



June Extension CD e-Newsletter



Guest Editor, Myra Moss, Extension Specialist, Sustainable Economic and Community Development

From the Desk of Dr. Ken Martin, AD / Community Development

Welcome to our June issue of the CD e-newsletter. We hope you are finding the information in these monthly e-newsletters resourceful for your community development work.

There are four regional CD meetings scheduled over the next several months. The dates and locations are provided below. I am looking forward to these meetings with educators and specialists as an opportunity to provide you with an update of our Community Development program and to have a discussion about the current and future opportunities and challenges involving our communities and partners. I encourage everyone to plan on attending at least one of these upcoming meetings.

Another event is being planned for September 7, 2006 which will focus on the role that Community Development plays in multi-disciplinary programs involving all of our program areas. Scott Peters of Cornell University Extension has been studying this linkage and will be the keynote speaker. Respondents from our various program areas will reflect on how community development principles and concepts have impacted their program efforts in building community. A series of roundtables will provide opportunities to learn about multi-disciplinary resources and programs that can help you to build community in your educational efforts. This will be held in the Agricultural Administration Auditorium in Columbus. Look for more information on this opportunity in the near future. In the meantime, mark your calendars and plan on attending.

In another effort to enhance our Community Development program, I have been working with an in-service committee to develop resources for our CD in-service effort. Having been on the job for about a year, one of the things that I observed is that frequently we hire educators who have CD responsibilities for a small portion of their assignment. Usually, they have little formal education or experience in community development. My hope is that we will have in-service program resources in place to provide them with the understanding and background they need to adequately represent our CD program in the counties and communities they serve. One way to do this is through a series of CD in-service program modules that provide an overview of our program resources and the expertise represented by our specialists and educators.

Working with the committee, we identified eight topic areas (leadership, local government, land use and sustainable community planning, economic development, downtown revitalization, marketing, basic community development, and GIS/Geospatial analysis) that represent the program resources we support through our community development program. These program areas and the individuals developing the in-service modules are:

- Basic Community Development – Chet Bowling, Deanna Tribe

- Leadership Development – Chet Bowling, Don Lacy, Sharon Strouse
- Local Government – David Civittolo, Bill Grunkemeyer, Don Lacy
- Land Use and Sustainable Community Planning – John Conglose, Nancy Kukay, Don Lacy, Myra Moss
- Economic Development – Greg Davis, Jeff Shaner
- Downtown Revitalization/Marketing Analysis – Cindy Bond-Zelinski, Myra Moss
- Direct Marketing – Stan Ernst, Julie Fox, Deanna Tribe
- GIS and Geospatial Analysis – Talia Brown, Nathan Watermeier

We are looking for 1-2 hour modules on each topic. The length will depend on how much time is needed to adequately inform educators about the breadth and depth of our program resources and expertise in the chosen area. The intent is to provide educators with an overview of our CD programs, increase their understanding of how our CD programs contribute to community development, ensure that they will be able to identify opportunities where our programs can benefit the communities they serve, and know who can work with them to develop and implement the programs in their communities. Modules will (1) be built around POWs and LOGIC models, (2) identify our CD educational programs that support the topic area, (3) provide an overview of the identified programs along with resource persons and curriculum materials, (4) identify the target audiences, and (5) include a success story.

There are several ways to make this information available. These include traditional face-to-face in-services, on-line educational programs, Web-Ex, and streaming video. We will look at all of these options. The latter options will make it easier to access program resources through computers and make access more convenient as well.

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www.microenterpriseworks.org/projects/ruraldevelopment/2006RFP/NewMEDProgramsRuralDevelopment.RFP.doc. For further information, contact Natalie Woodroffe,

Manager of Rural Initiatives, nwoodroffe@assoceo.org or call 603 444-5153.

The Mutual Service Cooperative Fund, administered by the Cooperative Development Foundation, awards grants for projects that enhance the quality of life for seniors living in rural America. Grants range from \$500 to \$20,000. **The deadline for applications is July 28.** For more information, go to

http://www.cdf.coop/msc_fund/index.htm or call (202) 638-6222.

A new issue of the USDA's Economic Research Services DatelineERS newsletter is available at www.ers.usda.gov/News/DatelineERSNewsletter.htm. This issue says farming is still an industry of family businesses.

Extension Community Development Programs

Next S.T.E.P. Initiative at the OSU Extension Center at Wooster

Written by John Conglose, Extension Specialist, Economic Development and Land Use

The Next S.T.E.P. Initiative or the Next Street Tree Evaluation Program Initiative of the Ohio State University Extension Center at Wooster is a multi-disciplinary program focusing on the social and economic benefits of urban forests for Ohio communities and citizens, the Ohio Green Industry, and the furtherance of scientific literacy. The program is directly connected to the many emerging issues identified by OSU Extension as critical for Ohioans. It **strengthens and enhances communities and neighborhoods** by focusing on the important component of community tree resources, home values, community investment in tree canopies, etc. It **enhances Ohio's educational capacity** by significantly affecting the scientific literacy of thousands of Ohioans directly through educational programming and many more through educational materials that are being developed (plant, pest and disease profiles, website development, community tree census tools). It contributes to **growing the green industry** through the strong relationship between the Master Gardener program, the OSU Extension Nursery Landscape and Turf Team members and their relationships with the Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association and the Ohio Chapter of the International Society for Arboriculture relative to tree selection and tree care services. Finally, the Next S.T.E.P. Initiative connects with **maintaining and enhancing Ohio's water quality and air quality** relative to the considerable environmental impacts of enhanced urban and suburban forests in Ohio.

There are currently twenty eight (**28**) **OSU Extension educators and specialists** along with representatives from the **OSU School of Natural Resources and OARDC** that are participating in this program. A subcommittee recently received an **OSU Cares Grant** to develop an **OSU Extension Master Gardener Tree Stewards Program**. Eventually (**2,000**) **citizens from across Ohio** will receive training in Community Tree Stewardship by **October 2007**. Pilot projects focusing on the **costs/benefits analysis of community street tree programs** in communities across Ohio will also be completed.

For further information regarding this OSU Extension Center at Wooster Initiative please contact Co-leaders John B. Conglose, Extension Specialist, Economic Development and Land Use (conglose.1@osu.edu) and Jim Chatfield, Extension Specialist, Horticulture and Crop Science (chatfield.1@osu.edu).

The Anatomy of a Community Development Project: The Appleseed Wool Corporation

Written by Chet Bowling, Extension Specialist, Leadership

As I understand it, the main goal of this newsletter is to keep readers “up to speed” on Community Development (CD) programs and projects that are being done around the state. Given the extended time frame and enormous complexity of CD work I thought there might be an additional opportunity here. This monthly narrative will, for as long as the below described project takes, be a running commentary of the twists and turns, fits and starts, roadblocks and detours, successes and failures of the project. Therefore readers who are very familiar with CD work will want to skim this material. For people who are not familiar with the emergent and diverse nature of CD work this column will, in a sense, be a practical lesson in CD.

At this point in time the title of the project is the Appleseed Wool Corporation/Plymouth, Ohio project. I believe this project holds promise for the future of one social entrepreneur, one business, one community, and perhaps one state and if you will allow me to suggest one nation. The project is in its formational stages and as it grows it is my intention to share my version of the project story. My hope is that by so doing readers will not only find valuable information, lessons they can use in their own work, and hopefully inspiration but that you will join me in the project by making suggestions, offering resources, and giving feedback.

The story starts with a chance meeting between me and Todd Fackler, the President of Appleseed Wool Corporation. Todd and I were both attending a one day Business Innovation Conference at the OSU Mansfield campus put on by the Braintree Center for Business Innovation. After one of the small group meetings Todd approached me, introduced himself and said that he like the comments I made during the meeting (flattery will get you everywhere). He said that he wanted to meet with me to talk about his business and community. He told me that he had a small wool business in Plymouth, Ohio and that the community was struggling from an enormous increase in substance abuse. There was something about Todd that I like right away, he seemed sincere and forthright and I was intrigued by both his business and the problems Plymouth was facing. I explained to Todd that I was in the middle of a very large project that was eating up 150% of my time so he agreed to a meeting date two months down the road.

The only research I had time for between our first conversation and our meeting in Plymouth was to use my trusty Mapquest to get driving directions and travel time. As I drove into town that day the place had familiar feeling. It is a very small community (population 1,863, 2.2 square mile land area, median household income \$36,994, and median house value of \$71,200) and it straddles the Huron and Richland County border. I sometimes call places like Plymouth “tweeners” because they are located between two political jurisdictions and/or larger population centers that make their growth problematic. During my ten years as an Extension Specialist I have seen many places like Plymouth. One stoplight, a one block business district with some of the stores vacant, a one or two block donut of homes surrounding the business district and as soon as you pass the last house in town you are in the corn fields. There are no suburbs or exurbs here, just town and country. It is the rural landscape of Ohio.

It didn't take long to find 55 Bell Street, the home of Appleseed Wool Corporation. They are located right next to the railroad tracks in the three or four building industrial section of town. Todd greeted me at the door and showed me around the building and explained the ecologically safe, mechanical felt making process. At the bottom of his business card it says "Makers of environmentally impeccable wool-based products for home, garden, farm and shop." What that means is that Todd buys wool that is not suitable for making clothes or carpeting turns it into felt which is used for carpet padding, hanging baskets and other environmentally safe uses. Readers will hear more about the felt making process and the uses for felt over the next few months. Perhaps some of you might even have some suggestions for new felt products that Todd could use.

Next month you will hear about my tour of Plymouth and our initial conversation about what could be done to build on its assets and resources.

Human Capital Assessment of Morgan County, Ohio

Written by Jeff Shaner, Extension Educator and County Directors, Morgan County

During the Fall of 2005, the Morgan County Improvement Corporation commissioned Markinetics and The Business Resource Center to conduct a research study on the Workforce of Morgan County. A small grant was secured from American Electric Power to help offset the cost of the study. This short report documents the Executive Findings of the study along with the introduction to the Final Report. For the complete report, contact OSU Extension.

With the latest two business closures having resulted in a loss of 465 jobs, the total job loss over the last decade in Morgan County has been approximately 1200 jobs. Consequently, Morgan County has been aggressively pursuing means to attract business opportunities to their area.

The Morgan County Improvement Corporation (CIC) has already evaluated all available demographic and census information. It has also conducted informal research in an effort to identify the businesses that best fit the existing workforce. Armed with a set of criteria by which to evaluate the best business prospects, the CIC is ready to actively recruit new businesses into the area. However, significant gaps in understanding the workforce capabilities exist.

Planners know that significant numbers of Morgan County residents, estimated at about 2200 people, commute to work outside the county. Supporting this estimate, the 2000 Census documented an average travel time to work of 36.2 minutes for Morgan County residents compared to the Ohio average time of 22.9 minutes.

Yet, little is known about what jobs Morgan County commuters hold, how much they earn and whether they would be willing to return to Morgan County if new jobs were available. In addition, no objective data is available to document the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the employed and unemployed residents within Morgan County.

This lack of information posed two problems for Morgan County economic developers.

1. Without this information, it is difficult to target businesses that are most compatible with the existing workforce.
2. Presentations to new business prospects are less compelling when objective information about the workforce is missing.

It is apparent that no information of this kind exists. While there is basic demographic data, no State agency can identify what has happened with a workforce that has undergone significant change because of job loss. Given that the entire State of Ohio has experienced manufacturing and mining job losses, this project is designed as a model for other counties. Using a local business to conduct the research may also create business opportunities for them to market to counties, cities, and other local groups that seek to have a solid base of employment information.

Finally, many times a company requests data on the Morgan County workforce that is not on hand. Likewise, Morgan County representatives lack the confidence to say that there is the necessary workforce for a given entity, although it is evident that there are numbers of people. This project helps to identify skills, training, and other valuable information to provide to potential businesses looking at the Morgan County community.

This study shows that there is a workforce with diverse capabilities in Morgan County. Morgan County residents work in at least 14 different job classifications with largest classifications being Office/Administrative Support and Manufacturing. Unemployed Morgan County residents have similar skills to those that are employed.

The knowledge base for Morgan County residents as measured by education is predominately high school graduates. However, significant numbers of post high school graduates still reside in the county. The biggest knowledge difference between an employed and an unemployed resident is that unemployed residents were less likely to have graduated from high school.

Residents working outside of Morgan County appear to be willing to return to work in Morgan County if a job pays the same and has about the same benefits. These benefits would include health insurance, vacation, paid holidays and possibly sick pay. It should be kept in mind that Morgan County residents working outside the county make more money than do those who work inside the county in similar jobs. Residents working in Morgan County were three to four times more likely to earn \$8 or less per hour than workers in other counties. Conversely, residents working outside of Morgan County are about twice as likely to make \$12 or more per hour than those working in Morgan County.

Unemployed Morgan County residents appear to have a good attitude toward finding employment since 75% are hopeful about getting a job. However, it should be noted that four in 10 don't know where to find resources to assist them in their job search. It is likely that these individuals also have lower education levels that contribute to this difficulty.

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