

EXTENSION SERVICE

REVIEW

U S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE * NOVEMBER 1966



The Extension Service Review is for Extension educators—in County, State, and Federal Extension agencies—who work directly or indirectly to help people learn how to use the newest findings in agriculture and home economics research to bring about a more abundant life for themselves and their communities.

The Review offers the Extension worker, in his role of educational leader, professional guideposts, new routes and tools for speedier, more successful endeavor. Through this exchange of methods, tried and found successful by Extension agents, the Review serves as a source of ideas and useful information on how to reach people and thus help them utilize more fully their own resources, to farm more efficiently, and to make the home and community a better place to live.

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EXTENSION SERVICE

REVIEW

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Synchronizing Extension Resources

We all see Extension programs that seem to move along meeting interim and ultimate objectives on time with little or no apparent effort. By contrast, we all occasionally see those that operate in a continual state of crisis, seldom meeting objectives on time and sometimes never meeting the ultimate objectives.

The difference in effectiveness of these programs many times can be blamed on our inability to synchronize resources—that is, our inability to apply the right resource at the right time with the right amount of emphasis.

Extension work does not require perfect synchronization to operate, as does the somewhat impractical gear arrangement featured on the cover. But, as our programs become more complex, good synchronization takes on more importance. And the closer we can come to perfection in synchronization of resources, the more effective our programs will be.

The Tippah County development program featured in this issue illustrates the good that can happen when all resources, including people, are working together.—WJW



Sixth-graders on a conservation tour of Paasch's farm learn about the dangers of forest fires from a representative of the State Department of Natural Resources.

Local Leadership—

reflection of
Extension assistance
to Washington families

by
Earl J. Otis
*Extension Information Specialist
Washington State University*

some standards, Skamania County, Washington, is still the "wild west."

One of the school teachers bagged a deer last hunting season without marring his back porch.

Near Stevenson, the county seat, an Indian with a loaded rifle recently perched on a high rock and warned the white men not to prevent his people from fishing the Columbia River according to their treaty rights.

In the county Extension agent's office, questions are basic and unsophisticated, and the answers most

often come directly from Chairman Richard Adlard or Home Agent Sharon Tiffany. Both have found themselves with important roles to play in their community.

One of their jobs is to foster participation and leadership among residents of the area, and some excellent examples of accomplishment can be counted.

"There had been no leadership development work in the county for a number of years," says Agent Adlard, "and it was my feeling when I came

here four years ago that emphasis in this direction was urgently needed."

As an excellent example of success in leadership development, Adlard points to Mr. and Mrs. August M. Paasch, of Stevenson. They have 200 acres of land, including timber, a 12-acre pear orchard, and some strawberries. In 1961 it was set up as a TVA demonstration farm.

Extension and other personnel of the Washington State University have helped the Paasches in virtually all areas of their farming set-up. The help included such things as constructing a small gravity irrigation system; determination of water rights; setting up a farm accounting system; and technical information on crop production.

The leadership the Paasches are exerting in their community may be a reflection of this assistance. Last year the Paasches volunteered to host a Skamania County sixth-grade conservation tour. This year every boy and girl in the county—about 100—visited the Paasches for the second annual event.

With help from the U.S. Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources, Game Department, Soil Conservation Service, and members of Adlard's forest committee, the tour turned out to be a highlight of the school year for the boys and girls.

"We believe in conservation and in starting to educate people early," said the Paasches. "If the youngsters are aware, they respond."

Agent Adlard likes to second the idea of "response" and looks to the Paasches as excellent adult examples of this same phenomenon.

"Call it by any name, but the leadership the Paasches have shown in our community has developed into something of broad good for the entire area," he says.

"Extension, with a little bit of leadership development, identified a man and wife on a small marginal farm and helped them—now they are making a tremendous impact on this community." □

Organized Action . . .

produces a winner. Tippah County, Mississippi, leaders tell how!

by

Duane Rosenkrans

Mississippi Extension Editor

Among other things, a successful community and resource development program provides guidelines useful to others engaged in similar activities.

Tippah County, Mississippi, is a good place to look for guidelines. It placed first in the 1965 Mississippi Resource Development Awards Program.

Results of Tippah County work range from industrial expansion to spiritual growth. Definite progress has been recorded during each of the past several years.

Tippah County leaders have listed several factors that contributed to the success of the development program.

First is a strong foundation of rural community clubs.

More than 700 people belong to 21 such clubs. Members are informed on pertinent issues through regular monthly meetings. They are the key to approval of industrial bond issues and the push for improved public facilities. The clubs were organized by Extension in the 1950's.

"The interest in improving our county stems from the community clubs," says Dr. W. E. Johnson, local dentist and chairman of the Mississippi Resource Development Committee. "There's no rural-urban any more. It's all one," he points out.

Ray M. Sartor, county Extension agent, observes, "People believe in

community clubs because they see the results. It makes them better neighbors, better citizens, and in the long run it makes a better community and a better county."

"This Development Association has tried to coordinate a program to improve the county. We did not try to take the place of any organization," states Troy Holliday, county superintendent of education and chairman of the Association. Concerning the Association's role in compiling results of studies made by the individual groups, Holliday said, "We furnished them the information which they helped to secure, and they went out and did the job."

Secondly, the program was built on a detailed survey and analysis of economic and human resources.

The survey results were presented to many organizations and were otherwise published. "We had problems, but we couldn't see them until we made this survey," Holliday explained.

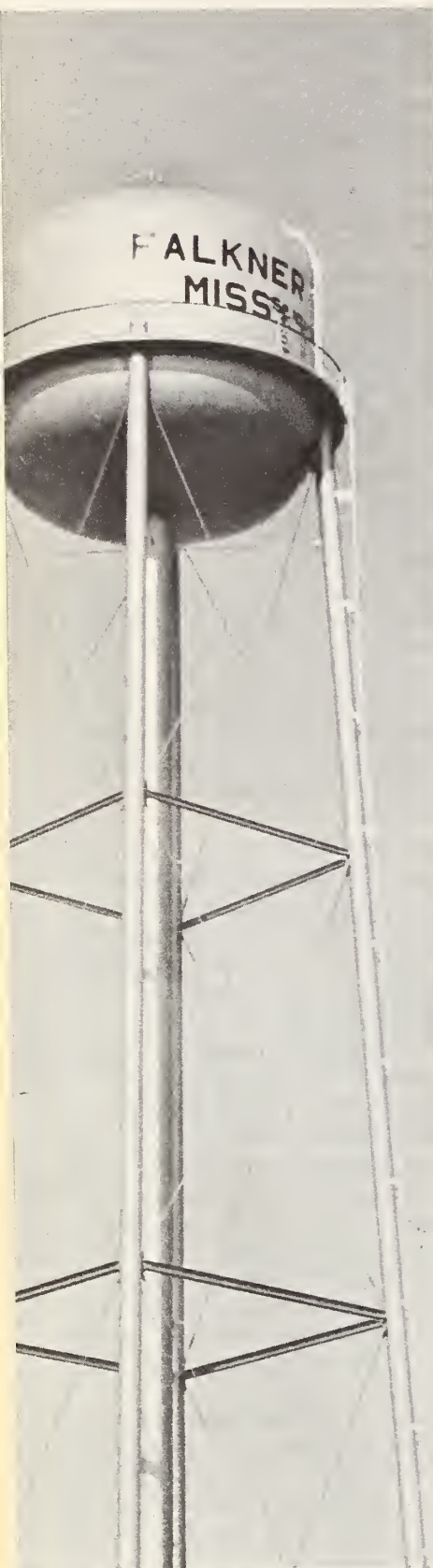
The problems included unemployment and underemployment, weaknesses in educational facilities and curriculum, farmers not using available assistance, and natural resources being wasted.

Goals of the Tippah County residents and recommended ways to teach them were made known.

Third, leadership was developed in every community.

Just a few key leaders can't conduct a development program in many areas. There is also great value to building better people as well as better things.

A new water system at Falkner, Mississippi, which includes this tower, serves 200 rural families in a 2½-mile radius.



J. W. Owen, Federal crop insurance representative and farmer, states, "You've got to have enough leaders scattered throughout your people, and then you must get them together."

Fourth, everyone was encouraged in a good attitude toward work, desire for improvement, and pride in accomplishment.

The president of the Peoples Bank of Ripley sees "everyone working and working together. It's intangible, but when you get people working together, it builds up like a snowball." A good county agent and Extension staff have a lot to do with it, he adds.

And finally, financial rewards were provided for good work.

Business and professional people of Tippah County furnish more than \$3,000 a year in awards to community clubs. The Sears Roebuck Foundation through the Mississippi Resource Development Committee provides \$800 to the State award-winning community club in the resource development program. Local leaders raise another \$3,000 a year for 4-H work.

Some results of the 1965 Tippah County development program are:

The use of chemicals to control grass and weeds in corn increased by 18 percent and in pastures by 40 percent. Farmers planted 4,003 acres of cover crops, made better use of all agricultural agencies, and obtained Federal crop insurance. Most of the county is under watershed planning.

The forestry program included planting 606,000 tree seedlings and constructing 24 miles of fire lanes.

Four community water systems and a sewage system were constructed or are being constructed. Because of better water and more pressure, 10 new homes and some small businesses have been attracted to the Falkner community. Many individuals added modern bathrooms, kitchen sinks, and hot water heaters.

The school system added 35 classrooms, together with vocational, physics, and driver education courses.

Construction is well along on a major addition to the Tippah County hospital, including 28 more rooms for patients. The town of Walnut secured a full-time doctor.

Gains were made in improved housing and landscaping throughout Tippah County. □



S. A. Huskison, right, associate county agent, helps farmers adapt new technology — in this case, chemical weed control.

New churches, as the one below, and parsonages indicate a growing spiritual concern of the people in Tippah County, Mississippi.



Leo Neaman's steers seemed a little thin by the taping test. George Gardner, Extension agricultural agent for youth programs on the Fort Hall Indian reservation in Idaho, showed the 4-H boy and his parents how to mix a better ration.

"I know what to do now," said Leo's mother, and her husband agreed that the suggestions were good. Leo put the idea to work. Not only did his steers gain substantially, but at the State meeting of the Junior Hereford Society several months later, he won second in weight judging.

That's an example of family cooperation in 4-H progress on the reservation. The program, in general, is a double-barreled effort. Boys and girls are eager to take part in club work. They push it. Their parents push, too. It's a strong combination and the foundation of effective leadership.

"Why can't my children get into a club?" asks a parent.

"Glad to have them," replies Gardner or Colette Farrar, home economics agent. "How about helping by being a leader?"

Many of them gladly accept the honor and responsibility. If they do not have the know-how or experience at first, they respond quickly to training and become faithful teachers.

Adequate leadership for about 120 4-H Club members—including many who are not Indians—is a first-line concern of the tribal council that governs all Indian activities. The council appoints the Shoshone-Bannock 4-H council, which works with agents of the University of Idaho Extension Service to select project leaders in fields such as beef, entomology, health, clothing, horses, and dairy. These leaders, or specialists, are available for advice in all geographical areas. There are thriving clubs with trained leaders and continuous programs in each of five districts.

The reason for active support by the tribal council is easy to find, according to Gardner.

Family Cooperation

Key
to a strong
4-H program

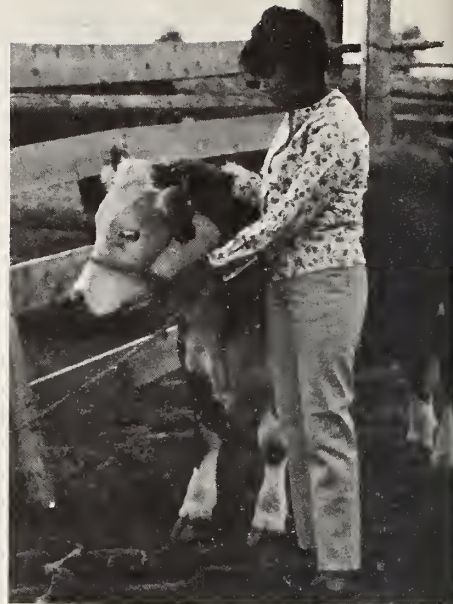
by
Cedric d'Easum
Assistant Extension Editor
University of Idaho

"A member put it this way," he said. "We help because you are interested in our children. You are interested in teaching them, so we are interested in you."

Chairman of the tribal council is Kesley Edmo, Sr. As a boy in club work, he raised potatoes. Today he raises cattle, as do most residents of the reservation. Both Mr. and Mrs. Edmo have long been 4-H leaders.

A daughter, Linda, was an Idaho delegate to the National 4-H Conference. Another daughter, Lorraine, won a trip to the National Congress in Chicago, and was 1966 editor of the State 4-H newspaper. A son, Kesley, Jr., was elected vice president of Gem State 4-H in 1966. Eight more Edmo brothers and sisters all have been or will be 4-H members.

Frank Papse, Sr., is vice president of the 4-H council. Instrumental in stimulating 4-H work, he has keen interest in beef projects for club boys. One of his objectives, he says, is to



Steers such as this one owned by Andrea Davis are purchased for club members through tribal council appropriations and individual contributions.

help boys become self-sufficient. Boys—and some girls—with a foundation of 4-H calves have the basis for building a beef business.

Indians in positions of influence put their money into the program. The tribal council appropriated \$2,500 in 1966 for 4-H projects, mostly beef. About \$1,000 more contributed by sponsors on the reservation bought livestock for club members showing ability and enthusiasm.

Most of the fund was for steers, and it also provided 14 head of feeder sheep. The investment is proving financially sound as well as educational. The young people pay back the original cost of steers and are encouraged to invest earnings in range heifers. Two bred heifers are considered the nucleus of a herd.

The tribal council has set up a revolving fund for the 4-H steer project. The money is for annual use in developing business sense and knowledge of livestock.

The Fort Hall Indian Stockmen's Association helps select the 4-H steers with assistance of Glenn Kunkel, chairman of the Extension staff on the reservation. Many of the animals are bought from association members who maintain a lively concern for development of the calves as they are raised by boys and girls.

"This kind of leadership and support," said Gardner, "is not only providing guidance for increasing numbers of young members, but is maintaining the interest of older children—14 and up. They are becoming junior leaders. Older youth who were once in 4-H but dropped out are coming back as leaders."

The reservation has a Builder's Club of 33 members, all advanced workers who do community projects and set an example for their younger brothers and sisters.

Fourteen 4-H members at Fort Hall took part in an off-the-farm business survey this year. The number was among the largest in the State for a comparable area.

They are talking turkey on the reservation. Turkey projects have been started in the Ross Fork and Gibson areas. Chicken projects, the first in many years, are developing, and pig projects are also being requested.

"They ask for these projects," Gardner said. "We don't tell them what to do. The initiative comes from the Indians. It shows they have a desire to try many ways of helping themselves. That's the kind of leadership that gets results."

Several clubs, assisted by the home economics agent and led by women gifted in the skills of home management, are working on home beautification, flower arrangement, etc. Clothing and sewing are taught constantly in the clubs.

Layton Littlejohn, 4-H council president, promotes landscaping and has been instrumental in obtaining expert instruction in that field.

"As the girls become excited about their work," said Mrs. Farrar, "greater



Frank Teton, beef project leader, assesses the progress of a steer owned by a member of the Flaming Arrow 4-H Club. The Shoshone-Bannock 4-H council, appointed by the tribal council, works with Extension to select project leaders.

attention is paid by the adults. So we feel 4-H is leading as well as being led."

The family unit, fundamental to most activities on the reservation, is the groundwork of 4-H. Parents put their time and effort in things that benefit their children. Whether formally designated or not, they are leaders in club work.

How about beadwork and moccasins? "Forget it," said Gardner. "The 4-H members and leaders here keep

up with modern things just like people in any other community."

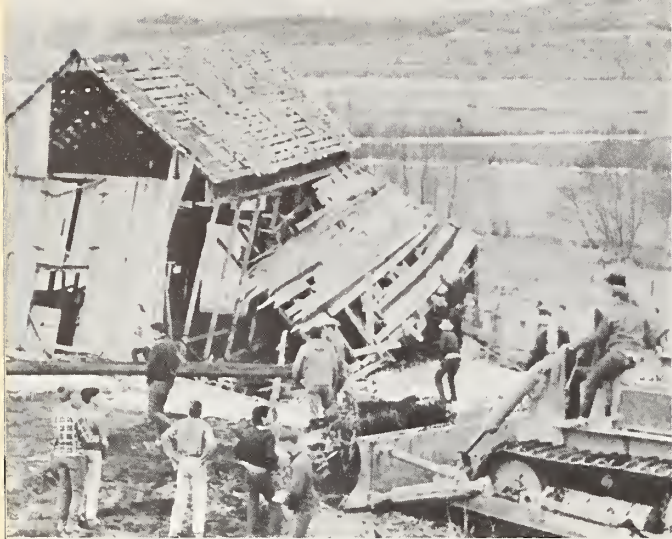
Frank Papse, for example, is asked such things as: "How about mineralized salt?" "Should I use stilbestrol?" or "What amount of vitamin A is good for a fattening steer?"

These are up-to-date questions from alert minds in a scientific world. They are the things Indian 4-H members want to know. The answers keep the leaders jumping, but they like it that way. □

Adequate leadership for about 120 4-H members, such as these youngsters in the Putnam Pioneers Club, is a first-line concern of the tribal council that governs all Indian activities.



Community Beautification



Dilapidated farm buildings were overrun by a horde of "cleaner-uppers". The old barn at Alpine was just one of the projects on the list for "kick-off" day. More than 200 workers showed up to get things started.

Nothing does more to build up community spirit than a project in which everyone — the young, the old, the businessman, the farmer, the home maker, and the community leader— can have a part.

The Utah Cooperative Extension Service program in landscape improvement under the leadership of Dr. Arvil Stark, horticulturist, is a case in point.

Results of the beautification efforts



The first "improvers" to arrive at the Anderson home in Ephraim, Utah, about 7:30 a.m., saw the place below left. The last to leave, about 5:30 p.m. the same day, saw the place as above. Quite a Saturday project, but then you could do it too with 92 people helping out—even to donation of all the materials. The couple living here was 83 years old. The local Landscape Committee and Lions Club co-sponsored the job.



on

Utah Style

from modest to spectacular. Enthusiasm for the beautification is fueled by a spirit of competition between communities, within counties, and between counties.

ough cutting weeds and cleaning vacant lots was part of the effort necessary to the overall improvement program — some projects far more formidable yielded to community determination, Stark points out. □



Vacant, weed-infested lots, above right, among other eyesores in Hurricane, became victims of the landscape committee's wrath. In a single afternoon, large groups of school children supervised by the committee members, cleaned up a number of lots and gave them a new face.

This eyesore at right, stood just one-half block from the center of Vernal, Utah. It had long since deteriorated beyond use as a recreation hall, so the committee and Chamber of Commerce sponsored its removal. The Junior Chamber of Commerce boys did all the work of tearing down and removing the debris without cost to the city. Now Vernal has a new paved parking lot, below.



by
Franklin P. Graham
Area Specialist,
Resource Development
University of Illinois



Mr. and Mrs. Tracy Snyder, Marion County, Illinois, discuss their farm and home business developments with Fay M. Sims, right, University of Illinois Extension farm management specialist.

Illinois

Test

Demonstrations—

“What a man hears he may doubt, what he sees he may possibly doubt, but what he does himself he cannot doubt,” was the philosophy of Seaman A. Knapp, who initiated the demonstration farm method in the late 1800’s.

Participants in an Illinois test demonstration project are proving that the old, reliable demonstration technique is still an important and effective teaching tool in the 1960’s.

The Illinois demonstration farms have been successful within themselves. Cooperating farm families have established well-balanced, efficient, and profitable farm business organizations, and their motivation and self-confidence have increased.

Equally important has been the effect of the demonstration farms on other farmers. Neighbors and acquaintances who have “looked over the fence” or talked with the participating farmers have adopted practices or ideas first observed on the demonstration farm.

A constant evaluation of techniques and procedures is of primary importance to all Extension workers. The most comprehensive demonstration project in the Illinois Extension program, the TVA Test-Demonstration Farm Program, was the subject of a recent evaluation.

This joint effort of the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service and the Tennessee Valley Au-

**Prove
“Learning by doing”
Still effective
In 1960’s**

thority has as its objectives (1) the development of complete, well-balanced, efficient, and profitable farm business organizations on selected farms that will serve as a demonstration to other farmers having similar resources, and (2) initiation of research findings of the College of Agri-

culture and the Experiment Station into an overall farm demonstration with major emphasis on fertility. Co-operating farm families receive generous allocations of fertilizer from TVA at reduced prices.

The Test-Demonstration Program in Illinois is directed by two Extension farm management specialists, F. M. Sims and D. E. Erickson. Each demonstration farm in the State is visited by one of the State project leaders and a county farm adviser twice a year.

During the visits, they outline the cropping system and fertility program for the year ahead, discuss long-time goals, anticipate livestock program changes, visualize building changes, and consider an overall farm plan. Subject-matter specialists provide information about specific enterprises on individual farms.

An advisory committee appointed by the dean of the College of Agriculture selects participating counties and farms for the program from names suggested by county committees. Five families per county act as demonstrators for a five-year period. Since the Illinois Test-Demonstration Program is limited to two groups of cooperators in a county, the program is in a county for a 10-year period. Presently enrolled are 42 Illinois families in seven counties.

At the time of the evaluation study, over 60 families had completed five years of active membership. Nineteen had records available for five years following their "graduation" from the program.

All Illinois demonstrator families keep comprehensive farm business records during the five years of their enrollment. Records from those and other families belonging to a statewide record-analysis cooperative are on file at the University of Illinois. By agreement with the cooperative, summaries are available for research study by University personnel.

The record summaries were the source of data for a paired-sample technique used as one phase of the

evaluation. A farm was selected for the paired-sample group if it was similar to a demonstration farm in size and soil productivity rating and had a similar livestock program. Available labor and operator age were secondary considerations in selecting the twin sample.

During the five years that the Illinois families included in the study were enrolled in the Test-Demonstration Program, their average returns to labor, capital, and management increased from \$5,600 annually to \$8,200 annually. During the same five-year period, the "twins" from the paired-sample group increased returns from \$5,600 to \$7,800.

Thus, the earnings of the test-demonstrators and the "twins" at the beginning of the program were about the same. After five years of intensive assistance, however, the demonstrators' returns were five percent higher.

The evaluation further indicated that during the period of enrollment, the demonstrators (1) increased the size of their farms, (2) intensified their cropping system by including more high-profit crops, (3) increased their crop yields, (4) increased their grain and livestock returns, (5) raised the value of total farm productions and (6) increased their net profit. The median net worth of the demonstrators increased by \$13,000 during the five-year period.

Ninety percent of the test-demonstration families recalled acquaintances having told them they adopted demonstration practices, particularly in the area of soil fertility. Nearly 60 percent of the farmers interviewed gave "acquaintances" as a primary source of educational information.

Almost half the nearby neighbors who were interviewed admitted that they had changed their fertilizer practices after observing demonstration results. One-third of the neighbors interviewed, however, were apparently unaware that a nearby farm was involved in a demonstration program. Demonstrators reasoned that diffusion

among acquaintances living away from the immediate neighborhood was greater than among those living on adjoining farms.

Their influence was greatest among people of their own age group who had a similar livestock enterprise or some other common interest. The demonstrators were younger than their nearby neighbors and had received more formal education. They also tended to be somewhat more specialized.

Educational tours sponsored by the Extension Service and other organizations allowed many people besides neighbors and acquaintances the opportunity to see the results of the planning programs. Visitors were from other counties, other States, and several foreign countries.

People who cooperated with the Extension Service and the TVA in the demonstration program also received benefits that were not economic. For example, 13 new homes were erected by families enrolled in the program. Many of these were designed by University of Illinois specialists.

Although a better financial structure was credited for making these homes possible, the families suggested that the motivation, desire, courage, and self-confidence gained from the program were important in bringing about the improvements.

The purpose of an evaluation study is to determine the effectiveness of a method or technique being used. Results of the evaluation of the TVA Test-Demonstration Program in Illinois show that the demonstration technique has not lost its effectiveness as a teaching tool.

Farmers may not be as fully aware of practices followed by their immediate neighbors as in years gone by, but they are much more aware of practices being used by friends and acquaintances living farther away. Certainly Illinois test-demonstrators would agree with Dr. Knapp's philosophy, ". . . what a man does himself he cannot doubt." □

The GARDEN ALMANAC

- *helps home gardeners
- *aids beautification efforts
- *reduces specialists' travel

by
Louis M. Berninger
Extension Floriculture Specialist
University of Wisconsin



The model above was used with a program on landscaping the home grounds.

The television camera was "in tight" on a specimen elm tree. In just 10 seconds it would dolly on down a typical suburban street to focus on another casualty of the Dutch elm disease. The opening teaser comments would set the stage for a 30-minute television program dedicated to halting the ravaging destruction of this magnificent shade tree.

Two of our pesticide specialists were on hand to discuss the present situation and recent progress in slowing down the appetite of this potent disease. A model of a typical suburban street was constructed to show the above-ground situation and also the natural grafting process between roots of neighboring elm trees.

Our model could be rotated to permit closeup cameras to show the intricate mechanism whereby the disease can spread from tree to neighboring tree.

Another GARDEN ALMANAC television program sponsored by the University of Wisconsin was about to roll, and it would wind up our fourth

season on the air. Eight commercial stations in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois carried the series in addition to our University station.

Many hours of preparation preceded those last 10 seconds before the red light and air time for another program. In fact, the number of hours required to produce each single program suggests organization of a regional cooperative project using the best talents available and then distributing the shows throughout the region to both educational and commercial stations. This would reduce duplicated effort and provide enrichment for our programs.

Television station managers estimated that 75,000 people viewed each program weekly. Effects of the program include a reduction of our participation in many local meetings; increased requests for information that can usually be handled with one or more publications; and strong indications that the programs have made a valuable contribution to local and State beautification programs and have

provided home gardeners with timely information.

What prompted this undertaking, and can we justify the man hours devoted to this series?

Our society has demonstrated an increasing concern for creating leisure time projects. Major emphasis has also been placed by government officials and private citizens on the improvement of our blighted areas and beautification of our countryside.

Furthermore, home gardeners will spend over \$3 billion in 1966 for plants and related materials. This television series was conceived as a means of furthering these goals and more effectively providing timely information for our home gardeners.

The GARDEN ALMANAC series was born in the spring of 1963 with the production of 15 programs. Extension furnished video tapes and visual aid materials to support some of the production costs and provided for distribution of the series to other stations in and around Wisconsin. Our University station provided technical



A number of models have been developed by the Extension Service to use with the television programs. The one above, complete with street, sidewalks, homes, and trees, was developed specifically for the program on Dutch elm disease.

assistance and absorbed most of the production costs.

Our initial series was devoted to indoor plants and garden flowers. Each program essentially contained three components: major topic for discussion, such as the culture of house plants; offer of a free bulletin; and a three-to-five-minute segment on timely tips.

Plans were made in early summer for continuation of the series. A schedule of 26 half-hour programs was prepared with the understanding that 10 used in the first series would be repeated.

The second series was initiated in December 1963. The early starting date permitted us to devote an entire program to the selection and care of Christmas plants. Later in the series, other programs highlighted Easter plants and annual flowers.

The effort emphasizing plants for special occasions coincided with one of our annual goals of trying to stimulate greater use of floral products in the home and garden.

Several county agents and the Extension information personnel made arrangements with commercial stations in Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Wausau to televise the second series. Air times varied from early morning to mid-afternoon on Saturday, and morning and noon on Sunday. Similar broadcast hours were obtained for the third and fourth seasons.

The series has been offered free to other commercial stations. In addition to the cost of video tapes, our expenses primarily involved those for duplicating each program and modest mailing charges.

Six complete programs were devoted to landscaping in the second season. A model featured movable life-like trees, shrubs, flower beds and several one- and two-story homes. The model was set on a turntable, which when rotated, provided excellent coverage of the action from an overhead camera and one set at ground level.

It was the third season before we truly lived up to the title of GARDEN ALMANAC. Program offerings then

covered ornamentals, pesticides, fruits, flowers, turf, and landscaping. This past season also featured programs on home greenhouses and hotbeds.

A major attempt was made to promote this last series. As a result two commercial stations in Minnesota broadcast the series and took charge of the promotion program.

A 20-second film "promo" and a one-minute video tape were distributed to cooperating stations prior to the season. A slide and script were also forwarded to each station for use one week in advance of each program.

A post office box was rented to simplify the mailing address for viewers. Approximately 150 to 200 requests were received each week for publications and information.

What about next year? The eight cooperating stations in addition to 12 other stations have expressed an interest and desire to carry the series. One of our cooperating stations may produce a portion of or the entire series in color at their facilities. □



Mrs. Carolyn Schrock, second from left, and Mrs. Lundy Adams, right, assist local women in design and color selection of materials for rugs.

Profile of a Low-Income Project

**reaffirms value of inspired
volunteer leaders**

by

Carolyn Schrock

*Former Resource Development Specialist
University of Kentucky*

It was just a simple project—conceived for the specific purpose of providing employment and more income for the unemployed and underemployed of the mountain village of Blackey, in Letcher County, Kentucky. It accomplished its purpose and more—the “more” some observers estimate to be of the greater value.

The dollars earned provided material things such as clothes, and funds for education for the children.

The side effects include such things as improved homes, a noticeable improvement in the feeling of self-worth by the local residents participating in the project, a greater community esprit de corps sufficient to overcome the various church factions, local politics, and isolation that before were pulling the community apart. And Extension workers’ faith in the value of local, volunteer leaders received a resounding reaffirmation.

The driving force behind the whole effort came from Mrs. Lundy Adams, wife of a local physician. She, along with Dr. Adams, conceived the idea, arranged the initial meeting, provided much financial support in the project’s early phases, and provided a central meeting place and work room.

When the first meeting in 1962, open to the public, was announced, 35 people attended to learn what a hooked rug was, how it was made,

and what the real market potential was. I presented the information at the initial meeting and taught the six training classes that followed.

Enthusiasm was high and turned out to be contagious. As women searched for materials to make hooked rugs, local used-clothing stores experienced an unexpected increase in sales. A local unemployed man netted \$200 from the sale of frames to the initial and subsequent classes of rug hookers.

Workers made tremendous strides in improving hooking techniques and speed. But they tended to express their resentment of the dull monotonous that exist throughout the mountain region by using extremely bright color combinations. This caused marketing problems with the rugs.

An Extension home furnishings specialist from the University of Kentucky taught the women the techniques of dyeing fabrics to achieve pleasing color combinations that would be acceptable to buyers. The State Department of Commerce made arrangements for a commercial specialist of Long Island, New York, to assist the women in design and color.

Help came from other communities and other States. Homemakers and friends in other parts of the country heard of this group through the East Kentucky Resource Development Project, and used clothing and wool materials arrived in large quantities. Some came from Michigan and Iowa.

The first special order for a 7 x 12-foot rug was received late in 1962. In the next six months 11 families sold 49 rugs for more than \$1,700.

The classes served as a social activity for the women in the mountain village, and at home the project became a family affair. Husbands who had little work away from home began to help cut materials. Some teenagers learned the technique in art class from their teacher who had attended the classes I taught for the adults, and even smaller children took part.

Some of the children do excellent

work, and several have achieved enough skill to make rugs that have been sold. This has helped to unite the family in a common project for fun as well as profit, and insures continuation of the rug making project.

The project developed a "fairy tale" flavor at one point. Through contacts made by the local editor and a lawyer-author, The Manhattan Bank of New York invited six of the rug hookers to New York City in December of 1965. The visitors participated in a daily pageant depicting life in Appalachia and operated a booth in the bank selling rugs and other hand-crafted items.

The trip developed one disappointing factor. A representative took Mrs. Adams to two department stores to negotiate contracts for special design rugs. She was not able to get a contract because of competition of foreign made rugs in countries where the wage scale was lower than in the United States.

The rugs are marketed through specialty stores in Paintsville, Harlan, Louisville, and other strategic locations. A used clothing store has been opened in connection with the rug project to bring money to help keep the stores open and operating.

A branch library has been established in the former hospital building where the hookers meet, leave unfinished work, and store materials. Many people see the finished rugs on visits to the library.

The success of the project is told partly by the increasing number of people taking up rug making. A recent count showed more than 150 were participating.

Mrs. Adams has faith in the ability of the individuals of her community to succeed. Because of this faith and her untiring efforts she has been able to motivate women to participate in the program who previously left their home only to attend church and funerals.

Local leaders have rapport with many of the low-income people we are trying to help and can relay the educational information in such a way as to make it meaningful and accepted. Our support and assistance and encouragement can make the difference between success and failure.

As Extension workers, at the State, area, or county level, we need to remember that key leaders like Mrs. Adams need our inspiration and continuing support. We leave the community—they remain to face the same problems and people daily. □

An indirect benefit of the rug hooking project was an observable growth in community spirit and feeling of belonging indicated here by the bold sign.





From The Administrator's Desk by Lloyd H. Davis

They Pay Taxes

Occasionally I hear an Extension worker express the concern that we should serve all the people. A common expression of this is "We have a responsibility to serve them too. They pay taxes."

This one deserves more attention than I can give it here—but let us not be confused on these points:

- A major effect of Extension work has been to lower the cost of producing and marketing food and fiber. Americans have never bought their food for a smaller share of their income. Who buys and eats food? All the people! Whom have we served? All the people!

- Americans have continued to enjoy a diet of progressively higher quality with more convenience and "luxury" foods—a product of our great agricultural system to which we have contributed in many ways. Whom have we served? All the people!

- Nowhere in the world can one buy and consume food with greater safety and assurance of purity and wholesomeness—and to this accomplishment of American agriculture we make many contributions. Whom have we served? All the people.

- The increasing efficiency of American farms and marketing firms has released people from essential food production to perform other services—in health, education, culture, improved housing, making and servicing television sets, etc. Ours has been a very important role in developing this efficiency. Whom have we served? All the people.

- Our American abundance of food has saved millions of people from starvation around the world. It is an effective weapon in achieving, promoting, and maintaining peace in our world. To this abundance we in Extension have made great contributions. Whom have we served? All the people—not just of this nation, but the world.

We could point to many other ways in which by working with a part we serve all the people. Obviously we serve in important ways many people we never see or meet. Surely in many cases these services are a greater benefit to them than would be the benefits if we only served people through direct service to them. □