

Community Development e-Newsletter – March 2006 Edition

Edited this month by
Deanna L. Tribe, Extension Specialist, Community Development

The Extension Community Development e-Newsletter attempts to strengthen ties to our Extension Educators and other professional audiences. We are always interested in your input for improving this e-newsletter. You may continue to provide suggestions by using the following link to a short Zoomerang survey. Thank you in advance for your willingness to help us serve you better.

<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB224W9VH36DP>

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

Regional Extension Educator Meetings

On Monday, March 12, 2006, Steve Baertsche and I attended a regional meeting of ANR/CD educators in Wooster. This is the third regional meeting that I have attended. I welcome these opportunities to meet with educators to provide an update on Community Development programs and opportunities. The meetings also provide me with opportunities to hear what educators in the field are doing in the areas of agriculture, natural resources, and community development education and outreach programs. The scope of work, the program innovations, and the benefits to local economies and clients continue to impress me. If you are involved in planning a regional meeting involving educators with CD responsibilities, I would appreciate an invitation to attend so I can continue learning more about your program efforts.

Community Development Program Opportunities

There are a number of Community Development program opportunities coming up that I want to call to your attention. They are listed in the Announcement and Calendar section of this e-newsletter. One is the second e-Commerce workshop sponsored by OSUE CD, OSUE Center at Piketon, and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). The ARC purchased the license to use the workshop materials which were developed by University of Minnesota Extension Service. OSUE CD has been working with ARC to develop the capacity to conduct the e-Commerce training in Ohio's 29 Appalachian counties. ARC staff has committed to conducting several initial workshops and then OSUE CD will continue to conduct future workshops using Extension educators as instructors. This is an opportunity for small business proprietors and entrepreneurs to learn what e-Commerce can do for their business. At the first workshop held a few months ago, Mike Lloyd and Jeff Shaner participated with the goal of becoming trainers so they can deliver the workshop to other audiences. For the upcoming workshop, we are planning to have ARC personnel deliver the workshop at Piketon and have Jeff and Mike facilitate a distance link at Caldwell with another group of participants. The e-Commerce workshop provides participants with an introduction to e-Commerce and provides them with a good understanding on how e-Commerce can be used and applied to various business and market development strategies.

Tax Preparation Program Partnership

We just completed our second year of offering free tax preparation in partnership with the Godman Guild, the Fisher College of Business, the City of Columbus, the Internal Revenue Service, Columbus Saves, and Columbia Gas of Ohio. Our efforts focused on increasing participation in the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program where taxpayers are eligible for up to \$4,400 in tax credits depending on their income and the number of dependents. Students from the Fisher College of Business, working with Professor Bill Raabe, provided tax preparation services for 196 taxpayers. From these returns which were all filed electronically, taxpayers received net refunds of \$295,000 of which \$160,000 were from the EITC program. A total of 110 new clients went to the Godman Guild to file their taxes through the program. What is unique about the program is that, in addition to encouraging participation in the EITC program, it provides access to financial services and programs by offering taxpayers advice on financial management, asset building through savings accounts, and home ownership. The program saves participants hundreds of dollars from other tax preparation services which often charge exorbitant fees for their services. If you are interested in initiating a similar program in your county, contact Susan Colbert for more information.

Fisher Entrepreneurship Center Program

A recent Fisher Entrepreneurship Center program, funded by OSUE, brought together six OSUE work groups to focus on business plan development. The projects involved an exercise program for businesses, bringing communities into the knowledge economy, promoting and expanding the green industry (two groups), developing more revenue generating offerings through the data center, and tourism enterprise development. The presentations by the work groups were given to Extension administrative cabinet members and detailed the various program and business strategies needed to move the projects forward. According to the work groups, this program was very helpful in getting them to think creatively and strategically in building a business plan that will lead to a successful program. There was a strong indication that additional opportunities will be made available to other work groups to participate in the program. If your work group or team would benefit from a focused effort on business plan development, I would encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity in the future.

Farm Science Review

For Farm Science Review (FSR) this year, OSUE CD will be working with Purdue University to offer exhibits and presentations of several community development topics. Discussions are getting underway and possible topics may include sustainable community economic development, cultural and heritage tourism development, local and regional food system development, downtown revitalization, regional economic development, and entrepreneurship. Put the dates on your calendar and plan on attending and participating as a resource person as we highlight the exciting things we are doing in community development.

Gallia County Newest Ohio Business Retention & Expansion Initiative Member

To create jobs and strengthen Gallia County communities, [Becky Nesbitt](#) will be involving Gallia County volunteers in the development of a [continuous Business Retention & Expansion program](#) over the next 12 months. The program is a cooperative effort involving [OSUE – Gallia County](#), [Gallia County Board of Commissioners](#), and the Ohio Business Retention & Expansion Initiative. Specific local program goals include:

- Strengthened communications between the business community and local officials
- Development of new linkages among governmental units in Gallia County
- Identification of issues hampering Gallia County business expansion efforts

The [Ohio Business Retention & Expansion Initiative](#) is a collaborative effort between [Ohio State University Extension](#) and OSU's [Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics](#). For more information contact [Becky Nesbitt](#) or [Greg Davis](#).

Lancaster Retail Market Analysis Underway

The [City of Lancaster](#), Main Street Lancaster, and the [Ohio Retail Market Analysis Extension Program](#) are working together over the next few months to better understand the extent to which Lancaster-area retailers are capturing the flow of dollars spent in the region. Targeted to rural and semi-rural communities, the program incorporates the use of [geographic information systems](#) (GIS) to examine sales of 32 retail sectors within a particular study area of interest. Combining available retail sales data with GIS mapping enables us to describe the relative supply of and demand for retail goods within a locally-defined market area. Contact [Greg Davis](#) for more information.

OSU Extension Sustainable Development Center

Bill Grunkemeyer announces that the Extension Sustainable Development Center will be collaborating with the City of Kent Community Development Office to present at the 12th Annual transforming Local Government Conference in Dayton Ohio from May 31 to June 2, 2006. Our topic is "Sustainable Comprehensive Planning: An Asset-Based Approach." The Innovation Group sponsors the conference. IG's purpose is to assist local government build and sustain the capacity to be innovative. We do this by identifying and removing barriers to innovation by transforming cultures, improving the quality of our thinking and creativity, maximizing technology, and providing a network for leaders in local government. For more information on IG and the conference link to Innovations Group at <http://www.ig.org/>

Share Your Heritage Projects in Ohio Appalachia

Two *Share Your Heritage (SYH)* projects are taking place this spring-summer in Ohio Appalachia. *Share Your Heritage* is an initiative of Partners in Tourism, a coalition of

national cultural organizations and agencies that is coordinated by the National Trust's Heritage Tourism Program. The ARC's Distressed Counties Program is also a partner as are more than a dozen local and regional organizations in Ohio Appalachia. The *SYH* project culminates in intensive planning workshops designed to bring a targeted group of community representatives together to address key cultural heritage tourism challenges. Deanna Tribe and Julie Fox are steering committee members for the *SYH* project, "Realizing the Dream of the Appalachian Highway Corridor," with John Kellis of the Ohio Valley RC&D Council chairing the initiative. The second *SYH* project—"Developing Cultural Heritage Tourism Plans for a 7-County Region of Southern Ohio"--is being coordinated by Mary Steinmaus of Rural Action. For more information about these projects, contact Deanna Tribe, tribe.1@osu.edu.

Nationally-known Authors at Vinton County's Spring Literary Arts Festival

Even small communities can attract big-name authors for dedicated cultural enrichment events as evidenced by the Herbert Wescoat Memorial Library in McArthur, Ohio (Vinton County) Spring Literary Arts Festival (SLAF) event, April 22-24. A variety of regional and state grants have helped make this event possible. In its second year, the SLAF will feature Robert Olen Butler, novelist and winner of the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction; Ivan M. Tribe, country music author and researcher; and Jeffery Deaver, poet and journalist who is perhaps best known in the field of suspense novels, having won a variety of awards presented through the genre. Other related activities will be taking place throughout the weekend. Events are free and open to the public. See www.vintoncountypublic.lib.oh.us for more information.

Community Development Announcements and Calendar of Events

Entrepreneurship Listening Session at Piketon – March 24, 2006

<http://comdev.osu.edu/pub/listeningsessionsreg.pdf>

McSweeney Land Use Conference – March 31, 2006, Fisher Auditorium

<http://woostercenter.osu.edu/jmcsbrochure.pdf>

E-Commerce workshop – April 17-18, 2006 – Piketon and Caldwell

<http://comdev.osu.edu/pub/Accessse-commercepiketon1.pdf>

Priester Health Conference – April 25-27, 2006, Louisville, Kentucky

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/fcs/priester/index.htm>

Quality Through Collaboration Health Initiative – ODOH, April 21, 2006, Columbus

- Population based health issues
- Access to care, ways to increase the number of providers in the community/region

<http://comdev.osu.edu/pub/2006RHOTBrochureCohort211.pdf>

Extension Community Development In Service, Monroe County (the “Switzerland of Ohio”), June 29, 2006. Details will be available soon. Save the date.

NACDEP, April 16-19, 2007 – Philadelphia