



Rural Development News

Illinois | Indiana | Iowa | Kansas | Michigan | Minnesota | Missouri | Nebraska | North Dakota | Ohio | South Dakota | Wisconsin

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The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

1999

NCRCRD Grant Used to Leverage \$2.5 Million Project

State Lawmakers created the Ohio Family Farm Loan Guarantee Program and appropriated \$2.5 million to help young, beginning, and existing farmers in Ohio to start or expand agricultural enterprises. The Ohio Department of Development and the Ohio Department of Agriculture jointly administer the program through the Ohio Rural Development Partnership. The program targets niche markets in value-added agriculture and has made 26 loan guarantees for \$1.5 million, helping many agricultural enterprises, including a greenhouse, a dairy, and a business that custom-markets its hay to Kentucky horse farms.

The roots of this program can be found in a North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

grant awarded to the Ohio Rural Development Partnership to help fund a study of lending practices of rural banks in Ohio. That effort looked at the current lending environment for agricultural and rural business loans. It also examined the requirements and procedures of lenders in an attempt to identify possible educational programs that could help meet the needs of both lenders and applicants.

As a result of both this study and the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force hearings, it became apparent that there was a great need for a vehicle to help young, beginning, and established farmers obtain loans to start or expand agricultural enterprises.

The Ohio State Legislature worked closely with the Ohio Banking Association on this program. It

NCRCRD Grant continued on page 8

Inside RD News

Tourism Conference Explores Economic Development	2
IA and MN Discuss Rural Development Policy	3
Annotated Bibliography Addresses Social Indicators	6
Transportation Action Online	7
Departments	8

Welcome!

Welcome to Willis Goudy, interim director of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development while director Cornelia Flora is on faculty improvement leave. Goudy, a professor of sociology and coordinator of ISU Census Services, just completed a five-year term as chair of the sociology department at Iowa State University.



Professor Goudy examines issues of applied population, community, and social gerontology. He has disseminated census and other secondary data in Iowa through computer-generated reports, fact sheets, and an annual report on counties. His work in community and social gerontology includes studies of primary and secondary data sources.

Flora, who will return to her position with the NCRCRD in July 2000, has been conducting research in Peru, Ecuador, and Argentina, and on October 1 began a term as the endowed chair in sustainable agriculture systems at the Minnesota Institute of Sustainable Agriculture, University of Minnesota.



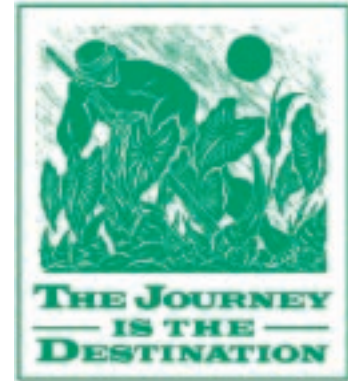
National Extension Tourism Conference Explores Balanced and Responsible Economic Development

“The Journey is the Destination” is the theme of the National Extension Tourism 2000 conference, scheduled for April 30 through May 3 in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. Conference planners invite participants to join in a celebration of diversity, creativity and entrepreneurship as the NET 2000 conference explores balanced and responsible economic development. Opportunities will be available to explore collaborative strategies, lifestyles, cultural preservation, and environmental stewardship in creative visitor industry programs and experiences.

Guest speakers include Peter Tarlow, a sociologist specializing

in tourism and economic development, and Gordon Goodman, director of Tourism, Policy, and Land Use at the ministry of Small Business, Tourism, and Culture in British Columbia. Tarlow will be speaking on making tourism compatible with local values and Goodman will address the benefits and challenges of community tourism in British Columbia.

Additional presentation topics include niche tourism (e.g., agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, educational tourism, and nature tourism), assessment of tourism impacts, collaborative approaches to community tourism planning and development, interpretation and training, and



sustainable tourism. More than 70 presenters from Australia, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, Russia, and all regions of the United States will address the above topics.

Experiential field trips will introduce participants to successful examples of community tourism that blend the environment, culture, and the economy. The field trips will take place before, during, and after the conference. Family members and guests are welcome.

Extension educators, small business owners, community planners, interpreters and resource managers, members of the visitor industry, and tourism researchers and educators are encouraged to attend. New information will be presented, networking opportunities will prevail, and the gathering of tourism innovators and leaders will empower participants to take positive action in promoting responsible tourism.

More information is available at <http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/~confctr/net2000.htm>, or by contacting Doreen Koizumi, University of Hawaii-Hilo, (808) 974-7555, dkoizumi@hawaii.edu. □

Center Staff

Willis Goudy
Interim Director

Cornelia Butler Flora
Director

Stevin Dahl
Assistant Director

Pam Cooper
Administrative Secretary

Julie Stewart
Communications Director

Kristi Hetland
Web Designer and
Editorial Assistant

Timothy O. Borich
Senior Fellow

Stephen Aigner
Senior Fellow

The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development is one of four regional centers coordinating rural development research and education throughout the United States. It is supported by the land-grant universities of the North Central region, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and grants and contracts from private foundations. The mission of the NCRCRD is to initiate and facilitate rural development research and education programs to improve the social and economic well-being of rural people in the region. The NCRCRD also provides leadership in rural development regionally and nationally by identifying, developing and supporting programs on the vanguard of emerging issues.

Rural Development News is published four times a year. If you would like an article about your center-funded project included, please submit copy to the communications director, along with photographs or other illustrations.

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Programs of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development are available to all potential clientele without regard to race, color, sex or national origin.



Iowa Rural Development Council and Minnesota Rural Partners Hold Historic Joint Meeting to Discuss Rural Development Policy

by Cornelia Flora, Director, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, and School of Agriculture Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems, Senior Fellow, University of Minnesota

On the 7th of February, 50 Minnesotans boarded a chartered bus and drove south to Des Moines, Iowa. Representatives from Minnesota Rural Partners and other key Minnesota leaders watched organizational videos during the ride, and took advantage of the opportunity to network as they prepared to learn about and discuss the formulation of rural policy. On February 8, the Minnesota delegation joined 150 Iowans at the Hotel Fort Des Moines to develop a strategy to implement a rural policy in their states and in the United States.

Mark Drabenstott, vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City and director of its Center for the Study of Rural America, as well as a NCRCRD board member, and Chuck Fluharty, director of the Rural Policy Research Institute, began the discussions with the premise that rural is more than agriculture—even in America's Heartland. Drabenstott and Fluharty presented five important facts about rural America at the turn of the millennium.

1. Rural is more than agriculture; the future of family farms is based on vital regional economies. Members of farm households frequently need local jobs with benefits. All rural elements—farm and nonfarm—must unite to better serve such areas.

2. The rural economy is strengthened and growing, but uneven. There are 10 million more rural Americans working than at the beginning of the decade. However, new jobs are dominated by low-wage industries, which means that rural workers are underemployed and not able to move up the economic ladder. Rural poor families also are working, often full time.

3. Persistent poverty remains. Although metropolitan poverty rates are decreasing, rural poverty rates are not. In addition, child poverty is higher in rural areas and tends to be in female-headed households.

4. Some rural counties grew in population in the 1990s because of in-migration from metropolitan areas and migration from other nations. Those counties that had in-migration usually were adjacent to metropolitan counties or had high levels of amenities. These counties are becoming more diverse.
5. Rural America is growing younger where there are amenities, a regional economy, and close to metropolitan areas.

Drabenstott laid out five key challenges that should guide the development of a viable rural policy.

*Joint Meeting
continued on page 4*

Congratulations!

Cornelia Flora, director of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, has been named to a committee to review the impact of publicly funded research on the structure of U.S. agriculture. The USDA's Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources convened the multi-disciplinary committee to assess the role of public sector research on changes in farm size and numbers, with emphasis on the evolution of large-scale operations. The committee will make recommendations for future research and extension policies, including how to improve access to results from research on new farm production practices and technologies.





*Joint Meeting
continued from page 3*

1. Close the Digital Divide. To date, the digital age has taken hold mostly in metropolitan areas. Can rural areas overcome remoteness? The telecommunications issue promises a new paradigm in that knowledge industries can be located anywhere.
2. Urge On Entrepreneurs. Business issues can be difficult in rural America. There is a sparse network of other businesses doing the same thing; fewer mentors, fewer support agencies, and a smaller qualified labor pool also create concerns. Rural entrepreneurs need a helping hand, but assistance programs for rural America have traditionally been aimed at farmers. It is important to note that many of the new entrepreneurs will not be farmers.
3. Leverage the New Agriculture. A new model of farming called supply chain agriculture is emerging, where products are grown on contract and profits rather than price are managed. This new agriculture is concentrated geographically, with only a few firms providing the integration of poultry, hogs, and other commodities. With only a few places being the hubs of supply chain agriculture, what will it take for rural communities to benefit? Drabenstott presented two alternatives to maintain Rural America: 1) grow or raise multiple products in order to tap into multiple hubs, and 2) position the community to be a hub by bringing together producers, labor force, the community,

and the integrator to cooperate and collaborate.

4. Sustain the Rural Landscape. The importance of quality of life is often taken for granted, when in fact dimensions of the environment, the economy, and production should be integrated in win-win situations. What does it take to put together a bundle of lifestyle amenities that will attract the best and the brightest to rural places?
5. Boost Human Capital. Rural America has a brain drain. Wages in rural areas are rising only one-half as fast as metropolitan wages. Rural communities need lifelong learning opportunities, more entrepreneurs, and strong local leaders.

The case for a new generation of rural policy was strongly made by all the speakers and respondents. The “what” of that policy may be reasonably clear, but the “who” and the “how” are not. Our institutions, including our land grant universities, were set up when agriculture and rural were the same thing. We cannot just lean against farm downturns. Together we need to address issues of who and how.

Fluharty argued that because the “who” and “how” are not clear, this might not be the time to institute a rural development policy on federal and state levels. He does not feel that the constituency is yet in place for that to happen. However, he did point to 10 hopeful rural developments:

- Congressional Rural Caucus is re-forming.
- National Rural Network is stronger.

- National Association of Counties Rural Action Caucus is active. Its number one issue is health care.
- Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City has established the Center for the Study of Rural America.
- Department of Labor has initiated a Rural Initiative.
- Small Business Administration has started Regional Rural Dialogues to bring in the banking community.
- National Rural Development Partnership and State Rural Development Councils are gaining voices.
- This election cycle provides an opportunity to articulate what rural means.
- There is emergent, new rural leadership.
- Rural “new governance” is happening as a result of decentralization and devolution and is creating exciting public/private partnerships.

Gerald Carlson, Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development, reiterated that it is not a farm problem, but a rural problem. Agriculture and the non-agriculture economy are interconnected. Neither can be solved without addressing the rural issue.

Stan Johnson, vice provost for Extension at Iowa State University and NCRCD Board member, suggested that we must craft a policy for rural America that depends on the private sector and a global economic climate where capital, technology, and labor are very mobile. Healthy rural communities require:

- Public sector services competitively provided—quality, price, availability—require efficient governance.



- Telecommunications—rural citizens need knowledge of how to use it and access to broad band capability.
- Shifts of infrastructure investment from roads where no one lives to broadband access.
- Rural banks and utilities prepared to respond to the deregulation of utilities and repeal of the Glass Steagle Act, which had set a fire wall between investment and banking.
- A natural and cultural setting where people want to live. Mobile people are those with great potential to contribute to rural communities. These people are educated, have capital and are innovative, and want texture, engagement, and diversity where they live.
- Celebration of diversity.

Johnson concluded that local people will have to do it themselves and drive the state and federal levels.

Tom Vilsack, Iowa Governor, and Wendy Wustenberg, from the office of Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura, both reintegrated the diversity theme. Communities that welcome and accommodate new migrants are a critical priority in both states. Both governors are in their second year in office and setting new plans for their states. Both recognize the importance of considering rural development as an issue that will not be solved by metropolitan growth or production agriculture alone.

Patty Judge, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture (elected), and Gene Hogeson, Minnesota Secretary of Agriculture (appointed), both stressed linkages between agriculture and rural development. In both states, the major-

ity of farm households also have off-farm income. In Minnesota, they have formed the Farm and Rural Minnesota team that includes the Commissioners of Planning, Commerce, Agriculture, Trade, Revenue, and Finance as well as Agriculture. Their top issues include telecommunications and education. Hogeson stated that while a strong agricultural economy may or may not be good for the community, a strong community economy is always good for agriculture. Judge noted that Iowa is developing a value-added strategy for rural development, which means that acceptance of diversity and education will be critical for labor force development.

David Lyons, director of the Iowa Department of Economic Development, pointed out that rural communities are in a situation where both people and capital are highly mobile and technology is globally available. As a result, rural development requires action rather than reaction. That requires planning and working hard to link people with opportunities. That, in turn, requires capital investment. Equity capital is required, not just loans. Because most people in rural Iowa are not connected to the farm economy, planning must take place to make sure the investment of scarce resources, both public and private, are done in ways that build all parts of the rural sector.

Rural America, in Drabenstott's terms, "marches to a different drumbeat" because of its geography, workforce, exposure to international markets, and population dispersion. Rural policy can build on those differences to create healthy economies, healthy ecosystems, a

strong civil society, and healthy, well-educated people.

Beth Danowsky, executive director of the Iowa Rural Development Council, and Marcie McLaughlin, executive director of Minnesota Rural Partners, pledged, with their councils, to move toward a national rural development policy as well as to help promote state efforts. David Sears, National Rural Development Partnership director, pledged to provide the coordination necessary to link with the many partners at the national level.

Sears congratulated participants for the first joint meeting of any state councils. All 12 states in the North Central region have a State Rural Development Council and the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development continues to support regular communication among the SRDC executive directors (see "The National Rural Development Partnership: Building Sustainable Communities of Interest." *Rural Development News* 20 [December 1996]:3, <http://www.ag.iastate.edu/centers/rdev/newsletter/dec96/thenrdp.html>).

At the end of the day, the Minnesota delegation climbed aboard their north-bound bus well convinced that their time had been appropriately spent and prepared to engage in concrete actions to make a rural development policy a reality. □



Annotated Bibliography Compiled to Help Facilitate Wise Community Management and Development

As part of a cooperative agreement with the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development has completed a bibliography designed to help identify social indicators that will be of use to communities, government agents, and others in locally-based initiatives to conserve, protect, and enhance watersheds and water quality. *Social Indicators: An Annotated Bibliography on Trends, Sources and Development, 1960-1998* is available on the NCRCRD web page at <http://ww.ag.iastate.edu/centers/rdev/indicators/entry2.html>.

The annotated bibliography provides a review of the social indicators literature from 1960 to 1998. Sources were sought that would be of value to people interested in using indicators to help facilitate wise community management and development. The items cited should be useful in providing background resources on social indicators as well as tools and indicators for use in communities.

With this in mind, the authors listed indicator categories in the annotations to allow people interested in finding new ideas for indicators to use the product as a resource. The authors also strayed from the strictly defined social indicator literature to include some important studies about sustainable communities, healthy communities, and healthy ecosystems (including humans)—though they focus on literature that either explicitly deals with indicators of social well-being or the interaction between social well-being and ecosystem quality.

The bibliography is divided into eight sections: theory; methods; policy; compilations and trends at the national, state, and sub-state level; quality of life; standard of living; other annotated bibliographies; and web sites.

1. **Theory**—This section is designed for those articles, books, or other documents that attempt to explain what functions indicators are supposed to perform, how they get derived, and the suppositions behind the development and use of indicators.
2. **Methods**—Included here are those works that refer to the strategies for defining, collecting, compiling, and analyzing indicators.
3. **Policy**—The books, articles, and reports presented in this section deal with the policy behind the collection and analysis of indicators and the use of indicators for particular policy goals.
4. **Compilations and Trends**—The national compilations of indicators refer to those reports that show national trends, such as comparisons among nations or even global regions. The state-level trends track social indicators at the state or provincial level. Sub-state refers to those citations that concentrate on social indicators at the community, town, city, county, or sub-state regional level.
5. **Quality of Life**—The measurement of subjective well-being is at issue here. More objective indicators of quality of life—such as health-related indicators or amount of leisure time available—are noted.
6. **Standard of Living**—Some references try to accurately record levels of standard of living. A short section has been included that deals with expanding the notion of standard of living from simply an economic measure.
7. **Other Annotated Bibliographies**—This section lists other bibliographies on social indicators or sustainability.
8. **Web Sites**—The number of web sites devoted to social indicators and indicators of community health or sustainability is relatively great. The web sites reported here are grouped according to community and regional indicators, national level indicators and methods, and others.



Stephen Gasteyer, research associate with the NCRCRD and primary author of the social indicators annotated bibliography.

The goal of the cooperative agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is to examine and promote community and watershed indicators of both environmental quality and social well-being. The next phase of the project will involve compilation and analysis of case studies of watershed associations from around the United States. □



Transportation Action Available Online

A curriculum developed by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development in collaboration with USDA is now available online. *Transportation Action: A Local Input Model to Engage Community Transportation Planning* is available in HTML format at the National Association of Development Organization's Regional Transportation Online Center. The URL is http://www.nado.org/rtoc.library/Trans_Action.html. The HTML version of this curriculum is also accessible from the NCRCRD's homepage at <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu> under Publications.

The Transportation Action model seeks to join technical information with a decision making process that assists rural communities in transportation planning. The process includes creating public dialogue, identifying transportation issues, and developing solutions. The model

consists of 10 steps through which a community might learn more about transportation and take a more proactive role in planning its transportation future. Successful completion of the program should provide a blueprint for local action.

Timothy O. Borich, NCRCRD, and Janet Ayres, Purdue University, wrote *Transportation Action* with assistance from a curriculum development committee. The committee consisted of Eileen Stommes, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Robert Works, Minnesota Department of Transportation; and Patricia Weaver, Kansas University Transportation Center.

A printed version of this report is available for \$15 from the NCRCRD, Iowa State University, 108 Curtiss Hall, Ames, IA 50011-1050; (515) 294-8321, (515) 294-3180 fax, jstewart@iastate.edu. □

Congratulations!



Congratulations to communications director Julie Stewart and her husband on the birth of their son in 1999.

Board of Directors

Walter Armbruster
Farm Foundation
(630) 571-9393
walt@farmfoundation.org

Janet Bokemeier
Michigan State University
(517) 355-0123
bokemeie@pilot.msu.edu

Charles Casey
University of Minnesota
Extension Service
(612) 624-2703
ccasey@extension.umn.edu

Mark Drabenstott
Federal Reserve Bank
of Kansas City
(816) 881-2697
mldrabenstott@kc.frb.org

June Holley
Appalachian Center
for Economic Networks
(614) 592-3854
jholley@tmn.com

Patricia Jensen
North Dakota State University
(701) 231-7656
pjensen@ndsuxext.nodak.edu

Stanley Johnson
Iowa State University Extension
(515) 294-6192
vpforext@exnet.iastate.edu

Arlen Leholm
Michigan State University Extension
(517) 355-2308
leholm@msue.msu.edu

Sally Maggard
ECS-CSREES-USDA
(202) 720-0741
smaggard@reeusda.gov

Wendy Wintersteen
Iowa State University
(515) 294-1823
wwinters@iastate.edu

NCRCRD Grant
continued from page 1

was passed unanimously by the House and Senate, effective May 1998. The program allows loan guarantees of up to \$200,000, which can be used to help secure and buy down the interest rate of a private lender.

While the ORDP administers the loan program, the Ohio Agriculture Finance Commission—an existing body consisting of two bankers, two farmers, and two bank board members—reviews loan applications. The ORDP also works with The Ohio State University Extension and Small Business Development Centers in Ohio when referring loan applicants needing help with their business plans.

The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development enjoyed working with John Steinberger, Jr., who retired last year after serving as executive director of the Ohio Rural Development Partnership since its inception.

For more information on the Ohio Family Farm Loan Guarantee Program, contact Randall Hunt, executive director, Ohio Rural Development Partnership, 8995 E. Main St., Reynoldsburg, OH 43068; (614) 466-5495, (614) 466-4346 fax, Hunt@odant.agri.state.oh.us. □

Publications



Self-Beliefs and Employment Readiness

My Key to Success is an eight-week program designed by Penn State University Extension for unemployed persons who are receiving public assistance. The program addresses the role of an individual's self-beliefs and overall psychological outlook in how they view their employment status and in their motivation for finding work. Public assistance recipients will determine how their self-beliefs support or hinder successful employment and make effective changes in their beliefs and behavior to bring about long-term employment.

My Key to Success has been designed as a collaborative effort of local public assistance agencies and extension educators. The extension educator assumes major responsibility for teaching the sessions, providing educational activities resources, recruiting employers for the employer panel, recruiting local experts for a session on appearance, and arranging for a team-building session facilitator.

Local public assistance employment and training staff recruit class participants, oversee class participation and weekly application submission verification, make facility arrangements, and recruit former class members who have been successful. They also present an overview of how public assis-

tance benefits are affected by working and what benefits are available to working clients.

My Key to Success is available from the Publications Distribution Center, The Pennsylvania State University, 112 Ag Admin Bldg., University Park, PA 16802; (814) 865-6713.



Speaking Up For Rural America

With new challenges and opportunities ahead in Congress, a guide published by the National Association of Development Organizations is intended to help regional development professionals and local elected officials stay current on the latest grassroots techniques. *The NADO Guide to Grassroots Action: Speaking Up for Rural America* will also reinforce the fundamentals of communicating with members of Congress and their staff.


The guide provides insights into the importance of using the media to influence federal policymakers through letters-to-the-editor, opinion pieces, and press conferences. It also contains sample letters, press releases, thank you notes, a glossary of legislative terms, and Internet resources.

The NADO Guide to Grassroots Action is available for \$25 from NADO, 444 N. Capitol St. N.W., Suite 630, Washington, D.C. 20001; (202) 624-7806, (202) 624-8813 fax, nado@sso.org, <http://www.nado.org>.



Tools for Sustainable Communities

This Place Called Home: Tools for Sustainable Communities is a CD-ROM resource library to stimu-



late ideas for positive action in home places everywhere. Innovative community projects around North America, interviews with national leaders on sustainability, and grassroots people actually forging the change shed light on the kinds of leadership driving change, the methods and tools being used to achieve new goals and designs, and obstacles to implementation.

Featured stories explore ways that communities are working to become compatible with natural systems and issues of place, scale, diversity, history, leadership, education, and change.

The CD contains more than 60 minutes of video, hundreds of still photographs, hours of audio, and hundreds of pages of text from books, articles, interviews, and speeches. Produced by the Alliance for Community Education, *This Place Called Home* is available for \$24.95, ISBN 0-86571-375-8, from New Society Publishers, P.O. Box 189, Gabriola Island, B.C. Canada, V0R 1X0; (250) 247-9737, (250) 247-7471 fax, info@newsociety.com, <http://www.newsociety.com>



A Farm Woman's Perspective: Dealing with the Challenges of Agriculture

A group of concerned farm women in Minnesota have discovered they can use play acting as a medium to share experiences, give support, and work together with other farm women and their families as they face the many challenges and opportunities of a changing agricultural scene. The Farm Women Network of West Central Minnesota has put together an innovative video, titled *Healing*

Stories, and a discussion packet to encourage other neighborhoods, communities, and church groups to follow their lead.

The video and discussion packet uses play acting that is guaranteed to help open dialogue around challenging and emotional issues that will resonate with women from Minnesota to Maryland. Three key farm life challenges are woven throughout the short vignettes: communication, self-worth, and overload.

The video and accompanying discussion packet is available for \$35 (payable by check to the West Central Farm Women Network). Copies may be obtained by contacting Dorothy Rosemeier, West Central Research/Outreach Center, State Hwy 329, Box 471, Morris, MN 56267; (320) 589-1711.



Conferences



Agriculture and Leadership Training

The Learning Communities Project is sponsoring an innovative seminar on agriculture and leadership training. The program, called Taproot, will be held April 28-May 2, 2000, at the Melon Bluff Retreat Center on the coast south of Savannah, Georgia.

Taproot, the first of its kind in the United States, is aimed at providing the tools for individuals to make concrete change in farming communities. The semi-

nar topic of multi-functional agriculture deals with the numerous ways in which agriculture contributes to our society by producing healthy food, clean water, wildlife habitat, and regional economic opportunities.

For overall seminar information contact Hal Hamilton, (606) 986-5336, hhamilton@centerss.org; or Vicki Van Zee, (413) 587-9302, vanzee@javanet.com. For logistics information or an application, contact Jeneene Spencer, Learning Communities Project, (606) 986-5336, jspencer@centerss.org, www.centerss.org.



Extension Health Conference

The annual Priester Extension Health Conference will be held May 8-10, 2000, in Denver, Colorado, at the Doubletree-Westminster Hotel. This year's theme is "Extension: Responding to Healthy People 2010."

The conference will feature concurrent sessions of selected programs and research, as well as a general share fair session to showcase exemplary programs. A new feature is the round table discussion session, where professionals will be able to share concerns and issues related to various aspects of Extension health efforts. Keynote speakers will discuss health, health care, and the American consumer, as well as the overall Extension mission. A pre-conference workshop, "Community Based Health Program Evaluation," will be held May 7, and a post-conference workshop, "Health Policy Programming Workshop," will be held May 10-11.

For registration information contact Dawn Allman, The Ohio



State University Extension, (614) 292-4481, (614) 292-0058 fax, <http://www.nnh.org>.



BREI Annual Meeting

Business Retention and Expansion International will hold its annual conference May 20-23, 2000, in Portland, Maine. In addition to business and board meetings, participants will attend breakout sessions focusing on school-to-work initiatives, working with communities, and what to expect after the business visitation. The program is also scheduled to include a motivational speaker, a panel discussion, and action item sessions.

BREI is a nonprofit, professional association of economic development professionals who are working for the advancement of Business Retention and Expansion as an economic development strategy for communities.

For more information contact Robin Hanna, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, (800) 526-9943, (307) 298-2142, robin_hanna@ccmail.wiu.edu, <http://www.brei.org>.



Digest

“What Do We Need?” vs. “What Do We Have?”

A local electrician wanted to participate in a Texas community’s self-help water project. However, this project didn’t require any electrical work. Instead of turning down the electrician, project leaders initiated a three-way barter transaction in which the electrician donated his services to a vendor who needed some wiring done; the vendor, in turn, provided materials for the project at a large discount.

The project received the full benefit of a local resource that would have been overlooked had local residents stayed within the conventional mindset and concentrated on the community’s needs instead of its assets. Conventional programs emphasize what external agents can give to the community—mainly money and professional advice—to make up for what it is presumed to lack. In contrast, the Small Towns Environment Program urges communities to start with what they can afford to pay and what they have in the way of local resources.

Excerpted from *Small Towns Environment Program (STEP) Newsletter*, Vol. 7, Numbers 3&4, Spring-Summer, 1999. STEP is a program of The Rensselaerville Institute.



Hospitals and Tourism

Hospitals may be in the tourism business in areas that they don’t even realize. Handicapped people who own large motorized wheelchairs find that many restau-

rants, while handicapped accessible, are not equipped to handle these chairs. Hospitals offer the best stopping places for rest rooms and reasonably priced food. Hospital locations are well marked along highways and are equipped to handle the larger wheelchairs by providing wide electric doors and ample handicapped restrooms.

Excerpted from *Tourism Matters*, Vol. 3 Issue 4, Winter 1999-2000. Published by Michigan State University Extension.



Girl Scouts Work for Clean Water While Earning New Patch

Girl Scouts all over the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area are working hard to gain a new patch to sew to their jackets. The new Water Drop Patch Program is an innovative clean water partnership between the Girl Scout Council of the Nation’s Capital and EPA’s Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds. The program encourages girls to make a difference in their communities by becoming watershed and wetlands stewards. It also teaches them to use their skills to educate others in their community about the need to protect the nation’s valuable water resources.

EPA has published a Water Drop Patch Program booklet that



provides background information on watersheds, nonpoint source pollution, wetlands, and ground water/drinking water; a list of resources and helpful web sites; and a glossary. The booklet has been distributed to 6,500 troops (approximately 45,000 girls) in the D.C. metro area. It will be made available to other councils at regional workshops throughout the year, and it is available on the Internet at www.epa.gov/adopt/patch/.

For more information, contact Patty Scott, U.S. EPA, 4501F, 401 M St. S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460; (202) 260-1956, (202) 260-2529 fax, scott.patricia@epamail.epa.gov.

Excerpted from *Nonpoint Source News-Notes*, No. 58, July 1999. Published by the Terrene Institute.



The Importance of a Good Business Retention and Expansion Program

A few years ago, a small city hired a new economic developer. In the previous year, more than 500 new jobs had been created, all from expansions of existing businesses. The interview committee told the developer, "We haven't had a new business move to town in over five years. We expect you to change that." The developer told the committee, "If I could get 500 new jobs every year, I wouldn't care if I ever had a new company move to town."

This true story illustrates a fallacy—the best way to create jobs is to attract a business. It is one way, but not the most productive or cost-effective way. It also illustrates that communities do not appreciate the businesses already there.

For economic development, existing businesses are the most valuable asset. First and foremost, they create the majority of all new jobs. According to Ohio State University's research, 78 percent of Ohio's new jobs come from expansions of existing businesses. In rural areas, it is 86 percent.

Second, existing businesses are the best source of leads for business attraction. The suppliers or customers of existing businesses are the most logical targets of an attraction campaign.

Finally, if a business is looking at a community, existing businesses can "sell" that commu-

nity. If existing businesses are happy, they will convince other firms. If they are unhappy, they will kill the deal before it starts.

Excerpted from "The Importance of a Good Existing Businesses Retention and Expansion Program," by Gordon Ipson, Community Economic Extension Agent, Sandusky County, in *The Gazebo Community Development Newsletter*, Vol. 2 Issue 2, Summer 1999. Published by Ohio State University Extension.



World Wide Web

The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives presents two new web sites for the community building field.

Measures for Community Research www.aspenroundtable.org

The Measures for Community Research database is a collection of measures used to evaluate outcomes viewed as important by Comprehensive Community Initiatives, public policy makers, program funders, and experts in relevant research fields. This collection of measures covers eight substantive areas referred to as strands: community building, economic development, employment, education, housing and neighborhood conditions, neighborhood safety, social services, and youth development.

Community Building Resource Exchange www.commbuild.org

The Community Building Resource Exchange provides a broad array of resources and information about innovative community building efforts to revitalize poor neighborhoods and improve the life circumstances of residents and their families. In recent years, hundreds of community-based development organizations, human service agencies, and state and local governments have initiated projects based on comprehensive community-building principles and strategies. Their experiences have produced a wealth of learning and documentation on the opportunities and challenges of a community building approach to neighborhood transformation.

Rural Development News



North Central Regional Center
for Rural Development

Iowa State University
107 Curtiss Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-1050
(515) 294-8321, (515) 294-3180 fax
jstewart@iastate.edu
<http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu>

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Vol. 23, No. 2

Rural Development Directory

The NCRCRD works with an extension liaison in each of the 12 states in our region. The liaisons, listed below, can be contacted for information concerning rural development programs in their respective states. Complete contact information can be found on our World Wide Web homepage at <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu>.

Illinois—John van Es

University of Illinois
(217) 333-3790
e-van1@uiuc.edu

Indiana—Janet Ayres

Purdue University
(765) 494-4215
ayres@agecon.purdue.edu

Iowa—Steve Padgitt

Iowa State University
(515) 294-8397
scpadgit@iastate.edu

Kansas—Daryl Buchholz

Kansas State University
(785) 532-5838
dbuchhol@oz.oznet.ksu.edu

Michigan—Ray Vlasin

Michigan State University
(517) 355-0215
vlasin@msue.msu.edu

Minnesota—Nancy Nelson

University of Minnesota
Extension Service
(218) 299-5020
nnelson@extension.umn.edu

Missouri—Glen Easter

University of Missouri
Outreach & Extension Center
(573) 769-2071
easterg@missouri.edu

Nebraska—Elbert Dickey

University of Nebraska
(402) 472-2966
edickey1@unl.edu

North Dakota—Kathy Tweeten

NDSU Extension Service
(701) 221-6865
ktweeten@ndsuxext.nodak.edu

Ohio—John Rohrer

The Ohio State University
(614) 292-6232
rohrer.2@osu.edu

South Dakota—Larry Tidemann

South Dakota State University
(605) 688-4147
tidemanl@www.ces.sdstate.edu

Wisconsin—Patrick Walsh

University of Wisconsin Extension
(608) 262-1748
patrick.walsh@ces.uwex.edu

For information about family and consumer science programming in the North Central region, contact:

Karen Zotz

North Dakota State University
(701) 231-9688
hdfndir@ndsuxext.nodak.edu

For information about 4-H youth development programming in the North Central region, contact:

Joe Kurth

Iowa State University
(515) 294-1018
x1kurth@exnet.iastate.edu

For information about agriculture and natural resources programming in the North Central region, contact:

Thomas Parslow

University of Wisconsin
(608) 262-9309
TPARSLOW@FACSTAFF.WISC.EDU