

EXTENOVATIONS

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ST PAUL CAMPUS LIBRARIES

Farm Credit Mediation program wins USDA Superior Service Award

For the second time in two years, a Minnesota Extension Service program has earned the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Superior Service Award. This year's award was presented to the Farm Credit Mediation Program in award ceremonies earlier this month in Washington, D.C. The award is one of fewer than ten given nationwide each year.

The Farm Credit Mediation Program was cited for its role in helping thousands of debt-

ridden Minnesota farmers and their creditors to find alternatives to foreclosure. Last year, Minnesota's Center for Farm Financial Management won the same commendation for its widely-used computer programs to aid farmers in financial planning.

Kathy Mangum, program director, and program administrator Blake Peterson accepted the award in ceremonies at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Ruth Grunke, program assis-

tant, is also named in the award but did not attend the presentation ceremony.

Since the mediation program began in 1986 under a legislative mandate, about 70 percent of Minnesota farmers receiving foreclosure notices have turned to mediation for help. The program has served nearly 7,000 farmers, and in 85 percent of the settlements, they continue to farm.

With its 700 volunteer media-

tors, Farm Credit Mediation has been instrumental in helping to keep Minnesota's per capita rate of Chapter 12 bankruptcies the lowest in the country. The federal Farm Credit Act as well as farmer/lender mediation programs in 25 states and several foreign countries are modeled after Minnesota's program.

Minnesota Extension Director Pat Borich credits Mangum, Peterson, Grunke and the hundreds of volunteer media-

tors and county agents who have made the program successful and a national pacesetter. He says, "These team members masterminded a one-of-a-kind, highly successful approach to solving the farmer/lender impasse. Their insight and wisdom transformed initial resistance to mediation into overwhelming support." ■

- Deedee Nagy



Extenovations photo by Deedee Nagy

Although heavy rain drove participants indoors, a tree was planted on the St. Paul campus to note MES's 80th anniversary in May. Among those who would have helped wield the shovel if weather had permitted are, from left, Lynn Mackey, representing the Extension Civil Service Consultative Committee; David Noetzel, extension entomologist; Evelyn Dose, retired Ramsey County home economics (EFNEP) agent; Roland Abraham, former dean and director of MES; and Pat Borich, current dean and director.



Extenovations photo by Don Breneman

Dakota County noted extension's birthday with an open house and an 80 cent lunch to commemorate 80 years of helping people through educational programming. Former Extension Director Roland Abraham, right, visited with former Dakota County agent Clarence Quie at the county office on May 8.

Extension plants trees to note history, look to future

MES's 80th anniversary celebration on May 8, the anniversary of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act, was marked by tree planting ceremonies, open houses and other commemorative activities in county offices and on the St. Paul campus.

Although much-welcomed rain kept the campus program inside, a ginkgo tree was planted near the Earle Brown Continuing Education Center to note the occasion. That type of

tree was selected because it has been around for longer than any other variety, signifying both Extension's rich history and its progressive mission as it approaches the 21st Century, according to Steve Laursen, state program leader for natural resources, who spoke at the May 8 campus program.

Numerous county offices also planted trees on May 8. Many tied the event to open houses and 4-H activities that drew widespread community support.

4-H participation rises dramatically

A new report shows a dramatic increase in participation in 4-H programs by Minnesota youth. In 1988, 4-H programs reached 209,000 Minnesota youth, compared with 137,000 in 1987.

Most of the 1988 participants (53 percent) were ages 11 and

under; 25 percent were between 12 and 14, and 21 percent were 15 or older.

The young people participated in a variety of ways. More than half were in short-term projects

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Aquaculture conference highlights something fishy and the dollar impact

Minnesota's 83 aquaculturalists generated more than \$6.4 million in sales in one year recently. Fish cultured by businesses in Minnesota include trout, salmon, northern pike, walleye, bass, sunfish, catfish, suckers, fathead minnows and shiners. Depending on the species, these fish are used for stocking, fee fishing, human consumption or bait.

Aquaculture is the fastest growing agricultural industry in the nation. In Minnesota, abundant water supplies and the depressed farm economy have created much interest in aquaculture. This was evident at the 3rd Annual Minnesota Aquaculture Conference, March 3 and 4 in Alexandria, when 200 people gathered despite a major winter storm. They heard 24 speakers discuss topics that included regulations, getting

started, marketing and raising walleyes. Concurrent sessions dealt with the culture of crayfish and live bait.

The U.S. had a \$7.1 billion international trade deficit in fisheries products in 1987, according to Ted Batterson, assistant director of the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center. In our 12-state region, 57 million people consume 900 million pounds of fish annually, but grow only one percent of them, he said.

In spite of this, Minnesota's best opportunities in the near future will be in raising bait rather than food fish, according to Dave Kandkamer, assistant aquaculture specialist with Extension. "There is less risk

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Extenovations photo courtesy of the Sea Grant Extension Program

Dave Landkamer, left, assistant aquaculture specialist with Minnesota's Sea Grant Extension Program, visited with a reporter covering the March Aquaculture Conference in Alexandria. Sea Grant organizers say that interest in aquaculture is high and that it is the fastest growing agricultural industry in the nation.

Counties pilot videodisc testing for Pesticide Applicators

Touching their answers right on the TV screen and knowing their score when they finish is appealing to growers in Clay, Goodhue and Yellow Medicine counties who have tried the new interactive videodisc testing method for Private Pesticide Applicator Training (PPAT).

What they see is the grower going through the same actions they do as applicators. Then they are asked questions such as whether the grower is dressed protectively (do those trousers go inside or outside the boots, for example) or pouring pesticides properly into the spraying tank?

All of the comments have been positive, among them:

"I liked it because you could see the situation on the screen, so it seemed to make it more realistic."

"It fit my schedule better than meetings."

The videodisc method is more acceptable to many test takers than using a pencil and then having the test machine scored.

The established way of training and testing in the PPAT program has been a workshop of about three hours in Minnesota Extension Service offices or home study training with the PPAT manual, then completing the open book test at home later.

This new videodisc method, developed by the Telecommunications Development Center (TDC), represents two years of

production, thousands of hours of work and over \$100,000 in costs. Developers know it won't replace the established method, but it opens exciting doors to testing of the future.

Rae Montgomery, who represents the TDC on the evaluation team for this project, says, "Dick Meronuck (extension plant pathologist) began the project in 1985 and 40 specialists have had input. The Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA), USDA, Minnesota Department of Agriculture have either visited the TDC to check it out as it progressed or worked from paper scripts we've sent them."

The content has been checked and rechecked for accuracy and compliance with regulations. Dean Herzfeld, whose extension role is pest applicator training, and Stacy Stockdill, with an independent consulting firm, complete the evaluation

team. One of the values of interactive video (meaning it's hooked up to a computer) is that its computer graphics component, for instance, can be changed as pesticide regulations change.

It takes about two hours to go through the videodisc PPAT questions—not too different from the time spent attending the class except that after the class time, testing has to be done at home. In Clay County, Jerry Arneson says taking the video test and knowing the score immediately is better than having the test "on top of the refrigerator or in the back of the pickup and having to wait for it to be scored." In any event, the test modules can be retaken if not passed the first time.

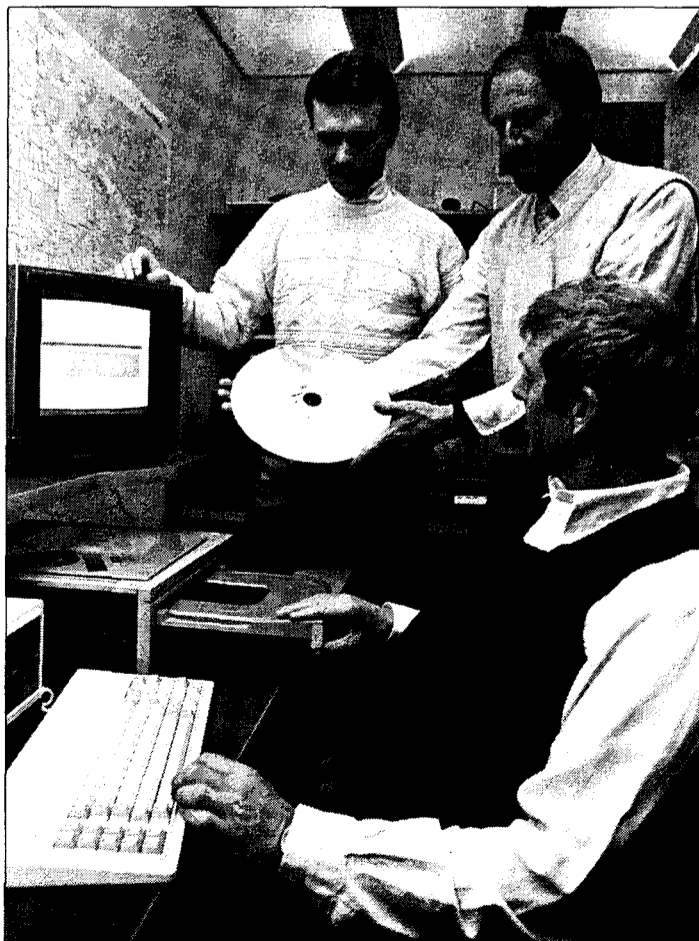
Arneson, Brian Schreiber in Goodhue and Richard Kvols in Yellow Medicine all call it "an interactive video program" rather than a computer program when suggesting growers take

the test. Computer is still a threatening word to some, they say. Perhaps the word video conjures up a more enjoyable reaction.

In all three counties, a private, quiet area of the extension office was designated to set up the system. Because it's a one-on-one testing, "it would be hard to do with a volume of people," Schreiber mentions. He adds that it's an excellent makeup when someone has missed the training.

There have been open houses and special showings of this innovative programming to extension committees. Local weed inspectors and farm management instructors have taken the test and the STI (Southwest Technical Institute) in Canby eagerly asked to borrow it for demonstration. ■

- Mary Kay O'Hearn



Extenovations photo by Don Breneman

Brian Schreiber, Goodhue County, seated at the computer and Jerry Arneson, Clay County, check out the video disc held by Rich Kvols, Yellow Medicine County.

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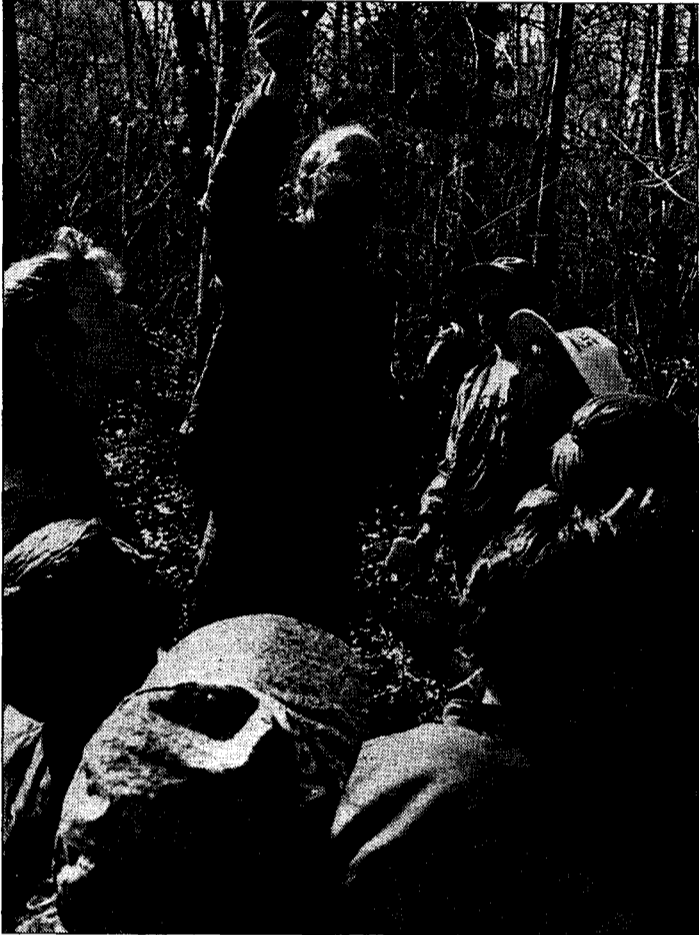
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Ten days in May help mark 80 years of Minnesota Extension Service's educational leadership

The Minnesota Extension Service marks its 80th anniversary this year and the federal Cooperative Extension Service is 75. Both noted their anniversaries with special activities pegged to the May 8 commemoration of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act, which began federal funding for extension activities. An upcoming

edition of Extension Review will feature extension activities that took place all across the nation from May 1 to 10. Don Breneman, Educational Development Systems photographer, has submitted to Extension Review a number of Minnesota photos taken during that commemorative week and we share some of that work with you.



Sixth grade students from Waseca attended an extension-sponsored conservation day camp at Lake Sakatah State Park near Waterville. Here Dick Peterson, DNR forester, leads a plant identification walk.



Julie Albrecht, left, extension assistant, and Elaine Asp of the University's Department of Food Science and Nutrition, arrange food products for videotaping by a WCCO television photographer. The food is part of an annual grocery store price comparison.



Anita Dinesen, EDS video designer, adjusts the makeup on a panelist being taped at a national tourism conference held in Bloomington. Jim Connolly (background), communication specialist, moderated.



Bridget Brennan, 4-H summer assistant, conducts a bicycle maintenance workshop for members of the Northern Lights 4-H Club in St. Paul



Diane Corrin, Hennepin County agent, explains the placement of a radon detector to Laurel Boerger, a consultant in the Northern States Power consumer affairs department. Diane is responsible for teaching classes about radon for the seven-county metropolitan area. Northern States Power sponsored several class sessions and encouraged employees to place radon detectors in their homes.



Participants attending the National Shitake Mushroom Symposium toured the Shitake production facility at the Minnesota Forest Resource Center near Lanesboro. Mitch Gilbert of the Forest Resource Center staff explains the process of aging oak logs to provide a medium for the mushrooms to grow upon. (Photo by John Colwell)

Fulbright grant recipient Barbara Koth finds tourism similar worlds apart

Arts, crafts, festivals emphasizing community heritage, rural revitalization. If this list sounds like ways to boost community economic development in Minnesota, true. But it's what's happening in Thailand, too.

Barbara Koth discovered more similarities than differences in tourism in the two countries while in Bangkok on a Fulbright grant from August to January. She is assistant extension specialist in tourism with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service Tourism Center.

"Southeast Asia is the hot destination in travel now," she says of that part of the world. Thailand promotes its culture, historic traditions and tropical paradise beaches to appeal to tourists. She is struck with "their welcoming attitude and Thai style of hospitality. The service industry there is an honorable profession — these are important people, not lower status workers."

Tourism strategies there and here are similar, according to Koth. "But they do a far, far superior job of statistics reporting" possibly because all visitors must pass through border control and travel-related information is collected on entry cards. Nearly everyone coming to the country flies in. The borders from Burma, Laos and Cambodia are closed. Informa-

tion gathered from entering visitors tells such things as percentages of first and repeat visits, average length of stay, expenditures, purpose of visits and demographics about the visitors themselves.

Koth notes there is a shortage of mid-level hotel managers in the country. The Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCIA) has sent representatives to Thailand and Indonesia to assess the need for cooperative training programs. Purdue University probably will soon be involved in training Thais who come to the U.S. for study hotel management.

Her assignment in Thailand was to do a case study of Khao Yai, a national park about 2 1/2 hours from Bangkok. She reviewed facilities of various tourist locations and lectured at several universities. One of her recommendations was to show the world the importance of Thai rain forests and why they should not be destroyed. Koth worked on ways to showcase wildlife viewing, jungle trekking, environmental education and scientific opportunities to attract international tourists to Thailand's protected areas system. "It was a new perspective on something they took for granted," Koth adds.



Photo courtesy of Barb Koth

Barb Koth (second from right) gives food and lotus blossoms to Buddhist monks at the annual temple ceremony in Thailand. In the foreground is Anchalee Sitisot, a colleague at the Tourism Authority of Thailand.

"Trekking might be the closest thing to a bed and breakfast in Thailand," she says. At a cost of \$10 to \$30 a day, groups of up to ten tourists can boat, ride elephants and hike in mountainous areas of the north, staying in open air bamboo houses. Several of the trekking companies are run by hill tribe members themselves. Increasing

numbers of tourists have brought social and environmental changes to this remote region.

Koth says the insights and perspective that she gained in her Thailand experience will prove helpful as she works with the tourism industry in Minnesota.

Editor's note: This article was written before the uprising in China curtailed tourism to that part of Asia, but Koth says visitor interest is still strong in Thailand and other countries of southeast Asia. ■

- Mary Kay O'Hearn

In brief . . . In brief . . .

Lewis Hendricks, forest products specialist, has been named Lumberman of the Year by the Twin Cities Hoo Hoo Club, the fraternity of forest products marketers and distributors. He was cited for his contributions to the joint venture between the academic and business communities. Hendricks is coordinator of the Cold Climate Housing Information Center and has written and taught on a range of topics including wood preservation, finishing, selection for housing, ice dam prevention, wood heating and moisture problems.

Alan Dexter, sugarbeet specialist, was selected as the first recipient of the Sugarbeet Distinguished Service Award presented at the Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association annual meeting. He was recognized for almost 20 years of service to the

sugarbeet industry in Minnesota and North Dakota. He has been a leader in research and educational programming about weed control in sugar beets since coming to his current position with the University of Minnesota and North Dakota State University.

Educational Development Systems staff are among the steering committee members for the University Communicators Forum, a group of writers and editors from various departments on the Twin Cities campus. Pamela Barnard, EDS editor, and Don Breneman, photography specialist, are newly elected to the group. Graphic artist John Molstad continues on the committee, which plans workshops and professional development opportunities for persons involved in University public information work.

Family Community Leadership (FCL) Honor Roll for 1989 includes the names of two Minnesotans, Lynnette Mullins of Crookston and Lee Luebbe of Winona. The national FCL honor was extended to 42 community leaders nationwide. The Minnesota FCL program trains community volunteers in leadership skills and issues affecting families and communities. Both Mullins and Luebbe helped implement the FCL program in Minnesota and are certified FCL trainers.

Mark Stenzel and Cathie Bergum of the Educational Development Systems (EDS) staff were awarded Honorary State Farmer degrees by the Minnesota FFA in recognition of their contributions to the state FFA convention held each year on the St. Paul campus.

Fish

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in going into the bait culture business because the market infrastructure is there and demand will continue to grow. When it comes to food fish, the demand is there, but we don't have the technology or the market infrastructure yet," he said.

Midwestern aquaculture should get a boost from the recent creation of the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center, which funds aquaculture research and extension activities. Projects will focus on finding practical solutions to the problems faced by aquaculturists in this region, Landkamer said.

The aquaculture conference was sponsored by the Minnesota Aquaculture Advisory Committee, the Minnesota Fish Farmers Association, Minnesota Sea Grant and the Minnesota Extension Service. It was organized by Landkamer with Sea Grant fisheries extension agent Jeff Gunderson, Douglas County extension director Larry Zilliox and Operation Walleye education and research director Cal Courneya. ■

- Karen Plass

Participation

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such as bike safety or camping. School enrichment programs such as alcohol education accounted for 22 percent, and 19 percent of the participants were in community 4-H clubs.

Bike safety, with 108,000 participants, was the most popular 4-H project.

Last year, 15,000 adults and 11,000 young people served as 4-H volunteers, also an increase over 1987 totals. ■

- Evelyn Anderson