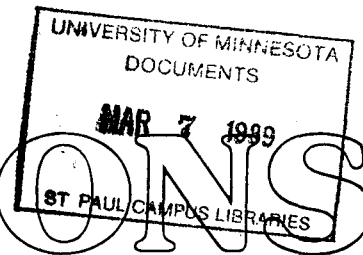


EXTENOVATIONS



VOL. 10, NO. 1 FEBRUARY 1989 FOR ALL OF EXTENSION

Extension gears up for 80th anniversary

The Minnesota Extension Service is 80 years old this year, and like any lively octogenarian, it will be celebrating with a number of special events in the months ahead, according to Director Pat Borich.

The 80th anniversary commemoration will kick off with the Farm Family Recognition program scheduled for the St. Paul campus March 16. This annual event brings hundreds of honored family members to campus for a recognition banquet, followed by County Extension Day March 17 with dozens of tours and demonstrations for as many as 500 invited guests from throughout the state. This year, each of these events will use an 80th anniversary theme and will tie extension's present and future directions to the organization's proud tradition of educational leadership.

In May, many counties will host open houses and tree planting

ceremonies linked specifically to the May 8 anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, marking 75 years of federal funding for extension. Minnesota's extension program actually pre-dates the Smith-Lever Act by five years, making it a national leader even 80 years ago. Since its beginnings in 1909, Borich says extension has grown to the largest educational organization outside of the public schools in the state.

Extension has changed to reflect the needs of state residents over its 80 year history, Borich says. Early extension efforts focused on organizing Farmers' Clubs to improve seed stock and crop marketing efforts. Forerunners of today's 4-H programs were Boys and Girls Clubs, which encouraged young members to compete in corn growing and bread baking contests.

Early home economics programs focused on domestic



skills — cooking in kitchens where electricity had only recently been introduced, mattress making and clothing construction. For several of its early years, an extension train

toured the state, stopping in small communities with railroad cars full of exhibits and extension staff giving demonstrations and teaching local people.

He adds that today's extension program is more likely to be delivered by a satellite hook-up, cable TV or computer software, but the goal is still to meet state residents' needs for informal education and leadership in areas of concern to them. More than 200,000 young people in the state now participate in 4-H programs. Some 50,000 extension volunteers help their neighbors and communities through their work as financial management consultants, master gardeners, 4-H leaders and farm credit mediators.

Borich adds, "Extension celebrates its past this year while it also looks toward the challenging issues of the future. Project Future, extension's current priority in rural revitalization, is helping local people in selected communities to chart their area's future course and insure its economic health. Water quality is another priority issue and virtually every county in the state has participated in efforts to safeguard our ground-water supplies."

'There's good news in Ellendale' Star Tribune features Project Future effort

(Editor's note: Project Future was recently in the news for the Ellendale efforts to keep a community newspaper serving the area. This article, written by Bill McAuliffe and reprinted with permission of the Star Tribune, provides details on that successful effort.)

The news out of Ellendale in August was the kind that usually stops the presses. For good.

Owners of the town's newspaper, the Ellendale Eagle, announced they were shutting down the paper and folding

news about the community into a column in the back of the Blooming Prairie News, which they also owned.

But Ellendale residents felt that their affairs rated more than a column in the back of another town's weekly.

"I wasn't happy with it," said Carol Anderson, who had been an Eagle reporter for three years. "I've lived here all my life and we need a paper. A paper is the lifeline of a town."

On Sept. 15, a month after the death of the Ellendale Eagle, residents received the first copies of Our Community News, serving Ellendale, Clarks Grove, Geneva and Hope with all the news, recollections, philosophy and advertising

- ELLENDALE
continued on page 4

Extension's four central issues — economic development, environment and natural resources, human development and community leadership — will provide the focus for programs into the 1990s and beyond just as the needs of Minnesotans have guided extension's efforts since the organization was born in 1909, Borich said. ■

- Deedee Nagy



Extenovations photo

Ellendale in south central Minnesota proudly proclaimed itself a Project Future community last summer when it hung this banner across its main street. Since then, Project Future has helped provide the organization and direction for starting a new weekly newspaper to replace the Ellendale Eagle, which folded last summer.

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Food, Agriculture, Nutrition Forums draw diverse audiences



Photo courtesy of Linda Dieleman

Small group discussions such as this one bring together professionals from many disciplines to share ideas on how selected health and nutrition issues can benefit the public.

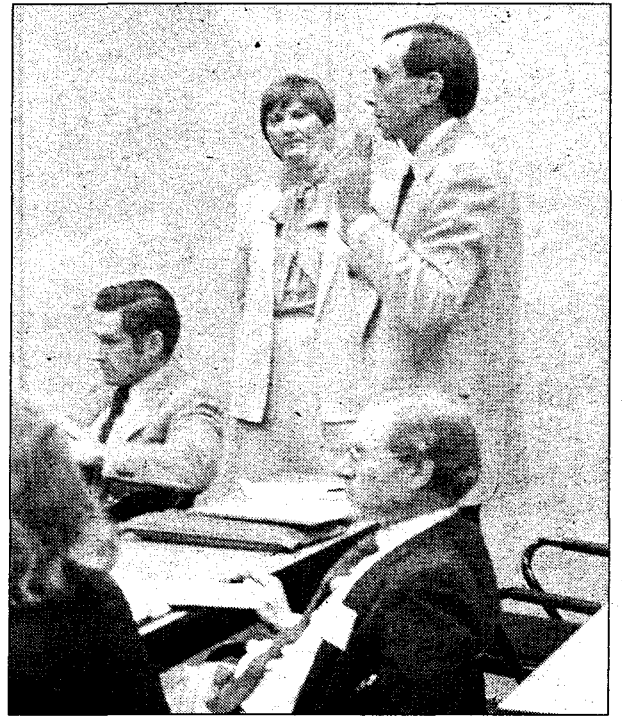


Photo courtesy of Linda Dieleman

Dick Epley, Extension meats specialist, was a participant in the FAN forum on animal product options for a healthy diet.

Invited guests from the health professions, education, food producers groups and the retailing industries are among those benefitting from a series of Food, Agriculture and Nutrition (FAN) Forums now underway with extension involvement.

The Intercollegiate Nutrition Consortium sponsors the forums, which are funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to foster communication and an education network for health and nutrition issues that ultimately affect the public.

In November, the second FAN forum "A Healthy Diet with Animal Product Options" drew about 80 participants. A slightly smaller number attended a June forum on "Actions for Lowering Blood Cholesterol: Collaborative Strategies." According to

Linda Dieleman, project leader, three more forums are planned for 1989 and 1990 under the Kellogg grant.

County agents and extension specialists are among those who attended the first two forums along with physicians, public

health officials, health educators from a variety of organizations, producer group representatives and persons involved with food marketing. Work groups of participants meet and discuss the research and opinions expressed by forum speakers and map out ways that the information can reach the public in useful and understandable ways. ■

- Deedee Nagy

Area extension agent helps Minnesotans discover 'How well is your well?'

People in northeast Minnesota who use deep, drilled private wells are being urged by area water resources agent Barbara Liukkonen to have their drinking water tested every two or three years. Those with shallow wells should have their water tested annually. She adds that in parts of the state where agriculture is intensive and aquifers are more interconnected, even deep wells should be tested every year or two.

In researching and putting on workshops about well water safety, Liukkonen has noted enormous variation in state residents' wells. They range from hand-dug pits as much as four feet wide and as little as six feet deep to drilled wells 400 feet deep. Only about half of the participants in her workshops have ever had their well water tested.

In northeastern Minnesota, shallow wells usually draw water from surface glacial deposits and can be easily contaminated by human activity. High levels of nitrates or coliform bacteria are warnings to watch for more serious contamination. Deep wells drilled into bedrock can also



Photo courtesy of Bob King, Duluth News-Tribune

Barbara Liukkonen, area water resources specialist, is one Extension staff person with an intense interest in the purity of our drinking water.

contain high levels of naturally occurring contaminants like fluoride, manganese, iron and salt.

"The main threat to water supplies in northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin is not from agricultural or industrial sources, but from individual septic systems leaking into individual wells," Liukkonen said.

If well water is contaminated, Liukkonen advises homeowners with septic systems to have those pumped out or brought up to code. If the problem is caused by naturally occurring

substances, she suggests filtering the water or disinfecting the well and household plumbing with chlorine. If the problem persists, a new well might be necessary.

"Testing ensures your family's safety and provides a record of water quality that may prove useful in case you sell the property," Liukkonen told property owners. If a problem should develop later regarding either water quality or quantity, having the record may improve the chances of solving it or winning a claim for damages.

- Karen Plass

In brief . . . In brief . . .

Neal Martin, extension agronomist in forages, has received the Northrup King faculty performance award for 1988. He and his departmental colleague Carroll Vance from agronomy and plant genetics, were honored for their outstanding contributions, Martin's in educational work and Vance's in research. The award carries a \$3,000 prize to each recipient.

Ellen Schuster, state EFNEP coordinator, has been appointed to serve on a national EFNEP task force set up by the home economics subcommittee of ECOP. The task force includes state and county extension staff from across the country and is scheduled to present its recommendations for the EFNEP program by this fall.

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Range newsletter to help home based business

The issue: economic diversification. The cooperators: seven public and private organizations on the Iron Range, including the Minnesota Extension Service of St. Louis County. The outcome: the CONNECTION, "a newsletter for home based businesses on the Iron Range," its blue and black nameplate states.

"Our first issue came out in September and we plan to publish six times a year," explains Eileen Anderson, county extension agent, home economics, St. Louis County, and the newsletter coordinator. A mailing of 900 reached residents on the Range and neighboring counties: Koochiching, Lake, Cook, St. Louis, Itasca and Carlton. Some are already in home based businesses or have expressed an interest in such a business, still others are with chambers of commerce, economic development groups and other organizations in the area.

The first four-page issue says its purpose is to connect with useful resources and others in home based business, to provide information to help make the best decisions for family and business and to create an awareness of the significance of the home based business industry. Ultimately the idea is to offer useful information and linkages with helpful agencies to strengthen home based businesses in diversifying the Iron Range economy.

"We have financing for two years," says Anderson, who is pleased that the newsletter achieved its very professional look. The first issue was typeset, subsequent issues will be done with 5.0 WordPerfect, desktop publishing software and laser printer in the Hibbing extension office.

Anderson brought together the seven organizations that are providing the resources for the CONNECTION: Arrowhead Community Economic Assistance Corporation (ACEAC), Babbitt Embarrass Area Development Association (BEADA), Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB), Northeast Ventures, Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Western Mesabi and East Range Church and Community Project and Minnesota Extension Service of St. Louis County, University of Minnesota.

A \$3,000 innovative grant from Extension Director Pat Borich, plus contributions from IRRRB and ACEAC bring the newsletter's total funding to \$4,500.

Winnie Koivisto, a partner in B&K Office Services at Embarrass, and one of the volunteers on the newsletter committee, is pleased with the newsletter and the fact that it will help home based businesses. For some, home based business has been a sideline. Machine shops, crafts, and



Photo courtesy of the St. Louis County Extension Office

Looking over an issue of The Connection newsletter for home based business are, from left, Greta Wood of Voyageur Vision, Shirley McKibbon of the Babbitt Embarrass Area Development Association and a member of the newsletter's planning committee and St. Louis County Extension Agent Eileen Anderson.

electrical repair operations are some examples. Koivisto says more people have gone into small businesses since the downturn in mining. She believes the newsletter will help individuals in home based businesses make connections with services available around them—some of them free, some with a cost. Lots of home based business people "are all alone" she says and these linkages are hard to put together.

Shirley McKibbon, Babbitt, vice president of BEADA, and a newsletter committee volunteer, has heard from crafters

"who are very pleased there is a communication tool." She sees the CONNECTION as continuing to provide information toward making home based businesses a financial reality.

Each newsletter will profile the owner of a home based business. "We will emphasize what others can learn from their experiences—for instance how they market products out of their area—not just a summary of how they got into the business," says Anderson.

Readers are invited to submit items for a Question/Answer column. Home business tax deduction questions will be answered in the next issue by Robert Heller, Small Business Development Center director,

University of Minnesota, Duluth.

Serving on the newsletter committee in addition to Anderson, Koivisto and McKibbon are John Baker, ACEAC, Virginia; Susan Forsberg, illustrator/designer, Chisholm; Diane Hallada, photographer/writer, Aurora; and Robert Wagner, SBDC, Virginia.

Although there is a Home Business Network quarterly subscription magazine published in Cambridge, Minnesota, Anderson believes the CONNECTION on the Iron Range is unique in being a joint effort of the seven organizations. ■

- Mary Kay O'Hearn

Rabbits outpacing llamas, water buffalo in alternative farm income competition

What do rabbits, llamas and water buffalo have in common? They've all been considered as alternative farm income sources on Minnesota farms. Rabbits are apt to be a more viable enterprise than either llamas or water buffalo.

"Rabbits are a good potential supplemental income source," says Brian Larson, assistant extension specialist in animal science. He thinks rabbits raised for meat may be a growth industry a few years down the road. "We could see rabbits raised under intensive management for meat—somewhat like broilers are now," he says.

There's a lot of interest in llamas—perhaps too much in terms of many people making money from them. "Llama fever" is projected to continue for another five to 10 years before it begins to decline.

Bred llama females may bring from \$10,000 to \$100,000. "For me, that's a lot of money to invest in an enterprise that's not well established or documented," Larson says.

And water buffalo? "I got a call from someone who was considering raising Asian water buffalo in Minnesota," he says. There are some water buffalo in Florida, but none documented in Minnesota. Water buffalo milk, meat and cheese are popular with Middle East and Asian ethnic groups.

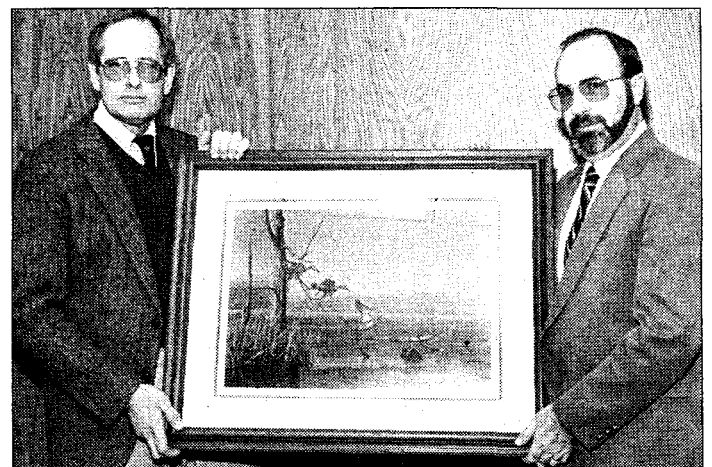
Larson is coordinating alternative animal enterprise programs. Specialists from several departments have written fact sheets in response to questions from agents and people interested in enterprises like llamas and alpacas, red deer, dairy goats, bison, family farm pigs, fish farming and game birds. There are also fact sheets on

marketing, farm flock poultry, honey bees and dairy beef.

Many rural people are exploring alternative ways for generating alternative ways to generate additional farm family income, says Tom Thorburn, program leader for agriculture. "The financial crunch that many farm families faced recently has generated new interest in non-traditional crop and animal enterprises," he says.

His advice to people interested in alternative animal enterprises: start small and move cautiously to see if you want to make a long term commitment.

- Jack Sperbeck



Extenovations photo by Educational Development Systems

Don Breneman presented wildlife print

Don Breneman, extension communications specialist on the left, was presented a Robert Plasschert wildlife print from Chuk Hamilton, chairman of the Minnesota 4-H Project Development Committee in shooting sports. The print was in appreciation of Breneman's work in producing "Shooting Fundamentally," an instructional video in basic shooting techniques. The program, funded by a grant from Daisy Manufacturing Company, has been distributed nationwide. According to Larry Karels, 4-H outdoor extension educator, "Shooting Fundamentally" has set a precedent that will establish a national curriculum in shooting sports. Daisy Manufacturing also received a national safety award for their sponsorship of the production.

Agriculture documentary wins national recognition

"From the Ground Up," a half-hour television documentary on the impact of international trade on U.S. agriculture, has won the prestigious Golden Eagle award from the Council on International Nontheatrical Events (CINE) for its producer, Rich Reeder of Extension's Educational Development Systems.

The program was developed through the Office of Internati-

onal Agricultural Programs and was funded by that office along with Extension, the College of Agriculture, the Institute of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics and the University's office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The program has also won several commendations from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education

(CASE). It was televised over a number of public broadcast stations this past summer and is available for rental through the Distribution Center in Coffey Hall. ■

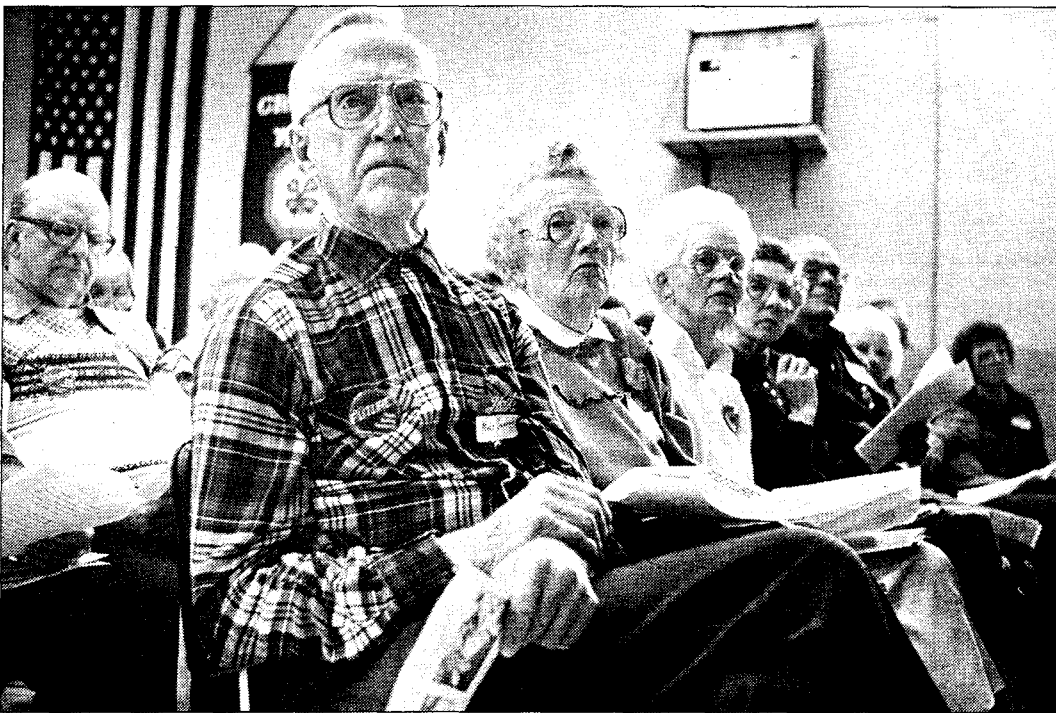
- Deedee Nagy



Extenovations photo by Don Breneman

Extension specialists tape radio interviews

Extension animal scientist Chuck Christians, on the left, was interviewed recently by Chuck Lilligren of KSTP AM radio in extension's radio studio. Lilligren visits Coffey Hall each Monday morning to interview faculty from the St. Paul campus. The interviews are then broadcast on KSTP (1500 on the AM dial) at 12:50 each week day. Extension broadcast specialist Marty Moen schedules the guests and is always looking for topic ideas from extension staff. His telephone number is 612/625-6243.



Extenovations photos by Don Breneman

About 200 Ellendale residents attended the Project Future meeting at which changes were made to the community's plan for future development.

Good News in Ellendale

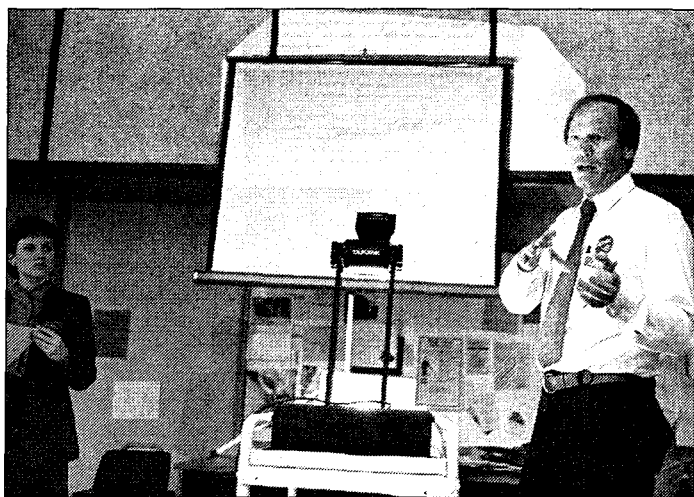
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they'd been used to.

The rescue had been an all-volunteer effort requiring the usual amount of hard work and dedication. Anderson and Sandy Vangen, another member of the Eagle staff, had worked without pay in the interim, covering meetings and selling ads in hopes that they could put some sort of paper on the streets.

But also significant in creating a new paper was Project Future, a program of the University of Minnesota Extension Service intended to help revitalize small communities.

Ellendale, which is about 12 miles north of Albert Lea, is one of five Project Future pilot areas in Minnesota. The two-year project is designed to draw citizens from across the community together to decide what they want their communities to be like in the year 2010. Once residents draw up a "vision statement," extension agents match them with the appropriate experts throughout the University system. The project does not offer money, nor does it



Extenovations photos by Don Breneman

Area extension agent Roger Steinberg reviewed Ellendale's Project Future vision statement at a recent meeting in that community.

focus on economic development.

"It does not take only federal and state dollars to be a successful community," said Roger Steinberg, Rochester area extension agent. "That's only a piece. It's what people can do for themselves." Other Project Future pilot areas are Sibley County, Jackson County, eastern Lake County and the city of Stephen in far northwestern Minnesota. All, including Ellendale, a city of 555 people, are still drawing up

their vision statements.

But in Ellendale the project has already yielded results. When the Eagle closed, a Project Future task force that included various citizens collected more than \$6,000, in 21 donations of \$300, to help establish a paper, and ultimately persuaded Jim Jacobsen, owner of the Security State Bank, to buy it.

"We targeted a group of volunteers to go out and pursue this idea," said Wayne Schimek, chairman of



Extenovations photo courtesy Minnesota 4-H

Profiles for Tomorrow participants meet Helen Thomas

Helen Thomas, center, well known Washington journalist and that city's United Press bureau chief, was the keynote speaker for last fall's Profiles for Tomorrow 4-H leadership training conference. Here Justine Olson, 4-H ambassador from Grant County, presents Thomas with the Minnesota 4-H Cookbook while Jim Kemp of the 4-H Foundation looks on. David Ness from Clay County was the other Minnesota delegate to the leadership program.

Ellendale's Project Future steering committee. "Without somebody to jump forward and take the bull by the horns, I don't know that it would have happened.

"Before Project Future was in Ellendale, you'd say, 'I wish that store didn't close,' or whatever. You kind of gave up," Schimek said. "Now there's a sense that if we all work together we can make things happen. We're really happy to have that newspaper back in the community again."

Newspapers disappear and reappear regularly across nonmetropolitan Minnesota, said Linda Falkman, executive director of the Minnesota Newspaper Association. But for a rural community to revive its own newspaper with volunteer work and donations, to the point of stable new local ownership, is rare, she said.

Chris Schocker, recently hired to manage the new paper, said the staff of five part-time workers is still trying to master the new equipment and the tasks that used to be done by the Blooming Prairie News.

Harold Wilkins inducted into Floriculture Hall of Fame

Former Extension horticulturist Harold Wilkins was inducted into the Floriculture Hall of Fame. Only ten other academic researchers or teachers have been included in the Hall of Fame, the last nearly ten years ago.

Wilkins, who left the University about two months ago, had been at the University since 1966. He is now with the Nurserymen's Exchange in Half Moon Bay, California. Before coming to Minnesota he was a post harvest physiologist at the University of Florida's Gulf Coast Experiment Station.

His major research interests have been the Easter lily, freesia, azalea, poinsettia and alstroemeria. Wilkins is considered the father of the alstroemeria industry, now a multi-million dollar floral enterprise. ■

- Deedee Nagy