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July Calendar of Events

July 1
◊ Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food—Redlands Community College, El Reno

July 9
◊ Podcasting 201: Polishing the Podcast—Centra

July 17
◊ Growing Season Prescribed Fire—Methodist Church, Cheyenne

July 19
• Parent Child Connections Program—Polycom video conference

July 20
◊ Current Issues in Agricultural Economics—Centra

July 30
◊ Cattlemen’s College—Reed Center, Midwest City

A New Month, A New Look

The Staff and Program Development intranet site http://intranet.okstate.edu/staff_development has a new look this month. We have updated our site using PLONE and added some new sections including the calendar of in-service training sessions and mentoring. We hope to continue adding additional resources that will benefit you. In addition, the in-service training generic evaluation form was added, however we would like to add other examples of evaluations that have worked for you at the county, area, district, or state level. Please send examples of evaluations and we will post as many as possible. Enjoy your summer and don’t forget to spend time with your family and friends.

From Joyce, Alexa and Leslie
The Staff and Program Development Team
Where does all the funding come from?

Do you ever wonder what kind of extra funding is available for your county and who might be able to help? Agriculture Sponsored Programs administration is here to help you find funding to assist with your county or district programs.

The Ag Sponsored Programs office currently has five staff members, although they are in the process of hiring another staff member. The staff manages grants and contracts from conception to closure. They have the services divided into pre-award and post-award. All funding found, applied for, and managed by Ag Sponsored Programs is external funding.

Currently, 36 counties have active accounts with the office and more than 600 active accounts throughout DASNR. Through the third quarter of fiscal year 2010, they have processed $22 million in awards and more than $47 million in proposals. The vast majority of the grants at the county level are from the NRA to support the shooting sports program. Funding for the Creek Nation educator position has also been through a grant. Other research areas within DASNR that are funded by grants include: bioenergy, integrated pest management, and poultry waste management.

Extension professionals can find grants in many different ways. Agriculture Sponsored Programs sends out a weekly listserv to distribute grant opportunities. Also you can visit their website, agsp.dasnr.okstate.edu, and all of the funding opportunities are archived. There are many websites that you can visit to find funding. Some of these are fundingopps.cos.com and grants.gov. In addition, check with other professionals who may know of different funding agencies.

“Remember that every funding agency’s requirements are different when filling out the application,” said Hollie Schreiber, manager of Agriculture Sponsored Programs. “Although, federal grants have become somewhat standardized through the implementation of grants.gov, read the instructions because it will be different for every agency.”

Agriculture Sponsored Programs personnel will also assist with filling out the applications. Some words of wisdom from the staff are to start early, plan, read and follow instructions, and proofread for spelling and grammar.

“Know what you can and cannot do with your funding,” said Karen Whitworth, grants and contracts specialist. “There are some things that cannot be purchased with your grant money. If you have questions call us and ask!”

Some of the most frequently asked questions they receive are; Do we have to route this? Is this allowed on the grant? How long will it take?

If you are trying to find additional funding or have any questions about grants these are the people you need to contact. They are more than happy to help you.

How to be Productive: A Guide to Avoid Multitasking

The fact is that the majority of people multitask in some aspect of their life, especially in the workplace. For example, you could be working two projects at once, while your county director has placed two new requests on your desk and your District Director wants your monthly reports pronto. You are on the phone while three new emails come in and you are trying to get out the door on time so you can attend a meeting. Then your cell phone rings and a co-worker stops by with a request for information. Also, your inbox is filled with 100 old messages to read. Multitasking is not always the best answer when trying to handle a busy schedule. In truth, multitasking is less efficient, more complicated, stressful, and chaotic. So here are a few tips to help you better manage your workload in a more effective manner:

1. **Do the most important thing first.** When you sit down in the morning, spend an hour on the most important thing on your to-do list. This is a great idea because even if you do not get it all done in one hour, you will be much more likely to revisit the task once you have started it.

2. **Plan your day in blocks.** Leave open blocks of time in between tasks for something urgent that may come up.

3. **Do not leave email sitting in your inbox.** Organize email into file folders. If the message needs more thought, move it to your to-do list. If it is for reference, print it out. If it is about a meeting, move it to your calendar.

4. **Check your email on a schedule.** It is not effective to read and answer every email as it arrives. Just because someone can contact you immediately does not mean that you have to respond to them immediately.

5. **Keep website addresses organized.** Use bookmarking services to keep track of websites. Instead of having random notes about places you want to check out, places you want to keep as a reference, etc., you can save them all in one place, and you can search and share your list easily.

6. **Know when you work best.** Try to schedule things in the time of day that you are most productive. Everyone has a best time. You can discover yours by monitoring your productivity over a period of time. Then you need to manage your schedule to keep your best time free for your most important work.

7. **Organize your to-do list everyday.** If you don’t know what you should be doing, how can you manage your time to do it? You can either write your list out or use to-do list software to help you better organize your schedule into manageable, relevant chunks.

Create a Sunny Summer Workplace

As you prepare for the summer months and request annual leave, how can you make adjustments to ensure a smooth-functioning summer workplace?

Time away from work is important—there is much to be gained from a vacation from the office. Balancing work and life is increasingly cited by workers as a key concern, with employees valuing time with friends and family outside of work. Time off does not mean you are not getting the best from your employees—in fact, taking time off can help to energize and inspire workers.

To ensure that employees understand how much you value time off, a handwritten note from the county director, district director or Department Head thanking them for their hard work and efforts would be a nice gesture. A sincere personal approach goes a long way to “send off” each employee and make them feel appreciated. Then hopefully, they will come back with an amazing spirit to hit the ground running. Everyone benefits from time off—be sure you make the most of your summer vacations with thoughtful coordination and advance preparation!

Source & Picture: webatsimon.com
Planning on taking classes this fall?

DUE August 16, 2010

Tuition/fee waivers for the 2010 Fall Semester should be submitted no later than August 16, five working days prior to the first day of class on August 23, 2010.

Please submit all tuition/fee waivers to Joyce Martin, 255 Ag Hall.

The Educational Leave form must accompany all tuition/fee waivers submitted by county educators even if you are not requesting educational leave. If you are taking a class but will not need educational leave, please provide information indicating **when and where** each class will be held. These forms should be signed by your County Extension Director, District Extension Director, Department Head, and/or appropriate Unit Administrator. It should then be forwarded to 255 Ag Hall for processing. Please allow plenty of time to get these forms submitted by the deadline. Remember, if you miss the deadline, the fee waiver will **NOT** be honored, and there will be no exceptions. There will also be NO acceptance of letters of explanation. If you are a full-time faculty or staff member taking classes, you may request a tuition/fee waiver. The form is available for download from the Office of the Registrar’s Web site, [http://www.okstate.edu/registrar/FormsOnline/FSFeeWaiverForm3.pdf](http://www.okstate.edu/registrar/FormsOnline/FSFeeWaiverForm3.pdf)

The Educational Leave requests are available on-line at the Staff Development intranet site: [http://intranet.okstate.edu/staff_development/](http://intranet.okstate.edu/staff_development/)

Distance Education courses do have additional fees and may not be eligible for tuition/fee waivers. In-service training does not require a fee waiver form. If you have questions, please contact your immediate supervisor as they have updated information regarding the policy on Tuition/Fee Waivers and Educational Leave Requests.

If your class is cancelled, you decide to drop your class, or if you change your educational leave request, call Joyce Martin at (405) 744-7969, so that your records can be updated. Also, check your Bursar invoice to make sure you receive the tuition/fee waiver. Contact the Fee Adjustment Office at (405) 744-6866, if you have questions.
How to Teach Adults in 1 hour

When presenting to a group you must always find ways for the participants to be involved. There are many different ways of getting them involved in your presentation. At the beginning of your presentation you might have the participants stand and introduce themselves. This helps you to better know who your audience is and for the audience to become better acquainted with one another. However, if you are presenting at a conference, time and attendance may prohibit you from doing this activity.

Another great way to get your audience involved is to survey the audience. Try to keep it to one or two questions because after the second “raise your hand if...” question, the number of people participating goes down. Also, make sure that the audience knows that the results of the survey were helpful to you as the presenter.

Asking participants why they are present will also get them involved. Asking them “Why are you here?” may be good for giving you an idea of what people are interested in and what they came to learn about. The best way to get this information is to talk to participants as they walk through the door or talk to the sponsors ahead of time.

Another participation technique is to have the audience give you a list of questions and you cover the topics or answer the questions. It would be a good idea to have a flip chart to write the ideas down. This is a very good technique to use in open-ended sessions because many times presenters will use this method and not be able to cover all of the material. However, this is a great way to give the participants exactly what they want out of the session.

There are many different approaches a presenter can take towards the introduction and getting the audience involved. The way you get your audience involved is completely up to you. Regardless of the approach you take, you still need to provide at least one instructive tip, lesson, point, fact, or concept in the first five minutes of your session. That means keeping the introduction of yourself to two minutes maximum, and opening remarks to a total of less than five minutes, so that you have time to get into the substance of your session within five minutes.

Source: How to Teach Adults in 1 Hour

Escape Common Time Robbers

There are many things throughout the day that can rob our time. They may not seem significant by themselves. But add them up, and they can equal minutes or even hours of wasted time!

**Common time robbers to avoid:**

*Procrastination*—Do not keep putting off a task that needs to be done. Tackle tasks promptly.

*Outside Interruptions*—Politey prevent others from disrupting you at your desk. Keep personal phone calls to a minimum. Keep telephone interruptions polite, but brief. Avoid unnecessary talking throughout your day.

*Wasted Steps*—Save steps by organizing your work logically according to the errands you must do to avoid unnecessary trips back and forth.

*Lack of Detail*—When given a project or task, get all the information you can at once. This way you will avoid going back several times to the person who initiated the task. On the other hand, when you need something from someone, make sure you give them all the details.

*Inability to Say “No”*—Of course you want to be helpful, but what if you are already swamped? How do you decide when to say “no” to a request? Ask yourself if this is part of your job or an extension of it. If it is neither, is it a way to advance your career, or are you being taken advantage of?

*Crises*—A crisis is an unexpected interruption of major impact above and beyond the normal day’s events that requires your immediate attention. Expect the unexpected to occur during your day. Head off crises by finding out why things keep going wrong and learning to anticipate the outcome of events.

*Managing Events*—Establish some quiet time throughout the day to get yourself reorganized and mentally back on track.

Source: MondayMotivators
Staying Safe this Summer

Basic Office Safety — Slips and falls are the most frequent cause of injuries in the workplace, and people working in an office are twice as likely to be injured by falling than people who are working in other types of workplaces. Keeping alert, thinking ahead, and using common sense can help minimize the risk.

Report it - Anytime you see something unsafe, report it to your county director or immediate supervisor. Things you might want to point out include sightings of torn carpet, loose tiles, wobbly steps or floorboards, burned-out lightbulbs, broken chairs or desks, and other defective equipment. Also, stray electrical cables or obstructions of walkways, and possible unauthorized visitors should be reported.

Emergency Preparedness - Emergencies can happen, and being prepared for them ahead of time is vital. Here are a few things that can better prepare you for an emergency: have a plan for evacuating the building in the event of a fire or other disaster, know where the nearest emergency exit is as well as other exits, and practice with fire drills at least once a year. Also, move away from windows during a tornado or other type of windstorm, take the stairs instead of the elevator during fires or other natural disasters, and create specific strategies to deal with possible power outages and computer work failures.

Work Safe - The safest workplaces are ones in which every single employee knows office safety tips. As a State of Oklahoma employee, all of us are required to participate in quarterly safety trainings. A safe office benefits employers and employees alike. We can save money on insurance and workers compensation claims, while also maintaining good morale and productivity among the staff. Workers save money on health care costs and are happier and more productive in safe office environments, so work and play safely.

Source: safety.lovetoknow.com

Organizing Your Electronic Media

Do you ever think to yourself, “I wish my computer was as organized as the rest of my office”? Well here are a few tips to make your computer look as good as your office.

First, organize your hard drive, CDs, external drives and paper files using identical systems and you might also color code your CDs to match your hanging files. Another organization tip is to delete old versions of software applications or unused programs to free up memory on your computer.

Periodically back up files on your hard drive to CD, DVD, or external hard drive, and consider removing files to free up storage space. Be sure to save only frequently used documents on your hard drive.

Another tip is to organize your hard drive, CDs, and external drives by creating subdirectories or folders. Make sure to give logical, easily identifiable names to your files and folders. Place the date within the file name, always placing the year first, then month. Disks that you use frequently should be stored near your computer.

Copies of software should be stored with the user manual and another tip is to compress your files to increase space on your hard drive. Also, schedule time on your calendar to back up your files on a regular basis.

Source: The Superproductivity conference
Happy Trails to You

“Retirement, your time to stop living at work, and start working at living.” - Anonymous

Goodbye, Farewell, So Long, Adios, however you say it, it still seems very hard to do! We have many co-workers who have chosen to retire this year. We know that each individual has made a tremendous impact on the total Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service programs for many years and we applaud them for their service. We wish each of them the very best as they embark on a new journey of life.

Just a few of the special moments!

L-R: Mick Jones and Sue Davidson—Lincoln County and Jim Trapp –Presenting Awards

Kevin Hackett—NW District

Kent Barnes—NE District

L-R: Pat Kidd and Starry Clark, Extension Finance

Jack Wallace—SE District
“I never cease to be amazed at the power of the coaching process to draw out the skills or talent that was previously hidden within an individual, and which invariably finds a way to solve a problem previously thought unsolvable.”

~ John Russell, Managing Director, Harley-Davidson Europe Ltd.