

EXTENOVATIONS

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What's ahead for Project Support?

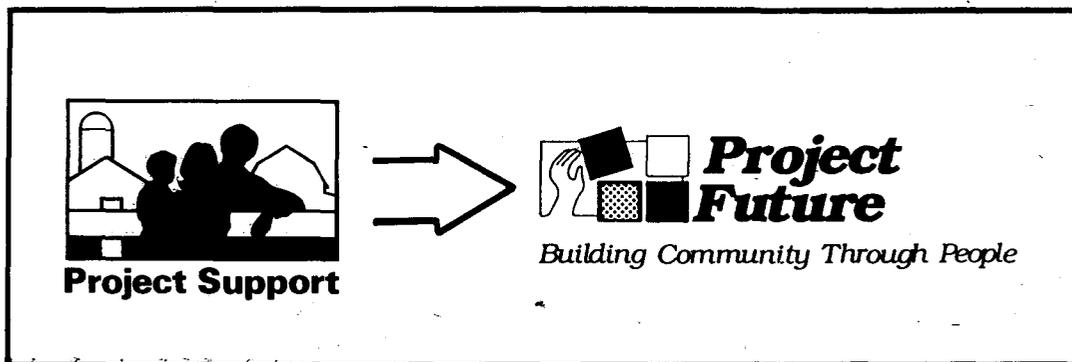
A few years ago Project Support was getting headlines. It was extension's top priority program—designed to help distressed farm families deal with the trauma of financial problems.

Project Support got coverage in the news media and attracted the attention and support of legislators, bankers, and rural leaders. Now, a new Minnesota Extension Service program, Project Future, will pick up where Project Support left off. Project Future evolved from Project Support—from working with families to working with community leaders to help revitalize Minnesota's rural areas.

Some parts of Project Support will be integrated into other program areas—agriculture, home economics, 4-H youth development, community natural resources development—and become on-going programs.

What did Project Support accomplish? It started in fall, 1984. By the end of the first year, extension staff had assisted 12,000 farm families with farm management information and helped 142,000 people with farm business, stress management, and family resource problems.

"In the first year, the primary objective was to respond to the educational needs of farm families with economic problems," says Kathy Mangum, Project Support coordinator. In year two, the program had two components: continued one-to-one consultations on financial and family distress and the FINPACK financial analysis; and longer term educational



programs in family and farm resource management, community economic development, and teens in distress.

To achieve the second objective, 13 county extension agents were selected for area agent assignments. In addition, five St. Paul campus faculty worked to develop new educational materials and programs. They were Mangum; Jean Bauer, specialist in family resource management; John Sem, program leader for community economic development; Duane Schrader, district program leader, agriculture; and Joyce Walker, 4-H and youth development specialist.

By June, 1987, the 13 area Project Support agents had worked with over 9,000 clientele and trained over 1,100 professionals and community leaders to be more effective in their rural community work.

Tourism programs involved financial management and marketing skills for owners and

managers of resorts and other travel and tourism related businesses. Community organizations also learned organizational, management, and marketing skills to strengthen the tourism industry in their community. Barbara Koth was the Project Support area agent who worked on tourism development.

Small business programs focused on family-based business and business management. Topics included how to start a small business, pricing and management principles, customer relations, advertising, marketing, rural enterprise alternatives, and the impact of managing a small business on the family.

Community and economic development programs had agents teaching citizens how to conduct a community analysis, goal setting, problem identification, and how to develop programs to improve their communities. Small business and economic development agents were Nancy

Charlson, John Eix, Catherine Huebner, and Dorothy Rosemeier.

Agents who worked in farm business management taught farm families skills and strategies to manage production and develop farm and family goals. Farm finances, inputs and outputs, labor time, and dealing with stress were also part of the program. Agents were John Cunningham, Gary Hachfeld, Ken Olson, Blake Peterson, and James Robehl.

Project Support also involved the Financial Management Extension Consultant Program—a beginning level program that helps economically disadvantaged families manage their money and other resources to improve living standards. Area agents trained 193 volunteer consultants to teach financial management to farm families. The area agents also trained 289 family service professionals in financial management. Agents were Marian Anderson, Martha Harder and Joan Sprain.

The 4-H Teens in Distress program has reached thousands of people nationally. A new part of the program, Tackling Tough Stuff, will teach young people skills to better manage stress and depression.

The second year also brought farm mediation—first a pilot program, then the statewide Farm Credit Mediation program mandated by state law. From March of 1986 through June, 1987, 4,425 farmers and over 9,000 creditors participated in mediation. Extension trained 700 volunteers to mediate loan default conflicts. And, extension agents did 7,594 FINPACK analyses.

"The mediation program was judged successful in three ways," says Mangum. Due to mediation, farmers are more prepared for current and future decisions about staying in or leaving farming. Communication between farmers and lenders improved due to mediation. And mediation fostered peaceful change in communities. Frustration and tension were reduced because mediation provides a constructive process for resolving farm indebtedness.

"Minnesota's farm mediation law and program have been used by 18 other states in drafting their own legislation," Mangum says. "Australia and New Zealand have modeled their legislation after Minnesota's." The Rural Bank of New Zealand began a Minnesota model mediation program with their farm borrowers. ■

—Jack Sperbeck

Salute to Extension draws crowds, high praise

More than 200 extension agents, support staff, volunteers, county commissioners and others interested in the organization gathered in Redwood Falls in September for a "Salute to Extension" sponsored by U.S. Representative Vin Weber to honor the Minnesota Extension Service.

"The extension service has done a remarkable job during a time of real crisis in rural America," Weber told the group. "In the face

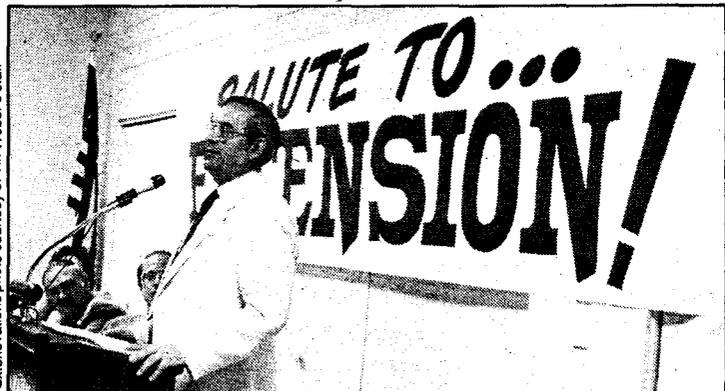
of these challenges, it has responded with a range of traditional programs and new initiatives."

Pat Borich spoke at the program and told of the commitment he saw daily within the extension service. "Our staff and volunteers have always shown a tremendous amount of dedication," he said. "But this is the first time in 29 years that I have seen a salute to extension. I think it's long overdue."

A flag that flew over the U.S. Capitol was given to the chairman of each county extension advisory committee. Of the 30 counties of the second congressional district that were invited, representatives from 26 attended.

Weber said he decided to sponsor the tribute during hearings this year before the agriculture appropriations subcommittee. "The Administration testified this year and again asked for cuts in the extension service. I told them it was the worst place possible to cut. With all that extension has accomplished, I felt we needed an event like this to highlight its importance." He added, "I'll be supporting full funding for the extension service. I'm happy to say that we have strong support for it on the subcommittee."

The salute was sponsored by a number of agribusinesses in south central and southwestern Minnesota including Land 'O Lakes, Cenex, Schwan's Sales Enterprises, Southern Minnesota Sugar Co-op, American Crystal Sugar, and Vigortone Ag Products. ■



Pat Borich adds his tribute to the others voiced at the Salute to Extension program sponsored by Congressman Vin Weber.

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Pat Borich and Congressman Vin Weber confer at the program to thank extension offices for their efforts during the farm financial crisis.

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Y.E.S. taps volunteers for 27 counties

Extension-trained volunteers are taking the Y.E.S. (Youth Entrepreneurial Seminars) into 27 counties of Southwest and South Central districts this winter.

Dorothy Rosemeier, Swift County extension agent-home economics, says, "Volunteers are being trained to teach and promote the Y.E.S. program and to expand the awareness, especially into the schools." Y.E.S., so successful in spring 1987 in the Northwest district and several counties in the Southwest, is an extension program designed to retain businesses and establish new businesses in rural Minnesota for youth and their families. Rosemeier is coordinating training in the 27 counties.

Phase I helps youth and their families with the personal assessment necessary to start thinking about beginning a business or career. Phase II, a retreat weekend, gives youth and their parents or mentors a chance to solidify thoughts in development of a business plan—essential to obtain any business financing.

Bubbling dreams of youngsters can balloon into businesses that stay with them through adult years, the Y.E.S. program finds. Y.E.S. aims at junior and senior

high ages, "but junior high is the real market," Rosemeier says. "Their minds are not made up and they aren't old enough for regular jobs."

During the earlier Y.E.S. programs, 27 of the 32 participants completing Phase II started a business, according to Jared M. Smalley, area extension agent, CNRD-NW, Crookston, who did follow-up telephone interview evaluations of the program with those 32 youth. There were 166 participants in Phase I (96 youth and 70 adults) and 62 in Phase II (32 youth and 30 adults).

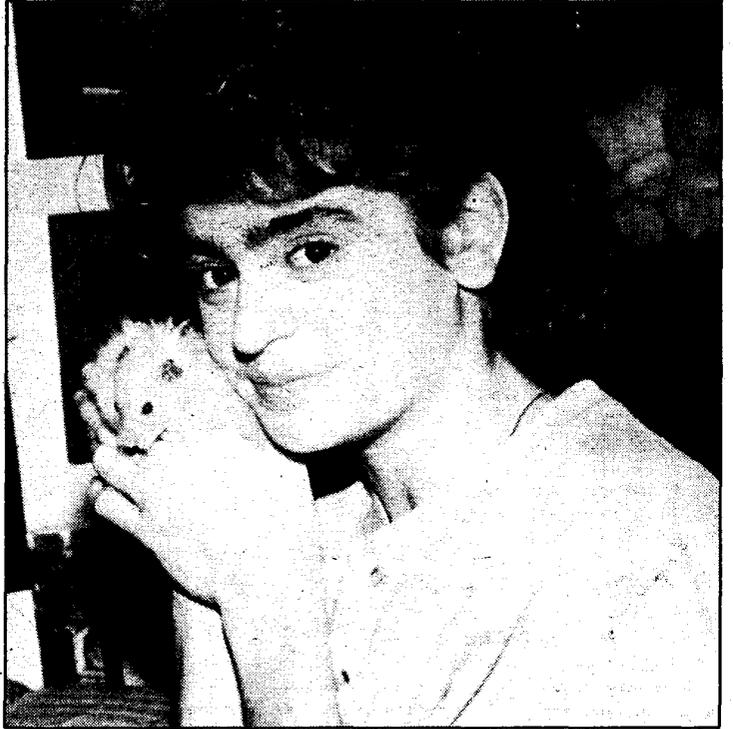
Catherine Huebner, Stevens County extension agent-home economics, organized the Y.E.S. Task Force while an extension release time agent, to expose youth to the concepts of small business development. Task force members included representatives of the Crookston Enterprise Center, Thief River Area Technical Institute, University of Minnesota both at Crookston and Morris, county extension offices and several allied agencies. These agents were on the Task Force: Cindy Christopherson, Marshall County; John Hjelm, Beltrami County; Diana Martenson, Traverse County; Andrea Nord, Pennington County; and Mary Ann Scharf, Stevens County.

Y.E.S. won an educational entrepreneurship award from the National Academic Association for Vocational Education in Washington, D.C. following Huebner's presentation.

Training for Y.E.S. volunteers began in November after agents' training to train volunteers. Southwest Minnesota Initiative Funds (part of the McKnight Foundation grant) are helping with the program. Volunteers are teaching and promoting "bits and pieces" of Y.E.S. Phase I to classrooms, civic groups, chambers of commerce and careers day programs in counties. As well as introducing more people to the program and freeing up agents' and program assistants' time, Rosemeier anticipates "an interest in adult entrepreneurship" as a by-product of developing youth programs.

A workbook, developed by Huebner and Rosemeier, deals with developing the business plan, the Phase II of Y.E.S. That should happen at a February retreat planned for the 27 county participants. ■

—Mary Kay O'Hearn



Jean Montaneri, 14, Gonvick, breeds and sells her hamsters in the Bemidji area. She's learned genetics is valuable to obtain long-haired hamsters, called "teddy bears," and more in demand in the marketplace. Her enterprise is described in the slide-tape produced for the Y.E.S. (Youth Entrepreneurial Seminars) program.

Marshall County workshop aids day care providers

About 50 day care providers from northwestern Minnesota gathered for a day-long training workshop recently at the University of Minnesota at Crookston. According to Nancy Nelson, Marshall County home economics agent, the program was funded by a grant from the Northwest Minnesota Initiative Fund and was organized by extension and the Crookston campus.

The family day care providers, who traveled to Crookston from 11 nearby counties, are required to attend a specified number of hours of training each year, but, as Nelson explains, the opportunities for such training were limited in their part of the state. A survey of day care providers turned up a list of topics in which there was interest. The Crookston workshop was then organized to provide information on as many of those topics as possible.

Among the speakers were the director of the child care coordinating council in Madison, Wisconsin, and president of the Minnesota Licensed Day Care

Association, who spoke about some of the current legislative concerns affecting the day care profession. Family life specialist Ron Pitzer spoke on creativity in child care and on ways that working with children can foster personal growth.

Other speakers shared information on taxes and recordkeeping, dealing with problem children and juggling the needs of one's own children with the demands of the day care youngsters. Nelson said that a number of day care providers taught small group sessions, sharing their techniques and information they had found helpful from other training sessions.

A follow-up telephone survey of participants is now underway, but Nelson says the general consensus was that the workshop was well-received and provided helpful information to the group. She adds that if funding is available and the final evaluation points to a continuing need, the workshops may be held annually. ■

—Deedee Nagy



Taping the half-hour program "Health Care Decisions" are, from left, Nora Hall (back to camera); Nancy McMonigal, Jenny Obst, Kevin Galligan and Tom Kline. The documentary is expected to air next month.

New video looks at making health insurance decisions

Health insurance, like income tax, is one of those things most people would rather not think too much about. But it's an essential part of the family budget, and a part that should be analyzed before it's needed. Family resource management specialist Sharon M. Danes has been tackling the problem of consciousness-raising on this issue, producing a publication and doing agent training to give home economics agents the background to field questions in their counties. As part of that effort, she has been working with EDS to produce a half-hour video on how to choose the best health insurance.

The initial idea for the video was created by home

economics agents in the Northeast, who have booked time on Duluth public television for its first showing in January. Agents Eileen Anderson, Lois Lewis, and Linda Bradley felt that such an issue deserved public airing, and extension was just the objective source to deliver such information.

The video takes a look at the major issues and concepts of health insurance by spotlighting three families as case studies. The first family is a two-career family looking at coordination of benefits in making the right health insurance choices. The second family is a self-employed farm family that must absorb the entire cost of their health insurance. And a third family is a retired couple who need to

supplement Medicare with a Medigap insurance policy. Experts interviewed for the program include Mike Hatch of the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Kent Peterson of the Minnesota Department of Health, and Steve Wolf of Minnesota Legal Services Coalition.

After its premiere in Duluth, copies will be available from the Distribution Center for agent use at meetings and in training, and for individual client use. Danes hopes the video will also find a market in libraries and other places where background information in health insurance decision-making would be helpful. ■

—Jennifer Obst

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No baaad jokes at Angora Goat Seminar



Livestock specialist Robert Jordan (left) and Warren Formo, an Angora goat breeder from Granite Falls, judge a class of replacement does. Seminar participants later judged the same class, then Jordan and Formo explained each animal's qualities—good and bad.

Jokes about goats eating tin cans and other materials of questionable nutritional value were not in vogue at the Angora Goat Seminar that was held on the St. Paul campus in

September. Instead, participants were dead serious about learning about the prospects of making money from Angoras or how to better manage their herds.

The seminar, the second the Minnesota Extension Service has sponsored, attracted 70 persons this year and 59 in 1986. Among the topics discussed were general information about Angora goats;

selecting replacement breeding stock; factors that affect fleece quality and value; feeding breeding stock, kids (young animals) and stock kept for hair production; and summer management of kids. Shearing and dehorning were demonstrated also.

Angora goats are raised mainly for their fine, silky hair, known as "mohair." An additional market for culled does (females) and wethers (castrated males) exists in the Southwest, where goat is a popular ingredient in Mexican dishes and barbecues.

A few years ago, the price of mohair improved dramatically, prompting people in northern states such as Michigan and Minnesota to enter the industry, which is concentrated in Texas. Extension livestock specialist Robert J. Jordan, who developed the program for the seminar, estimates that about 100 Minnesotans already have Angora goats.

Almost all of the mohair produced in the United States is shipped to Texas and eventually to England, where it is used in luxury yarns and fabrics. While

many Minnesota and other midwestern mohair producers market their production through the North Central Wool Marketing Corporation in Minneapolis, which ships the fleeces to Texas, a few have geared themselves to a small, specialty market—home spinners.

"Raising Angora goats may be an attractive alternative to raising sheep," Jordan says. "Goats require the same kind of housing and feed as sheep, although extra care must be exercised after shearing, when the goats are very vulnerable to cold. In fact, raising Angoras may have some advantages: a person who decides to run a herd of wethers does not have the hard work and long hours that lambing or kidding requires."

Jordan also does research on Angora production for the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, which makes the University of Minnesota the only U.S. university other than Texas A & M that does research on Angora goats. ■

—Sam Brungardt

Sea Grant hypothermia videotape completed

Anyone who plays or works near cold water should be concerned about hypothermia. After a fall into cold water, you are as likely to die of it as you are to drown.

"Hypothermia: The Cold Facts" is a new Sea Grant videotape that explains current research on hypothermia, how to prevent it and how to increase your chances of survival in cold water. It is now available to county extension offices for a small rental fee through the Distribution Center in Coffey Hall. Copies are also being made available to the general public for rent (\$30) or for sale (\$60) through the Sea Grant Extension office in Duluth or the Sea Grant office on the St. Paul campus.

The half-hour program explains:

- Why some people become hypothermic almost immediately while others can tolerate the cold much longer;
- How factors such as body weight and attitude affect the ability to survive in cold water;

- Why drinking alcohol increases your chance of becoming hypothermic;
- How your body protects you against the cold through shivering and other reflexes.

The videotape is in a nontechnical, feature format, making it suitable for hunters, anglers, youth groups, medical personnel, and anyone who plays or works near cold water. Featured are Robert Pozos and Lorentz Wittmers, professors at the University of Minnesota-Duluth Medical School and hypothermia researchers for Minnesota Sea Grant, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

A companion piece to use with the videotape is a brochure by the same title published by Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources boat and water safety section, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4046. ■

—Alice Tibbetts



Hypothermia research conducted by Minnesota Sea Grant tests the bodily responses of volunteers exposed to icy waters.

In brief . . .

Bert Swanson, extension horticulturist, nursery management, received the Educator of the Year award from the American Association of Nurserymen at their annual meeting in July. He was recognized for outstanding teaching in horticulture. The award included a plaque and a \$100 cash prize.

Sharon Wright, 4-H youth development specialist, has been named by Governor Rudy Perpich to serve on the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. The statewide board, which meets four times a year in locations around Minnesota, acts as an advisory council to the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission.

Minnesota Master Gardeners attend Washington conference



Minnesota's Master Gardeners gathered for a group portrait at their national conference in Washington, D.C.

Twenty-nine Minnesota Master Gardeners attended the first national Master Gardener conference in Washington, D.C., in October. They were among more than 600 U.S. and Canadian Master Gardeners and comprised the largest delegation from any of the 44 states with Master Gardener programs.

Jane McKinnon, extension horticulturist, is in charge of training for the Master Gardening program. Volunteer activities are coordinated through local extension offices. Of the successful Master Gardener in this state, McKinnon says, "Minnesota is a great volunteer state where people help their neighbors. It's been fun to work with so many talented, unselfish Master Gardeners."

Accompanying the volunteers to Washington were Deborah Brown, horticulture specialist; Mike Zins, area horticulture agent; and county agents Denny Schrock of Olmsted County, Don Olson of Ramsey County and Bob Mugaas of Hennepin County.

The state currently has about 800 Master Gardeners who do radio and television programs, put on seminars and conferences, conduct tours and clinics, and organize vegetable garden programs for their local neighborhoods or communities. In exchange for their extensive training in gardening, each volunteer contributes a similar number of hours to teaching others what they have learned in the program. ■

—Jack Sperbeck

4-H teens help grade school kids say 'no' to alcohol

Teenaged 4-H teachers are taking an anti-alcohol message "Be Smart, Don't Start" to elementary school children and, in the process, are learning about themselves and are strengthening their own resolve to avoid alcohol and other drugs.

4-H youth development specialist Sherri Wright explains that the new Alcohol Decisions teen training workshops are part of the organization's emphasis on self-protection. Joining forces with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Minnesota Safety Council, 4-H began the Minnesota Community Traffic Safety Project. With funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Minnesota project provides funds to begin community programs on specific traffic problems.

One of the first efforts funded has been the Alcohol Decisions Teen Training Workshops now operating in Dakota, Cook and Morrison counties. Grant money totaling \$60,000 helped launch the training, buy materials, and hire county-based coordinators. Benton, Stearns, Crow Wing, Blue Earth, and Mille Lacs counties will join the original three counties receiving funding for 1988. The counties were pre-selected because of their high traffic accident and fatality rates, according to Wright.

The county programs focus on



Dakota County 4-H'ers Maria Langenfeld and Kim Grabarczyk tell a class of fifth-graders how they rank in comparison to the nation on seatbelt use. They are among about 40 4-H members in that county trained to give presentations on alcohol use and driving as well as other traffic safety concerns.

drinking and driving and seatbelt use. Wright points to Dakota County as a leader in training high-school-age 4-H members to teach about alcohol use in their local elementary schools. She has conducted workshops to train the teens and now veteran teen teachers have taken over the training for newcomers to the growing program. In that county alone, nearly 40 teens are making classroom visits to talk to fourth, fifth, and sixth graders about the pressures to use alcohol and the safety hazards it can pose.

Mary Duncomb, Dakota County

4-H agent, says nearly 1,000 elementary school children in that county have heard the three hours of classroom teaching, role playing, and other activities led by the teen teachers. And the number of requests from schools to have the teens make the presentation is growing rapidly.

"The 4-H members doing the teaching have great rapport with the kids," Duncomb says. "They just seem to listen and accept more of what the teenagers say than they would if the information was coming from an adult."

She adds that the teens benefit from the program as well. "Many of them have commented that they have learned a lot about themselves and about making their own decisions from the material that they discuss with the younger kids in the classrooms. It boosts their self-esteem. And teachers have told us that they appreciate the teens' honesty and fresh approach to teaching."

Duncomb credits Catherine Foxworth of the Dakota County staff for much of the program's success. Hired with funds from

the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration grant, she has made the contacts with schools and handled the many details involved in the program's success. In addition to the classroom sessions, the Dakota County effort also has included "Family Nights" in the schools. At these, Duncomb explains and promotes the effort to parents, answers questions, and introduces the 4-H members teaching in the school. "Attendance has been good at these," Duncomb says. "It's a wonderful public relations opportunity for extension among families with elementary school-age kids."

Judging from the success in Dakota and the other initial counties in the program, Wright is confident that the Alcohol Decisions effort can make a difference in teens' decisions about drinking, driving, and other highway safety issues. "The data on alcohol use indicates a need to educate very young children about the effects of alcohol and to help them develop the skills they'll need for self-protection. If we can help even a few of these elementary school children and their 4-H teachers make wise decisions about drinking, the program will be a success," she concludes.

—Deedee Nagy

Annual Conference: A look at Minnesota Extension Service, past, present, future



Verne Long, center, receiving his award from Pat Borich, was one of two recipients of the Director's Award for Distinguished Service at the Annual Conference awards banquet. With Long on the left are agents Bob Fritz and Connie Schwartau from Long's home county, Pipestone. Mrs. Long and University President Ken Keller are on the right. Also presented a Director's Award was Frank Hansen of Tofte.



Marie Lee Rude received the Distinguished Faculty Award from last year's county winner, Jeanne Markell. Honored with the Distinguished Civil Service Award from a county office was Betty Krenz, principal secretary with the EFNEP program in Ramsey County.



Ron Pitzer waits to accept his Distinguished Faculty Award from Pat Borich. The Distinguished Civil Service Award to a campus-based person went to Katherine Scheffler, assistant administrator with the Telecommunications Development Center.



At an idea-sharing session, Deb Zak, right, Pennington County agent, explains materials she prepared on irradiated foods to fellow agents Barb Haynes, Sue Olson and Kathy Olson.



4-H Specialist Jim Lewis, left, presents some of the gag awards to agents garbed in their best 60s-style fashions at the final night's party.



This trio from the '60s at the final night's party are, in real life, agents Dorothy Rosemeier, Ann Bosch and Beth Russell. Ann and Beth came dressed as Lucy and Ethel from the old "I Love Lucy" television series.