

May 2014



Southwind Extension SUCCESS

Landscape: 101



The goal of landscape design is to connect a house, fence water feature, buildings or other permanent structures to the environment. As simple as it may seem, landscape design can be challenging. The landscape designer should carefully consider the beauty and science of plants to be used as well as site features. To assist homeowners with their landscape design challenges, the Southwind Extension District hosted an in-depth landscape design. Twenty-one class participants learned simple and effective home landscape design methods during three, three hour sessions. Each participant used drafting paper and tools to draw their home and yard to scale. They used tracing paper to overlay existing utilities which is a very important component of landscape design. Not only did they learn through the classroom time, they also had homework assignments to complete. Once class participants understood the concept that a good landscape needs walls, ceilings, flooring and furniture (the same items the inside of a home needs) it all came together for them. The class also gained knowledge in picking the right plant for the right location.

Positive Youth Development

Throughout the school year, the Southwind Extension District provides programming to schools within the District in the areas of Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Positive Youth Development. In addition to the obvious educational objectives, Agents also encourage youth to enhance their speaking and presentation abilities in a group setting. During a Beginning Entomology school enrichment program, a young girl who appeared shy and hesitant to participate in the hands-on activities, especially when it came to sharing her work with her peers. By the end of the series, when the class was asked for volunteers to present, she was the first to raise her hand. School enrichment programs like this are more than just a program, youth are learning important life skills. Utilizing an Entomology curriculum, youth gained skills in communication and public speaking.

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*Knowledge
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Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact Carla Nemecek, 620-365-2242.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
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Food Preservation Workshop



Early in May, 14 people gathered in Humboldt for a day-long Food Preservation Workshop with Karen Blakeslee, Food Safety Specialist for K-State Research & Extension. They learned about the science of food preservation, home canning basics—including pressure canning and water bath processing, drying food, and freezing food. Hands-on practice with the preservation techniques was a big part of the class and everyone had the opportunity to participate in pressure canning carrots, drying herbs and making and water bath processing salsa and 5 kinds of jams and jellies.

100% of participants reported by survey that they improved their knowledge and plan to practice new skills learned as a result of this program. Some of the actions and/or changes they plan to make include adding more product to get the correct headspace; prepare and process salsa correctly using reliable recipes (reported they had not been doing it correctly for years); to help granddaughter learn to can; to grow and dry some herbs; to can more often and tell others how to can properly; and to plant a bigger garden and do more home preserving.

Public Relationships & Marketing

Wikipedia defines public relations as the practice of managing the spread of information between an individual or an organization and the public. Public relations may include an organization or individual gaining exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that do not require direct payment. The aim of public relations by a company often is to persuade the public, investors, partners, employees, and other stakeholders to maintain a certain point of view about it, its leadership, products, or of political decisions. In the Southwind District, public relationships and marketing are critical to programming success. Common practices include keeping the website up to date with current information, weekly columns in local newspapers within the District, booths and trade shows or fairs, and advertising events. Most recently, radio advertisements were incorporated into the marketing plan to encourage residents to test their soil for nutrient analysis and to promote the Horticulture program as a valuable and trusted resource. Two local stations were selected with a potential combined weekly audience estimated to be 30,000 to 40,000 area residents. During and after the advertisement period, an increase was seen in the amount of soil testing conducted within the District.

Aging with Attitude Regional Expo

Southeast K-State Extension family and consumer sciences professionals and key community partners have hosted four annual Aging with Attitude Regional Expos to promote positive attitudes about aging and educates older Kansans on issues that support physical, mental, and financial health. At the 2013 event, approximately 150 people from nine southeast Kansas counties were involved. Ten educational sessions covering topics such as prescription drug interactions, meals for one or two, the power of humor, balance and falls, tai chi and safe driving were offered during the day-long event. Participants visited with business representatives from 28 vendors, gaining information and increased awareness of resources and services available in southeast Kansas. 55 bone density screenings were provided. Surveys completed by participants indicated the following:

- 90% learned something new.
- 83% changed their attitude about aging because of the Expo.
- 76% plan to take action or make a positive change in their life.
- “I have collected all my medical and medication information and gave a list to my family members.”
- “I have been motivated to get up and moving more.”
- “I have been more careful when driving my car.”
- “As a new caregiver I feel that the information I learned will be more helpful going forward. There will be lots of decisions to be made. Because of the Expo I feel better informed and confident.”