Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting  
March 19, 2009

Welcome & Introductions
Chair, Mike Henry, Washington County called the meeting to order and introductions were made. Those present for the meeting were: Jerry Albers (Clinton), David Wheat, Edwards/Wabash), Sarah Sickmeyer (Franklin), Keith Krapf (Franklin-State), John Hodges (Hamilton/Wayne/White), Scott Martin (Jackson), Say Hayes (Jefferson), Ann Nowak (Madison/St.Clair), Harry Braddock (Marion), Elden Niemeyer (Monroe-State), Sally Cook (Perry), Angela Truluck (Randolph), Mike Henry (Washington), Pam Jacobs, (Monroe County Director/Interim Associate Regional Director), and Ryan Hobson (Interim Southern Regional Director).

Extension Partners Report
Elden Niemeyer reported that Pam Webber is the only paid employee and is working hard to get the state money for the FY09-10 fiscal year. They are also working to get the Expanded Food & Nutrition Program and the CUF at Risk program funded.

State Advisory Council Update
Topic discussions at the state meeting were: CAD availability on programs for flood recovery & disaster relief programs were discussed. Grant funds were used to make these programs. The membership fee and ways to cover the cost in the county. Discussed sharing programs with other counties and the county raising part of their own funds, i.e. sharing equipment, staff, etc. Individuals went to Washington, D.C. to discuss funding and Extension support. Other topics discussed were alternative energy, i.e. windmills, ethanol production and other ways to produce energy. Extension is asked to reduce budget for next year by 10%.

Unit Sharing Report was given be each member present. (See attachment)

Regional Director Updates – (See attachment.)

Other
The question was asked regarding a rumor about cutting the Dairy Program. Ryan said that whether the question concerned cuts to 4-H, CED, Family Life, Dairy or any other program area that he could not comment on it at this time. The Extension administrative team has had discussions about where layoffs might occur if there are budget reductions but that information is not public and we hope we do not have to implement it. Any staff reductions that occur are relative to funding received. Elden asked the group to show appreciation for all of Ryan & Pam Jacob’s effort during their interim time.

Next Meeting Date – September 24, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Sickmeyer, secretary
Sharing Report

**AJMUPU Unit** planning continues with the Celebrate Youth conference to be held on May 19th and 20th at Shawnee Community College. Celebrate Youth is for 7th graders from all over the 5 counties to come and attend workshops (over 20 to choose from) on a variety of topics. Last year we had over 700 students participate from the five counties. The university REACT Chemistry team is coming down for the second year in a row.

A Pre-Teen conference will be held in Metropolis on April 17th – an all night event for 5th and 6th graders. Participation is limited to the first 90 registrations. The program will be centered on the Six Pillars of Character Education, with activities and games to teach the curriculum. Debbie Simmons-Gray is working with AJMUPU staff to create a fun-filled program for the youth. We have about 15 junior youth staff participating to lead the activities during the program. The community workers are finalizing plans and gathering donations for food, snacks, drinks, etc. The city of Metropolis donated $1,000 to pay the registration for all the city and Massac County participants.

**Bond County** staff developed cost effective method to market extension programming opportunities. A simple, colored printed postcard was developed. The front is always formatted with a picture and pertinent information concerning the program/event; on the back, a calendar of upcoming programs is listed. These postcards are distributed in several locations---businesses, government offices, restaurants, etc. Although flyers were used previously, these cards can be more strategically placed for viewing, smaller to fit into pockets and purses and more attractive than full-page flyers. This idea has reached a larger percentage of the targeted audience which has resulted in increased program attendance.

**Clinton County** hosted the Health & Safety day for area 4th grade students. Over one hundred youth from five area schools attended the annual program. Youth participated in sessions on Lawnmower Safety, Firearm Safety, Making Good Snack Choices, Bullying, Internet Safety and The Sugar & Salt Nutrition Quiz. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to visit our local community college for the four hour program and many of them stayed to enjoy their lunch in the college cafeteria. In conversation with the youth, all were eager to share information from their favorite session and said they very much enjoyed the event.

**Edwards-Wabash Unit** has been working on the issues of Indoor Air Quality. The unit had a state poster contest winner in the radon poster contest. The winner won two $100 savings bonds with her poster and the poster was sent on to the National contest. This is the second year we have had a state winner with the poster being sent to the National contest.

**Franklin County** - The 6th Annual Family Issues Update was again successful. Dining with Diabetes classes are being held during March. Planning for Parenthood and Head Start Cooking Classes have increasing participation every month. Funding was received from the National Quilt Association to preserve heritage skills like quilting and sewing. As a result sewing workshops for youth and adults are being held. We have a group making one quilt block each month for a year, and they will have a finished quilt by the end of the program. The CYFAR project is continuing with over 100 new mothers enrolled. Hundreds of FNP programs have been presented. Heart Smart and Adolescent Health programs are delivered weekly.

**Hamilton/Wayne/White Unit** in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of the two-day Fairfield Fun Fest U of I Extension was asked to provide an educational component that would involve Wayne County Students. As a result the Tech Fest was developed. Hands-on workshops offered each day to approximately 220 5th grade students included: Robotics, Digital Photography, GPS/GIS, Aerospace, and Computer Game Design. The workshops were led by local volunteers and high school students. The
culmination of the two-day event was a community-wide open house that showcased the activities that the students participated in during Tech Fest. Tech Fest was deemed a huge success. As a result of the popularity of the robotics session, Wayne County has received monetary donations that allowed the 4-H Community Worker to purchase three robotics kits that are currently being used with 4-H clubs and school classrooms.

**Jackson County** was the largest recipient of funds from donations received from J.C. Penny in the United States. At present we have received a donation of 4207 dollars. A saddle club donation is helping support some upcoming riding clinics. Jackson County has been cooperating with other counties to offer multi-county programs. Our family life educator and county director did teach sessions at the recent Intergenerational Conference at John A. Logan. The family life educator worked with other agencies to implement an area-wide Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Coalition. The youth prevention educator is offering Catch (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) Training to area schools which has to date resulted in over 1400 dollars of cost recovery funds.

**Jefferson County** Many Ag. Programs are held during the winter months in Mount Vernon. The staff assisted with the Corn and Soybean Classics, Private Pesticide Safety Training and Testing, Tree Fruit School, Vegetable and Fruit School, and Grain Fumigation Training and Testing. Youth Development is working with after-school programming, i.e. sixteen youth participated in Baby Sitter training; youth received training in Japanese Culture, and Extension helped with the organization of Black History program at J.L Buford School about 200 youth and parents attended. Family Nutrition is working on program that encourages families to share mealtime together. Jefferson County continues to promote Breast Cancer Awareness programs in the community and continues to provide Partners in Parenting programs for teen parents.

**Madison-St.Clay Unit** is pleased to announce that Franklin Elementary School, Belleville; Lewis and Clark Elementary, Wood River; and Parkside Primary School, Bethalto have been selected as 2009 Illinois State Schools of Character. Illinois State School of Character awards recognize schools or districts that demonstrate an outstanding character education initiative that yields positive results in student behavior, school climate and academic performance. These three Illinois State School of Character winners exemplify the Eleven Principles of Effective Character Development and have been forwarded to the National Schools of Character competition sponsored by Character Education Partnership.

**Marion and Clinton County** collaborated and obtained a $2,500 grant from the Centralia Foundation. Those grant funds were used to purchase 10 Robotics kits ($250.00 each). This program is part of the Youth Development STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programming initiative. Both offices have utilized the kits in Centralia area schools during the current school year reaching junior high students.

**Monroe County** – Three Monroe County individuals completed the new Master Naturalist training program and are actively involved in local environmental projects. These individuals are also establishing new partnerships, which will help build the program. An Advisory Committee of U of I Extension staff and environmental agency staff from the counties: Bond, Clinton, Madison, St. Clair, Monroe & Randolph, was established to develop and conduct the first Master Naturalist training in this part of the state.

**Perry County** has seen an increase of its members showing livestock. This year 33 swine, sheep and goats were weighed in as well as 10 steers. Rhonda has also recently completed a Visual Arts Workshop with approximately 15 youth attending. They met 6 times making various projects including string art,
nature, and clay. A sewing workshop has also been being held. They are making a quilt that Perry County 4-H Federation will be raffling off as a fundraiser.

**Randolph County** Extension Director was trained this winter in the Engaging Generations curriculum and presented a short program to the Steeleville Sorority this month. The goal of the program is to help the participants gain the tools to be able to better communicate in the workplace, with customers and clients, in the classroom and within a community. This is an educational and fun program of any group. In addition, she is serving on the 4-H Shooting Sports Task Force for U of I Extension. To date the Task Force has collected survey information from 13 states. To date 2 States in the Nation do not have 4-H shooting sports...Illinois being one of them. A power point presentation has been developed and it’s the desire of the Task Force to present the information collected to the Administrative Team on campus in April.

**Saline/Gallatin/Pope/Hardin Unit** Master Gardeners will be out in full force to participate in the Annual Stewardship Week at the Dixon Springs Ag Center. The program is a week long experience for school kids from all over Southern Illinois to experience resource conservation first hand. A new program this year will a hands on experience for the kids of learning about raised bed square foot gardening for persons with limited yard space for a garden. The kids will be able to use live plants and learn more about planting vegetables. The Master Gardeners taking part from Saline, Gallatin, Pope, and Hardin County are George Turner, Luise Pittman, Jim Fowler, Debbie McVey, Pauline Johnston, and Rosalie Tison.

**Washington County** is gearing up this weekend for their annual Teen Conference “Simply the Best”. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the program. The planning committee has chosen the theme of Together Through Time for this year’s event. The event is held for students of Washington County in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades. High School Youth also have the opportunity to serve as “teen leaders” as mentors for the grade school children. Students will have the opportunity to attend workshops throughout the day. The topics to be presented are: Together Through Healthy Choices, Together Through Group Interests, Together Through Diversity and Together Through Communicating Healthy “No’s”. The day will also feature the Southern Illinois – Carbondale Women’s Basketball Coach, Dana Eikenberg as a key note speaker. Participants will also compete in Team Challenge Activities throughout the day. The event concludes with a dance for all participants. This year currently we have 280 grade school youth and 150 high school teen leaders.

**Williamson County** has worked jointly with surrounding counties to offer programming in pruning, hunting leases, grazing management and the upcoming southern Illinois equine seminar. Williamson and Jackson counties worked jointly to publish an equine newsletter which was mailed out to over 200 horse owners. Media efforts in the county are flourishing and county web contacts continue to increase. Megan Adams is now full-time FSNP working with schools and other agencies within the county. Our 4-H Community worker is presently working with Junior High students teaching them about steroid abuse. The full office staff is now practicing recycling in the county office. The challenge for Williamson County is cost recovery in tough economic times.
Southern Regional Advisory Council

Regional Director Update

March 2009

The following items are compiled from the administrative team notes and minutes.

**Budget**

President White will likely be implementing differential rescissions or budget reductions. The most protected will be undergraduate education and instructional units. Instructional units are protected because they bring in tuition dollars. Also, research positions will be protected since they bring in grant dollars.

Minimal salary increases are expected.

Here are the IDOA numbers:

1. CBM: $12,160,000. Same as FY09. Asked for $14,500,000.
2. 4-H Youth Development: $1,713,900. Down from an appropriated level of $1,870,000 for FY09. Asked for $1,916,000.
3. Cook County Extension: $5,000,000. Down from an appropriated level of $5,360,000 for FY09. Asked for $5,520,800.

Remember that these are not final numbers. They represent the starting point for deliberations among the Governor, House and Senate.

**Hiring**

Campus administration is short of saying we are under a hiring freeze but the hoops we have to jump through are dramatic. The Southern Regional Director and Director of State 4-H Office positions have been approved by the Provost’s office. The search process has continued in both cases and interviews have been conducted. We still have not been able to move forward with county director positions in Jackson and Marion so they were closed. Martha Speir in Edwards-Wabash announced her retirement effective March 31. Ron Waldrop, county director in Richland-Lawrence, will serve as interim. There are also several program coordinator positions in the region that we haven’t been able to move forward on. We are moving forward with a secretarial position in Marion and extra-help (non-permanent) positions across the region to help with FNP and summer youth programs. We also filled a CED unit educator position in Monroe but had to use visiting status. The offer was already made when the hiring process changed.
CED educator resigned and FBMM educator retired at Mt. Vernon Center. Network Administrator at Carbondale Center has also resigned to take another position.

**County Board Match**

The first quarter payment for County Board Match (CBM) has been received. We have also received 2/3’s of the second quarter payment.

**Equipment Purchases**

Extension Administration is requesting a hold at this time on equipment orders of new computers, large printers/copiers and furniture. Only critical need purchases are allowed at this time. If equipment is still functioning and meeting the day-to-day needs, offices need to continue using it. Computer servers are already in and will be installed as planned.

With the uncertainty with state revenues, it is prudent to be very conservative with expenditures. We hope this temporary moratorium on buying will just be a few months and we will be able to resume our annual computer rotation plan and other purchases as needed when possible. This request is applicable to all purchases regardless of fund source.

**Telenet System**

Some costs will be charged in the future, mostly to outside groups. There were 1.3 million minutes used last year. Some changes are

- It is self scheduled now.
- You have to enter the content instead of just putting your name.
- There will be a no show fee of $25.
- Avoid overbooking. There will be a $25 charge if over 50% of the lines are unused.

**Legislative Connection**

Dr. Richard Clark, Assistant Dean and Director of State 4-H Office, sought input on whether or not to have the Legislative Connection from staff and Extension administration. He cited the costs, kids being able to attend, and difficulties in kids arranging meetings with their legislators in the past. He said past evaluations show that it is very educational for the youth. Discussion ensued about youth meeting with legislators in their districts while they are not in session. Dr. Clark said that they will brainstorm on how to make that happen in place of Legislative Connection.

**Core Programming Priorities**

Dr. Dennis Campion has discussed possible scenarios with the University budget as it may potentially impact Extension. He felt administration needed to consider what is needed for future core programming. What should Extension’s programming portfolio look like and what are the strategies for getting there. To just operate by however the vacancies occur within the organization is not an acceptable strategy.
A discussion was held with the group consensus on the top five criteria Extension programming should address: high societal issues; a strategic advantage for delivery by Extension; ties to research/expertise; ability to engage cross campus connections with all UI campuses; and potential to garner external funding. Other considerations would include value to old/new stakeholders; creating more dialogue with constituents and other experts; and consideration of local opportunities and demand.

Program Planning

“Together We Can…Tell Us How” Program Planning Process Initiation

Purpose:

The State Program Planning Committee is launching a process to gather input from Illinois residents on important issues that can be addressed through education. This input will be used to develop state and county/unit plans of work that reflect priority educational needs and effective delivery methods to achieve targeted impact on individuals and communities.

Process:

An online survey using SurveyMonkey was opened to the public in March to collect input on their educational needs. We currently have over 2700 in English and 84 on the Spanish site s of March 13. Based on requests, the survey will be extended through April 17 which will allow promotion through many Extension newsletters that often go out just before the beginning of a new month.

The survey focuses on 10 broad issue areas. The survey is targeted to the public at large and is purposely organized around public issues—not our traditional four core program areas. Paper copies can be duplicated from an original that will be provided to offices at the local level and distributed to those who do not have web access or who call and ask for one.

Participation:

The target audience is a representative cross-section of the public including those not traditionally considered Extension users. The goal is to collect a minimum of 100 responses per county, with encouragement to collect a larger number of responses in more populated counties that may be needed to reflect the broader and more numerous demographics of that county.

4-H Program Fee

The current economic conditions threaten our ability to provide high quality, sustained programs for youth. Federal funding for Extension and 4-H has not increased for many years. With inflation costs, the purchasing power of these funds has continued to decline. State funding for Extension has also declined and current state economic conditions remain challenging at best. Local funding with state matching funds (County Board Match) has been strong and historically has resulted in a good flow of revenue. However, recent cuts in the level of County Board Match from the state are now threatening the financial stability of Extension and 4-H programs.
After careful consideration, 4-H program staff has determined that to preserve high quality programs, a 4-H Program Fee is necessary. With this policy, Illinois is joining similar efforts of other states who have found it necessary to generate additional revenues to continue providing high quality programs, thus breaking from a long tradition of not charging for 4-H programs.

**4-H Program Fee Details:**

Beginning with enrollment of 4-H members in September 2009, a $20/year 4-H Program Fee will be applied to members who are part of a sustained 4-H experience including delivery modes such as community clubs, special interest groups meeting on a regular basis, Cloverbud groups, and after-school programs that meet regularly. Local Extension Councils will specify details as to the final amount and collection of this fee. Most of the fee will stay locally and be used by the local program to help 4-H support costs. Six dollars will be forwarded to the State 4-H Program to provide educational, technical and logistical support to maintain a high quality program at the local, center, regional, and state levels for youth and volunteer leaders. No individual will be denied participation in 4-H due to the inability to pay. Extension offices may be contacted for scholarship information or other payment assistance. Clubs and groups may choose to do fundraising or collect donations to offset 4-H Program Fees for their members.

WC Region analysis from discussions with county directors.

**4-H Fee**
- 5 units currently plan to charge the entire $20 to 4-H’ers
- 5 units plan to have a foundation pay the entire fee
- 4 units are leaving fee generation and payment up to the clubs
- 1 unit wants to cover the entire fee, but is unsure yet how
- 3 units have no plans to date

**Scholarships – offering assistance for those unable to pay a program fee**

- 1 paid by donations
- Most are on ask only basis, no verification required
- 7 supported by Foundation or Federation
- 7 not sure
- 1 provides rebates on application basis
- 1 offered through clubs
- 2 use prorated scale
- 1 required proof using reduced lunch status or LINK card