Southern Regional Advisory Council Meeting  
9/25/08 Minutes

The dinner meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Interim Regional Director, Ryan Hobson.

Those in attendance were: Brenda Yurs (Bond), Dave Raterman (Clinton), David Wheat (Edwards/Wabash), Sarah Sickmeyer (Franklin), Keith Krapft (Franklin-State), Charles Nolan (H/W/W), Robert Koehn (Jackson), Anne Nowak (Mad-St.Clair), Harry Braddock (Marion), Carole Shaffer (Marion-State), Elden Niemeyer (Monroe-State), Mike Swayne (Perry), Shirley McCormick (Randolph), Mike Henry (Washington), Pam Jacobs (Interim Assoc. Regional Director) and Ryan Hobson (Interim Regional Director).

Those counties not represented were: AJMPU, Jefferson, Saline/Gallatin/Pope/Hardin and Williamson.

Welcome and introductions were made by Ryan Hobson

**Election of officers**

- Chair – Mike Henry (Washington Co)
- Vice Chair – Carole Shaffer (Marion Co – State)
- Secretary – Sarah Sickmeyer (Franklin Co)

Ryan briefly discussed the **Roles for RAC members** as listed below.

- Exchanging information and discussing issues of regional concerns.
- Identifying, promoting and supporting multi-county planning and programming as appropriate.
- Fostering a partnership between University of Illinois Extension, University of Illinois Extension (East Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southern or West Central) Regional Advisory Council and Extension Councils.
- Supporting the policies and procedures of University of Illinois Extension.
- Assisting with enhancing local, state and federal funding.

**Updates by Ryan**

*Southern Regional Director Search*

Closing deadline for the Southern Regional Director position is November 7, 2008. Ryan is also serving as the search committee chair. Other committee members are:

- Pam Jacobs, County Director, Monroe Unit
- Linda Craw-Jackson, Extension Educator, EFNEP, EFNEP Training Center, E. St. Louis
- Jeri Marxman, CED State Specialist and Interim CED Program Leader
- Dennis Epplin, Extension Educator, Crop Systems, Mt. Vernon
- John Pike, Extension Educator, CED, Carbondale
- Christine Hill, Unit Educator, 4-H Youth Development
- Joy Richey, County Director, Franklin County

Ryan’ goal for the process is as follows.

1. Review credentials mid-November (17 or 18) and pass a list of preferred candidates (up to five unranked) to Dr. Campion for interview selection.
2. Interviews anytime mid-December to mid-January.
3. Search committee meeting week after interviews completed.
4. Forward candidate summaries to Dr. Campion week following search committee summary of candidates meeting (hopefully no later than late January).

Ryan has brought aboard 2 50% FTEs as associate regional directors to assist in the region. They are Pam Jacobs and Carol Schlitt, Extension Educator, Nutrition and Wellness, Edwardsville Center. These are temporary positions to assist in regional matters and concerns. The future of the associate regional director position is a discussion for the new regional director and Dr. Campion to have.

Open Positions
CED Unit Educator, Monroe Unit, closes October 3
4-H Youth Development, AJMPU Unit, closes October 17
Regional Director, closes November 7
County Director, Marion Unit, yet to be advertised. Discussions underway on interim.
County Director, Jackson Unit, on hold until funding assessment is completed
4-H Youth Development, Edwards/Wabash Unit, yet to be advertised
4-H Youth Development, Hamilton/wayne/White, yet to be advertised

4-H Youth Development Cost Recovery, and Program Fee
The 4-H Youth Development Cost Recovery Task Force made the following recommendations:

Recommend there be a 4-H program fee of $20. School programming would not be part of this plan. Unit decision as to additional audiences the participant fee would be implemented-- similar to how project books are paid for is Unit decision. Of the $20, 70% ($14) stays locally and 30% ($6) goes to the state 4-H office.

In regards to the $20 program fee, the primary focus is on support for local 4-H program. If out of county, the 4-H fee is $20 regardless if neighboring unit has sponsorship of fee. EFNEP and FNP 4-H members would not assessed $20 fee.

If a donor provides money to help offset 4-H program fee, this donation would not meet the criteria for County Board Match. There was consensus that none of the program fee would be eligible for CBM regardless of how fee is supported by clubs, groups, agencies, etc. since it is targeted money. Also, it is important that it is communicated to 4-H families that the $20 fee was paid by other means.

4-H Fee proposal will be implemented in September 2009.

Fiscal Update
The Southern Region had a $59,078 GRF reduction in FY09 which started July 1, 2008. Regional Directors will be meeting with Extension central administration in March 2009 to outline how they will deal with FY10 general revenue fund (GRF) reductions. FY10 for GRF reductions will start July 1, 2009. We are currently projecting a 3.25% GRF reduction which translates to $45,622 ($61,133 with benefits) in the Southern Region.

In April/May I met with West Central county directors (same happened in Southern Region) regarding a 0% and 85% CBM budget scenario. Each prepared the budgets for their unit. Zero percent was not a good scenario, there would have been massive mergers. It did show the need
to diversify revenue streams at the unit level also. Thank you to all of you who contacted your legislators. It was the volunteers who made the difference.

Questions had been raised about possibility of field office hours being 4 days a week; if only 4 days it would be impossible to get 37.5 hours because can not work more than 7.5; negotiated with unions based on needs of job; not a practice Extension will support at this point

**Program Planning Process**
The new proposed process for program planning is a statewide on-line survey – limited to around 30 questions or appropriate length to be answered by Illinois residents.

**Unit Budgets/Summaries**
Many Units have used carryover in their FY09 budgets. Regional Directors need to take good look at unit budgets. We cannot continue as usual but need to develop strategy with the Unit to resolve financial difficulties. Message from campus is that Units cannot continue a history of deficit budgets and will need to explore combining; Units need to project their unit life expectancy.

**Other items:**
MG training: a state committee is looking at distance education model for next year’s training; perhaps 3 sessions face to face; breaking it up to perhaps 3 hr training blocks; also discussing issues of program money where does it get allocated.

Below are some of Dr. Campion’s remarks regarding Extension in FYI 08-23. He provided information on the budget situation and what is the vision. Some excerpts are below:

Two common questions recently have been where has the money gone and what is the vision.

First, where has the money gone? In drawing information from the Intranet site, Financial Initiatives, Extension had budget reductions totaling $2.38 million during the past eight years (FY03-FY08). These dollars are no longer available to Extension. The reduction for the College during this same timeframe was over $11 million. On a pro rata basis, Dean Easter has treated all departments and Extension on a pro rata basis. Thus, each has reduced its budget the same percentage.

If we look at the horizon over the next five years, we will likely experience five more years of the same.

Over the last 35 years the amount of Federal Smith-Lever has remained nearly constant, but its purchase power has decreased nearly linearly and today represents about half its purchase power. This means that Extension loses about $122,000 in purchase power annually, or nearly $1 million over the FY03-FY08 period.

The good news is that, overall, County and County Board Match has grown during this period (18% and 27%, respectively) as have grants (155% increase during period of FY03-FY07, FY07 is latest year for which data are available). The decrease in CBM in FY09, however, puts in question the stability and growth experienced in the FY03-FY08 timeframe.
What is the vision? Our mission is still to put research-based knowledge to work. We still strive to be the "go to" source when communities (broadly defined) have difficult issues to solve. The vulnerability of State funds and the loss of purchase power of federal Smith-Lever funds must be off set by some subset of programs that will generate new and different revenue streams.

There are to diversify our programming to meet the continuing need to maintain and grow human capacity. In some respects, we have more flexibility than do the traditional faculty/departments to respond to the budget environment we are in today. For example, Illinois' tuition is now second highest in the Big Ten; there is little wiggle room left. Extensions' tuition, in terms of fees, is nominal by comparison meaning there is more wiggle room at this time. And, we are becoming far more astute at finding funding for Extension-outreach related programs. The days when Center Educators could operate nearly exclusively from appropriated funds are past and should not be a surprise to us. The vulnerability of the Center Educator positions has been a topic of discussion for several years.

If we do nothing regarding development of some set of programs that have high-end appeal, the vision for Extension is very clear. Centers continue to reduce in human capacity and so does the capacity of the administrative structure to meet core administrative expectations. This fiscal year Regional staff and team members will literally see the impact of budget reductions for FY09 and FY10. Recognizing the challenge is real and that it will require a new mindset is fundamental to moving us forward, and forward as a team.

While it will be uncomfortable to do so, there is not a one size fits all "solution" to the challenge ahead of us. Together, however, with the discussions and communications that are now being held in the Regions, and between and among teams, the opportunity for input and for meaningful solutions is before us.

Extension Partners
Elden Niemeyer provided information about the group, i.e. what they do to keep funding through the State. It’s all about Volunteers and Extension Awareness! He encouraged everyone to join.

Sharing Report

AJMPU Unit
Many programs have been successfully completed since our last report. Celebrate Youth and our Pre-Teen Conference has both been selected as Regional Award winners for the mid-west and was featured in poster sessions at the Galaxy III conference in Indianapolis. I, Too Am America was show cased at the same conference in a workshop. Our disaster preparedness efforts have been rewarded again this year with another grant from USDA CSREES in the amount of $38,500. We will be cataloging web resources, hosting workshops in the six states, and concluding with another conference in Metropolis, tentatively scheduled for July 6th and 7th 2009.

Bond County
In response to the increasing cost of food and other consumer goods, Bond County developed a series of three sessions this summer to address these issues. They were entitled and marketed under “Stretching Your Family Dollar” with a specific emphasis at each session. Extension educators presented and lead hands-on workshops on preservation, canning and fall gardening.
Preservation methods, hands-on canning techniques, establishing and maintaining a fall garden and purchasing good quality equipment was discussed.

**Clinton County**
As a part of our Youth Development program this fall Clinton and Marion Counties have worked together to secure a grant for robotics education. This program fits well into the 4-H SET (Science, Engineering and Technology) initiative. We will be working primarily in the Centralia city schools for the 2008-09 school year, teaching a 2 part program in all 6th, 7th and 8th grade classes. The program will include a session on building a robot with the Lego Mindstorm robotics kit and then learning to program it to perform simple commands through the software program developed to go with the curriculum. In addition, we are offering a robotics workshop for 4-H members in Clinton County in October as a first time trial to see what questions the youth have and help us prepare for the fall school programs. Plans are to offer additional workshops in the future at both the county level and with individual 4-H clubs. The robotics kits will offer lots of new opportunities for youth to explore computer use as well, through the robotics program.

**Monroe County**
Science, Engineering & Technology, one of the three National 4-H Youth Development Initiatives is a major focus of youth development programming in Monroe County. As an active participant and grant recipient of Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), Susan Hayden, Extension Educator, has provided leadership in teaching youth and adults how to use new technology for educational enhancement in the classroom and for group projects. Susan and two 4-H teens participated in the ESRI International Education User Conference representing Illinois 4-H as members of the National 4-H GIS Leadership Team. In addition, a GIS/GPS camp was held this summer for local youth. Participants went geocaching, assembled and placed a geocache, and mapped a variety of community establishments. New 4-H Youth Development technology projects are in the works to reach new audiences.

**Franklin County**
Franklin is one of three counties in the Southern Region that has received a grant for working with Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR). Staff members are providing parenting education to help build more stable families. Over 100 new moms are currently enrolled in the program. CYFAR and FNP (Family Nutrition Program) staff are working together with several local agencies to host a monthly class on Preparing for Motherhood. It has been very well received, and with all the cooperation we have the attendance is usually 20-25 teen moms—an extremely hard audience to reach!

**Madison-St. Clair Unit**
Three 4-H families joined families from all over the United States in hosting students from Japan. Illinois has been successfully exchanging students with Japan for over thirty years. International experiences are an added opportunity through the 4-H program. The students stayed with the families for three weeks learning about life in the states.

The ExCEL afterschool program has continued to grow over the past four years. This past year the students were introduced to martial arts and self-esteem programs, as well as the life skills 4-H programming. The students continue to participate in club and project activities and service learning projects. The Madison School District has incorporated a self-guided computer based
math and reading tutorial call SuccessMakers. We have observed gains in students’ academic abilities. Consistent student attendance has increased over previous years.

**Jefferson County**

Jefferson County received $16,000.00 grant award from Illinois Department of Public Health, Ticket for the Cure Community Breast Cancer Education. This is Jefferson County’s 3rd grant award from IDPH for Breast Cancer Education. Jefferson County also received funding from United Way for 4-H Youth Development.

Planning for the Columbus Day weekend Discover Chicago trip is progressing well. We presently have 101 youth and adults signed-up for the trip. This event is coordinated by Dan Spangle, 4-H Youth Development Community Worker. Discover Chicago is a Southern Regional event.

**Marion County**

Worked with Clinton County Extension office to obtain a grant for $2840 from Centralia Foundation Community Endowment Fund to purchase 10 robotics kits and software to use with all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders in Centralia

The Master Gardener program completed projects including: landscaping the front of the Extension building, holding a plant sale that made over $500, and are beginning to work with the Odin Health Care Center on a state grant for developing an accessible therapeutic garden

**Perry County**

Perry County 4-H began the new year with a Blast Off with 4-H picnic. This time is used to bring in new members and to re-enroll past members. Over 100 4-H members and their families attended this event. This is the second year for it and it has proven itself as a success.

With school now being in session, our FNP Programs and School Programming is in full swing. Between the two programs, we are in every classroom of every school and pre-school in the county. The teachers and administration find these programs to be a beneficial program supplement to their programs. We have received a lot of positive feedback from teachers on the programs.

**Washington County**

Washington County is back in the full swing of school programming for youth enrichment classes this fall. The various programs that are offered to area schools are Polite is Right, Health Curriculum, Foods and Nutrition and Get Up and Move. The response from the area schools has been overwhelming and is keeping the Community Workers very busy.

Washington County is also gearing up for the upcoming Discover Chicago Trip which will be held October 11 – 13. Washington County is fortunate to have 18 youth and adult chaperones attending the trip this year. While in Chicago the participants will have the opportunity to visit the Shedd Aquarium, the John Hancock Building, dine on a hearty four course meal while cheering brave knights as they demonstrate their skills at Medieval Times, visit the Museum of Science and Industry and the Field Museum.

**Edwards-Wabash Unit**
Master Gardeners continue to facilitate the *Seasons Horticulture Series*. They are also helping with the *Farmers’ Markets* in both counties. The unit has a $4000 grant from the Illinois Department of Agriculture for advertising the markets.

A new school program is being done during the regular Physical Education class period. The program combines physical activity with nutrition education. The program uses the *Healthy Moves for Healthy children Series* as well as some ideas from the *Get Up and Move series*. *Eat a Rainbow* materials are being adapted to the younger classes to help them recognize color to enhance the healthfulness of their diets. The program meets once a month and reaches 360 children each time.

**Hamilton-Wayne-White Unit**

A 2-day Technology Conference was held for all 5th grade students in Wayne County. The conference was held at a local church and students signed up to participate in two workshops. The workshops offered during the 2-day period were Digital Photography, Robotics, GPS, Computer Game Design, and Aerospace. Students participated in a morning session and afternoon session and were provided lunch. There were over 30 volunteers who assisted with various aspects of the conference. Five schools sent approximately 200 students. Comments during and after the conference were extremely positive from teachers, students and volunteers. Sponsors were secured for the program.

**Jackson County**

Jackson County continues to get support for school health education with a cooperative agreement with the Jackson County Health Department. This grant pays nearly 25% of the salary for the youth prevention educator.

This is the second year for a CYFAR grant which pays 10% of the family life educator salary. This program educates new mothers on the parenting of infants and children.

For the fourth year in a row, Jackson County has had a 4-H volunteer inducted into the 4-H Hall of Fame. A reception is being held tonight for this year’s recipient, Mary Huseman, a 27-year volunteer. The four volunteers inducted into the 4-H Hall of Fame have a total of 133 volunteer years to Jackson County 4-H.

**Randolph County Extension**

Presented 4 sessions to the IMPACK (Interested, Motivated People Assisting Community Kids) camp this summer. More than 100 campers participated in the summer camp.

The County Director recently was the guest speaker at the Governor Rod Blagojevich’s Summer Youth Works Program Closeout Reception in Sparta. This past summer 50 Randolph County youth participated in the youth works program, including one at the Extension office.

**Williamson County**

Williamson County Extension held a Horse Judging contest. We had 86 youth from the surrounding counties to attend the meeting. The staff set 8 goals last year in October. We have exceeded 6 in of those goals and met the requirements on 2 of the goals. Our website usage has gone up 77% over this time last year. Our contacts and walk in have increased by 70%. Great news the Williamson County Commissioners have agreed to increase the County Board money by $10,000.00 for the 2009 /2010 budget.
Saline/Gallatin/Pope-Hardin Unit
Robotics is a part of the SET or Science, Engineering, & Technology program, one of our 4-H Mission Mandates. In Robotics I, members can design a robot, program it to run a maze or accomplish different tasks, or design a challenge course for the robot. In Robotics II, a member can design and program a robot to accomplish tasks with gripper attachment, design and program a robot using rotational sensors, different gears, or a pulley system, or analyze and interpret data to solve robotic engineering problems.

Next meeting date is scheduled for March 19, 2009.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Sarah Sickmeyer, secretary