall at (334) - 415-8658

ServSafe is one of the food safety certification trainings required by the Department of Public Health for food service establishments such as restaurants, schools and daycare centers. Food safety and canning workshops were also conducted in Woodstock and Centreville in 2011.



Fresh Vegetables at the Farmers Markets—Centreville & Woodstock, AL



The Bibb County Extension Office provided technical support for the Bibb and Woodstock Farmers Markets. Free growers permits are issued for the markets at the Bibb County Extension Office. All farmers that participate in the Farmers Markets are required to have a growers permit in their possession. The Market begins in late May and runs through Labor Day. Centreville hours are Friday from 3-6PM and Woodstock holds their market Tuesdays from 3-6PM.

Farmers Market Contacts:

The Centreville Market is located at 155 Birmingham Highway, Centreville, AL. Contact: Market Manager Helen Dunnavent 205-532-0782.

The Woodstock Market is at 20035 Highway 11, Woodstock, AL. Contact: Faye Gamble at the Woodstock Town Hall 205-938-9790 for more information.



Invasive Plant Identification and Control Seminar

Non-native, invasive plants are a serious problem in Alabama. Plants such as kudzu, cogongrass, Chinese privet, and others originated in foreign lands. They were introduced into the United States by accident, for agriculture, as ornamental plantings, or in the mistaken belief that the plants would improve wildlife habitat. Today, these plant species have escaped their original plantings and established self-sustaining, breeding populations. The spread of invasive plants has deteriorated wildlife habitat, re-

duced forest productivity, hindered the management of rights-of-way, and caused many other problems.

On July 28, 2011, the AL Cooperative Extension System's Forestry, Wildlife, and Natural Resources Management Team conducted a seminar on invasive plants in Jemison, AL. There were seventy-three attendees including foresters, landowners, loggers, and wildlife biologists. Attendees learned about invasive plant identification and control, herbicide safety, herbi-

cide use in sensitive areas, and financial assistance programs available to landowners battling invasive plants. A post-seminar survey was used to evaluate the success of the seminar. All respondents (n=60) reported being better able to identify and control invasive plants as a result of attending this seminar and that they would recommend the seminar to colleagues or others needing information on the identification and control of invasive plants.



Patrick Cook
Forestry, Wildlife and Natural
Resource Management
Regional Extension Agent

For more information about Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resource Management contact Patrick Cook at (334) 850-6837.

2012 Bibb County Youth Leadership

CEC Matthew Hartzell and BCYL Chair Cena Davis have designed a four month program taking place from January 2012-May 2012 that engages 27 high school juniors in four standard program sessions where participants learn about teamwork, collaboration, public safety, local government, workforce development and com-

munity service in an interactive environment. The Class Project charges each participant with teaching computer skills to an older adult, and student participants will select one of three community service projects to perform.

Students will learn to recognize each other's differences, work with

one another more effectively, and obtain more knowledge about their county as a whole. Student participants will realize they CAN make a difference and improve quality of life in Bibb County collectively, and as individuals.



2011 Bibb County Leadership Accomplishments

Leadership Bibb County was cut short in 2011 due to the April 27 tornados. Session 5 (e-cycling) and graduation had to be cancelled. However, both the adult and youth leadership classes accomplished a great deal as illustrated by the class projects. The adults put together a tourism resource booklet, training and information sheet in conjunction with Leadership Bibb County Alumni. The youth cleaned up Taber Mill Road and participated in Tourism Hospitality Training in Woodstock. Training sessions at Mercedes for both youth and adults and a trip to the National Forest for adults were enjoyed by all.



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Patrick Cook

Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resource Management

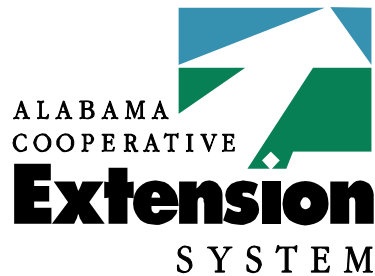
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TO:



*Alabama A&M and
Auburn Universities*



Upcoming Bibb County Job Fair!



Another exciting Extension project being planned with local and regional partners for February 2012 is the inaugural Bibb County Job and Career Fair for adults, college students and high school seniors.

Whether you are an employer seeking willing and willing labor, an unemployed person desiring new skills and opportunities, or a self-improver looking for more meaningful employment, the Bibb County Job and Career Fair may be

of to you. The goal of the fair is to link employers with new employees (and vice-versa,) as well as to provide job seekers with training and skills that are critical to the job-seeking process. Training topics will include how to write a resume, how to search for and apply for jobs online, and how to dress for an interview for a job, just to name a few. The fair will be Thursday, February 16 at First Baptist Church of Woodstock. More details will be provided.