Community Visioning Project for Bennet

Wanting to update their Comprehensive Development Plan, members of the Bennet Planning Commission asked Extension Educator Yelena Mitrofanova to help facilitate citizen participation in the process. Mitrofanova and other extension educators have outlined a Community Visioning Process which will bring the community together to help shape the future of the Village of Bennet.

In September, a Town Hall meeting was held and nearly 80 residents attended. Other steps are underway, including committee research, listening sessions and written input. At future Town Hall meetings, the community will develop a vision statement. Eventually, the community input will be used by a private consulting firm to develop a new Comprehensive Plan which will guide future land development.

“I have found it very enlightening to work with extension professionals,” said Bennett Planning Commis- sioner Bruce Dahlberg. “Their knowledge of community planning has proven to be very beneficial in obtaining community input for the shaping of Bennett’s Vision.”

Mitrofanova has also worked with the Village of Firth on a community attitudes survey, which may lead to a Community Visioning Process.

Midwest Mold, Moisture & Ventilation Symposium

Extension Educator Lorene Bartos was part of a planning team comprised of extension, health agencies and businesses which organized the Midwest Mold, Moisture and Ventilation Symposium held March 16 in Omaha. More than 250 builders, contractors, remodelers, residential housing managers, real estate licensees, inspectors and HVAC and other housing professionals attended. “I plan to use the information I gained today in the inspection of the 2,500 homes we manage,” said one attendee. Another participant said, “This is the best conference I have attended in my 20 years in the business.” This was first of a series of indoor air quality conferences.

Fair Impressions

This summer, Extension Educator Yelena Mitrofanova and two educators from other counties conducted Fair Impressions at three county fairs. This year’s group consisted of 4-H Floor Judges and Fair Evaluators were recorded and presented to the Fair Boards to use as a tool in planning future County Fairs. “Yelena’s work with Fair Impressions was great,” said Wayne Heyen, Lancaster County Fair Board member. “It brought to light some things we knew needed changed, and it also affirmed things we are doing well.” Based on the success of Fair Impressions this year, other educators statewide will be trained to apply the program locally.

4-H Career Portfolios

This year, Extension Associate Dean-na Karmazin was part of a statewide 4-H team which developed a new record-keeping system, “4-H Career Portfolios.” This publication replaces the 4-H awards book. 4-H members can use the portfolio to record their 4-H experiences — including knowledge learned, skills gained and community service activities. The goal of this project was to simplify the 4-H record-keeping system and to provide the youth with a tool to assist them in scholarship, college and job applications.

Educational Programs at Juvenile Detention Center

This past year, UNL Extension in Lancaster County partnered with the Juvenile Detention Center to present educational experiences at the 14,848 Youth Participate in Lancaster County 4-H

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension 4-H youth development program is open to all youth ages 5–19. Emphasis is on teaching practical skills and developing life skills through learning-by-doing. In the past year, 4-H reached 14,848 youth in Lancaster County.

“By being in 4-H, I have gained the responsibili- ties of being big sister for the rest of my life — through speech contests and submit- ting items in the county fair and state fair,” says 4-H member Amanda Peterson (age 13).

Lancaster County 4-H consists of several com- ponents:

- Organized Clubs — Lancaster County has more than 100 4-H clubs which range from 4 to 60 members. Each club is led (or co-led) by adults. Youth choose officers to run meetings. Clubs usually participate in one or more projects together.
- Independent Members — With increasingly busy schedules, more and more youth are becoming independent 4-H members. Youth work on 4-H projects on their own.
- Projects — Youth can choose from more than 150 projects. Some project manuals are woven by university experts.
- School Enrich-ment — 4-H PRO gram s for classroom use include: Garbology, Embryology, Earth Day, Wellness Festival, Ag Awareness Festival, and Nutrition Educa- tion Program.
- 4-H Embryology Web Site — Embryos and other resources at http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Embryology.

2005 CWF Group

4-H 4-H CWF Members Travel to D.C.

In June, the Lancaster County 4-H Citizen Washington Focus (CWF) group traveled by bus on an ambitious 15-day itinerary to Washington D.C. The 12 members had 4-H training in Schools, worked on four different projects and hosted the annual 4-H CWF Civic and Journalism Contest for 4-H youth in the state. April and May were devoted to projects in school and after-school. In June, the group visited the nation’s capital.

In a series of indoor air quality conferences.

Educational Events

- 4-H staff organizes several educational events each year, such as Clover College, speech workshops and leader trainings.
- Leadership Oppor-tunities — 4-H Teen Council, 4-H Council, Citizen Washington Focus group and more.
- Educational Programs
- 4-H at the County Fair
- 4-H CWF Members Travel to D.C.
- Gettysburg, Mount Vernon, Monticello. CWF is a citizenship and leadership program for high school youth which provides an in-depth look at our nation’s government and history. In Lancaster County, CWF organizes a trip to D.C. every three years.
- 4-H at County Fair
- Continues to Grow
- Many 4-H youth showcase their projects at the Lancaster County Fair, which has seen rapid growth in recent years. As of 2005, the Fair has grown. A total 4,334 4-H exhibits were showcased at this year’s fair (includ- ing static exhibits, animals and contest entries). Student presenters in the 4-H horse, beef cattle, dairy cattle, and poultry shows were up significantly and extra stall and feed buildings have been completed. Lancaster County 4-H has the largest 4-H youth fair in the state with 29 total events!