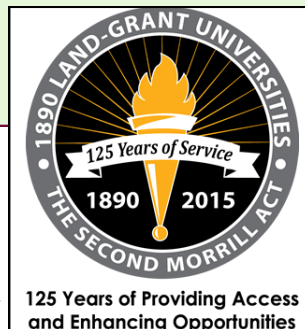




Making a Difference

In Fort Bend County

Spring 2015



Special Topics for Spring 2015

- ◆ Message from the Director
- ◆ New Employee Hired
- ◆ Outdoor Challenge Winners
- ◆ Fort Bend 4-H State Roundup Winners
- ◆ Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist
- ◆ Validated Issues for the 2016 Prgm. Year
- ◆ Texas Learn, Go, Eat, Grow!
- ◆ Crop Weather Prgm.
- ◆ Extension Disaster Education Network
- ◆ 2015 Backyard Basics
- ◆ FBC Theatre Camp
- ◆ Nature Watch Kids' Camp
- ◆ Quick Stats & Facts
- ◆ Snap-Shot of Upcoming Events
- ◆ Contact Information

April—June, 2015 TOTAL CONTACTS

431 educational sessions
33,558 attendees
318 Social Media posts
6,075 Social Media followers
21 Newsletters
9,018 Newsletter contacts
518 Volunteers assisted
1,694 Volunteer hours
4,740 Edu. Resources Used

Message from the Co. Extension Director

Our sister agency is celebrating a major milestone. The largest in a network of 19 historically black colleges and universities within the 1890 Land-Grant system, Prairie View A&M University continues to be dedicated to providing educational opportunity for all people through innovative scientific research and community minded Cooperative Extension programs. The focus is on distinctive educational programs for a broad spectrum of students, particularly first generation students and those with limited access to opportunities. Topics addressing: health disparities; obesity prevention; enhancing agricultural enterprises for small & limited resource operations; engaging youth in leadership development; increasing awareness & interest in STEM (science/technology/engineering/math) careers; expanding global access to safe & nutritious food; enhancing resiliency of families, individuals & communities for economic mobility; and conducting cutting-edge research to generate new knowledge and solutions to global challenges are all important to the students and community supported by this fine university.

Together, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program through PVAMU are part of the Texas A&M System. The Texas A&M System, U.S.D.A., and the Fort Bend County Commissioners' Court cooperate as a team to provide support for Extension educational programming in an effort to reach all Fort Bend citizens. Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.

New Employee!



Derrick Banks—Hired on April 15, 2015 as our new Extension Agent for Agriculture & Natural Resources with the Cooperative Extension Program of Prairie View A&M University. Mr. Banks holds a Bachelors of Science degree in Agriculture from PVAMU. His previous experience includes work with Aldine ISD, Cooperative Extension Program's H.S. Estelle Camp, and PVAMU's Research Farms. Mr. Banks has strong knowledge of general agriculture as it relates to animal husbandry, farm & ranch management, plant & soil sciences and fisheries.

Vince J. Mann

Outdoor Challenge Winners!

A new 4-H event for Fort Bend County. Congratulations Fort Bend Co. Outdoor Challenge teams for rocking it at State Roundup. FBC earned 5th in Intermediate Males, 2nd in Senior Co-Ed, and 1st in Junior Co-Ed and Intermediate Females divisions. Ya'll did GREAT! Thank you FBC coaches: Ruth Maus, Jaron Tolman, Mitzi Tolman and Nora Lepovitz.



Fort Bend County 4-H State Roundup Winners!

Floyd Lynch Memorial Scholarship - Tucker Novosad \$3,000; Promote 4-H Educational Presentation - 4th Place Austin Oney; Swine Quiz Bowl 1st Place Sr Team (Hunter Bean, Caitlin Wesneski, Austin Oney, Taylor Hoelscher; Swine Quiz Bowl 3rd Place Sr Team (Alexis Smith, Nicole Jones, Chance Legendre, Logan Gilbert); Swine Quiz Bowl 1st Place Intermediate Team (Cassidy Smith, Jack Bishop, Mitchell Wendt, Slade Gilbert); Swine Skill-A-Thon 3rd High Point Individual - Caitlin Wesneski; Swine Skill-A-Thon 1st Place Sr. Team (Caitlin Wesneski, Chance Legendre, Nicole Jones, Taylor Hoelscher); Swine Skill-A-Thon 2nd Place Sr Team (Logan Gilbert, Hunter Bean, Alexis Smith); Swine Skill-A-Thon 1st High Point Intermediate - Mitchell Wendt; Swine Skill-A-Thon 2nd High Point Intermediate - Jack Bishop; Swine Skill-A-Thon 3rd High Point Intermediate - Cassidy Smith; Swine Skill-A-Thon 1st Place Intermediate Team (Mitchell Wendt, Jack Bishop, Cassidy Smith); Vet Science Skill-A-Thon Novice - Kennedy Talamendez; Wildlife Challenge 1st High Point Senior - Logan Maus; Photography Elements of Design (Blue) - Tayla Gunner; Photography Dominant Color (Red), Night Photography (Blue) - Alyssa Hodges; Photography Digital Darkroom (Red), Photography Food (Red), Photography Catch-All (Blue), Photography People (Blue) - Alexandria Hornsby; Photography Storyboard (Red), Photography Plant/Flora (Red), Photography Animals/Domestic (Blue), Photography Animals/Wildlife (Blue), Photography Theme (Blue) - Victoria Hornsby; Photography Details & Macro (Red), Photography Marine/Aquatic (Blue), Photography Nature & Landscape (Blue) - Sydney Sacra. For more info & pictures go to: <http://agrilife.org/ftbend4h/>



Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist

The CPMN are a group of trained volunteers under both agencies—Texas Parks & Wildlife and AgriLife Extension who share our appreciation and disseminate knowledge of nature with the Fort Bend and surrounding communities through outreach, education and conservation/restoration projects. These distinguished volunteers are highly trained and very eager to help our community grow and prosper while helping to conserve 'green space' for our enjoyment as well as to nurture and preserve our wildlife for future generations of Texans. If you would like to help educate others and yourself, plus preserve and protect Texas' natural resources, then the Texas Master Naturalist program might be just right for you! 2015 Classes begin Saturday, August 22, and will run alternating weekends through November 14. Please note, there will be only 20 slots available this year. You may visit the CPMN website at <http://txmn.org/coastal/> or contact:



Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist
Ft. Bend and Waller Counties
1402 Band Rd. Suite 100
Rosenberg, TX 77471
Ph; 281-633-7042
Email: mmcdowell@ag.tamu.edu



Validated Issues for 2016 Program Year!

The Texas Community Futures Forum, was held in Fort Bend County on March 27. It was co-hosted by Fort Bend Leadership Advisory Board to assist Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Agents in identifying the most critical issues affecting local citizens in four programmatic areas. These identified issues will serve as the basis for our 2016 program planning process which begins in August. The issues are listed as follows.



Youth Development

1. Summer/After-School Programs in Arts & Sciences
2. Health Education for Youth (fitness & nutrition)
3. Partnerships Between Youth & Adults (focusing on leadership, diversity and heritage)

Community Development

1. Infrastructure: Mobility; Mass Transit; Traffic Flow
2. Water: Supply; Infrastructure; Usage
3. Population Growth: Affordable Housing; Water Conservation; Urban Sprawl, Farmland Fragmentation; Language/Cultural Diversity

Agriculture/Natural Resources & Horticulture

1. Water Conservation Education
2. Traditional Ag-related Programming
3. Food Preservation & Environmental Edu.
4. New Agribusiness Opportunities
5. Government Resources for Rural Communities

Family & Health

1. Support / Development of Mental Health Prgrms.
2. Educational Programs Addressing Diversity
3. Health/Wellness Education for All Citizens

Learn Go Eat Grow!



Coming this fall! The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas A&M University, in collaboration with the University of Texas School of Public Health have received funding to implement and evaluate the impact of two intervention programs designed to improve physical activity and eating behaviors of children at Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) elementary schools across Texas that include; (a) Junior Master Gardener Program (JMG), and (b) Walk Across Texas Program (WAT). Thirty-two (32) Title I schools in four counties in Texas with three to five third-grade classes will be invited to participate in the three-year project.

The Crop Weather Program (CWP) offers easy access to weather data, decision-making tools and calculators to aid crop managers in their production of cotton. Global economic pressures are changing the landscape of agriculture in the U. S. and signal the need for more informed decisions from crop managers. Crop yields & quality depend crucially on management decisions that consider the effects of the environment. Environmental conditions dictate what happens in the field; and, knowing how the environment is affecting crops offers-up an opportunity to make the best possible agricultural decisions. Utilizing an established network of weather stations along the Texas coastal plains, CWP has the data grower's need to make better decisions. For more information go to: <https://cwp.tamu.edu> (sign-on registration required).

Crop Weather Program!



Extension Disaster Education Network

AgriLife Extension's EDEN website (<http://texashelp.tamu.edu>) is loaded with information to keep our Fort Bend County citizens and all Texans informed, prepared and safe. This site is intended to accommodate Texas AgriLife Extension agents and all Texas citizens by sharing educational resources to reduce the impact of natural and man-made disasters for individuals, families and communities. The primary goals of Texas EDEN are to: 1) Provide credible and reliable information relating to disaster preparedness and recovery for individuals, families, and urban and/or rural communities; and 2) Reduce the impact associated with disaster by disseminating educational materials related to disaster mitigation, preparedness and recovery. EDEN's featured sections include Severe Weather Resources, Drought Resources, Disaster Preparedness Resources and Disaster Recovery Resources each with dozens of articles. For those of us who may prefer electronic formats check out the Preparedness & Recovery App (free at the App Store), After a Disaster eBook, Preparedness & Recovery eBook, and the Preparing for the Unexpected eGuide.



Backyard Basics!

Upcoming Topics:

8/15 - The Fall Food Garden
9/12 - Composting Made Easy
10/23 - Jams & Jellies
11/14 - Grilling
12/5 - Fruits & Nuts



Supporting healthy living through home-based food production, preparation, and preservation.

Backyard Basics will provide consumers, backyard gardeners, homemakers, educators and farmers "do-it-yourself" learning opportunities such as home canning, live plants and gardening essentials, rainwater harvesting, raising chickens for home egg production, and cooking basics.

- Start your own garden!
- Create family time & togetherness
- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables!
- Promote health & wellness
- Practice water conservation!
- Practice organic gardening
- Practice food safety!
- Save money on your food budget

Visit fortbend.agrilife.org for more information and to download the registration form.

Fort Bend County's First ever Theatre Camp!



July 27-31 Fort Bend County hosted its first ever Theatre Camp, and boy did the eleven youth ranging from 8 to 13 years of age have fun learning about theater and performance arts! The camp helped build self-esteem, confidence, discipline, poise, teamwork, collaboration and fellowship. The students practiced communication skills, speech, public speaking, and more! The week-long camp culminated with a skit for our neighbors—Fort Bend Seniors. Bravo, Bravo!



Nature Watch Kids' Kamp!

Thirty-five enthusiastic youth had a GREAT Nature Watch Day Camp on July 22 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. The kids were in tune with nature and had a blast making shark tooth necklaces, dissecting owl pellets to determine feeding habits, and making hanging gardens using recycled products. Youth were educated about endangered species, and created useful hummingbird feeders and designed tee shirt bags. Our older 4-H youth volunteers assisted the entire day with every event and measured the participants' knowledge gain by having everyone take part in a fun-filled quiz bowl that covered many of the elements learned. And, as a great community service project the Kampers made beautiful puffy paint cards for local nursing homes! Wow!



Quick Stats & Facts About Fort Bend

A Glimpse of Fort Bend County:

2013 Population: 643,408

College Educated: 40.40%

Median Household Income: \$81,528

Mean Household Income: \$108,994

Per Capita Income: \$37,152

For over 20 years, Fort Bend County has been in the top 20 counties in the U.S. for economic excellence and population growth - by design and not by accident. Excellent schools, affordable housing, and extensive recreational facilities have attracted families with impressive demographic profiles. This results in a local employment base that provides companies with a diverse mix of professional, technical, skilled, and unskilled labor with the highest educational levels in the region. To learn more go to <http://www.fortbendcountytx.gov/>.

Snap-Shot of Upcoming Events:

- Backyard Basics "Fall Food Garden" - Aug. 15
- 4-H Veterinary Science Project Interest Meeting - Aug. 17
- Cottage Food Handlers' Class - Aug. 21
- Dog 4-H Project Informational Meeting - Aug. 31

- Backyard Basics "Composting Made Easy" - Sept. 12
- Private Applicators' Training - Sept. 14
- Food Handlers' Class - Sept. 17
- Childcare Providers Education - Oct. 10
- Backyard Basics "Jams & Marmalades" - Oct. 23



Vincent J. Mannino,

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<http://fortbend.agrilife.org/>

www.facebook.com/FortBendCountyExtension

Our Vision

To be the premier 21st Century outreach & continuing education organization in Texas responding to the needs of the people.