A Day on the Hill:
Public Issues Leadership Development Conference

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The three-day Public Issues Leadership Development conference this spring was a great opportunity for me to interact with Extension volunteers and staffers from all parts of the United States, as well as federal decision-makers.

Just traveling to Washington, D.C. with the seven State Advisory Council (SAC) members presented an opportunity to discuss issues concerning North Carolinians.

With our rapid population growth, keeping an abundant supply of safe water, food and fiber is a big concern. Many farm and forestry acres are lost each year to urban sprawl. With funding for agriculture programs being cut, much-needed research in our land-grant colleges and universities will be lost. Fewer acres will have to be much more productive. Ways will have to be implemented to offset the inflationary costs. Funds need to be increased, never cut. Positions must be funded. Research has to be done and we must have field agents to help put that knowledge to work.

The PILD conference gave me another chance to connect to my elected officials and to relay that message. As SAC members, we all have to communicate with elected officials often enough that they recognize our names, our faces and always know how we feel about Cooperative Extension programs and the benefit Extension has for Americans. Taxpayers will never get a bigger return on their money than when it is invested in Cooperative Extension. The trickle-down effect is too great to be measured. That message must be conveyed, and what better time to deliver it than when hundreds are gathered together for the same cause?

The conference was a great experience and I appreciated the opportunity to attend.
As all of you are keenly aware, North Carolina and many other states are experiencing considerable transition as they consider the socio-economic challenges that lie ahead during the next several years.

North Carolina’s Change Management and Marketing Initiative is testament to what we believe is important in positioning Cooperative Extension to best serve the people of our great state well into our future. Extension administration is deeply grateful to our advisory leaders for helping guide our organization through this process.

As we witness other states initiating these same steps to evaluate not only the business they are engaged in within Cooperative Extension, but how they conduct that business in a most efficient and effective manner, we are concomitantly witnessing historical changes at the federal level.

The 2008 Farm Bill recently passed by Congress contains some very important new legislation that impacts funding for research and extension programs nationwide. Many individuals throughout the land-grant system and our partners in USDA have worked very hard for a couple of years to facilitate these important new processes and structures.

For example, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture has been created and will replace the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service. This new institute will have a director who will be appointed by the president for a six-year term. This director will report to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and be responsible for implementing a ‘road map’ to guide the institute for external and internal grant funding for research and extension programs nationwide.

In addition, this chief scientist will be charged with programmatic planning and elimination of duplication of effort among agencies. Also, they will be responsible for establishing and staffing the following six Research Education and Extension Offices:

- Renewable Energy, Natural Resources and Environment
- Food Safety, Nutrition and Health
- Plant Health and Production
- Animal Health and Production and Animal Products
- Agriculture Systems and Technology
- Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities

As you can clearly see, Extension programs are well represented in each of the six program categories. However, there is currently some concern that neither Family and Consumer Sciences nor 4-H and Youth Development are well represented. Many individuals are working on this issue at the national level. All of these changes are to be in place by Oct. 1, 2009.

As advisory leaders, it will be important for each of you to stay current with what continues to develop at the federal level because of the potential impact it has on the funding for all our programs in both research and extension. I will keep you updated as program structures and processes resulting from the 2008 Farm Bill continues to evolve.

As always, thank you for your continuing support, your vision and your insight on behalf of all of us in Cooperative Extension and especially the people of North Carolina.
Matt Lynch, chair, Wilkes County Extension Advisory Council, was recognized recently by the International Society of Arboriculture.

The presentation was made at the Southern Chapter annual conference of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) in Knoxville, Tenn., in April.

Matt, an avid supporter of North Carolina Cooperative Extension, represents Wilkes County at the county, district and state levels. He was recognized for his efforts in educating consumers about tree care as it relates to the utility industry. A certified arborist, utility specialist and certified licensed pesticide applicator, he is employed by Duke Energy and works in various counties of the Carolinas Northwest area.

Matt serves on the N.C. Vegetation Management Association’s board of directors and received a SRWA designation with the International Right of Way Association after extensive work in negotiations, law, engineering and appraisal.

He also works with Wilkes County Cooperative Extension and Wilkes Community College to develop training classes for arborists in western North Carolina. He works with ISA’s Southern Chapter to set up arborist certification workshops and leads in a partnership with Wilkes County Cooperative Extension, ISA’s Southern Chapter and Duke Energy to promote sound arboricultural practices for private owners, commercial and utility customers.

WELCOME TO NEW SAC ADVISORY MEMBERS

Please help us welcome the following new members to North Carolina Cooperative Extension’s State Advisory Council:

Ralph Warren: Ralph has been an active volunteer and participant in community and state affairs since beginning school volunteer work in the late 1970s. He was elected to two terms on the Orange County School Board (1988 and 1992), served as a board officer for four of those years and was elected by fellow N.C. school board members to the board of directors of the N.C. School Boards Association in 1994. He has an extensive background in volunteer, elected and public appointment activities. County: Orange. District: North Central.

Marshall Wood Grant: Marshall is a recognized leader in agriculture in our state and has represented agriculture at the national level. His present service includes: chair of the N.C. Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation Inc.; advisor to Carolina Cotton Growers Cooperative Board; and the Roanoke Rapids Union Mission board of directors member. His past service includes: chairman, N.C. FSA Committee, 1980-2007 (except ’92 to ’02); chairman, Beltwide Boll Weevil Eradication Committee of National Cotton Council, 1985-2000, and still a board member; Advisory Council for NC State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; vice president, NC Farm Bureau, from which he resigned to take the state FSA committee spot; director, National Cotton Council; Governor’s Advisory Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood; and National Commission on Agriculture Trade and Export Policy member. County: Northampton. District: Northeast.

Joseph (Joey) Bullock: Joey served on the Rowan County Advisory Council from 2005 to 2007, as president in 2006-2007. He has attended Extension cluster and district meetings and the NC Listening Forum. He is co-leader of the 4-H Vaqueros horse club in Rowan County, a member of the Rowan Advisory Committee for Equestrian 4-H Clubs (RACE), and the Northwest District Horse Advisory Committee. County: Rowan. District: West Central.

Jim Parlier: Jim has been an active SAC member for many years, and knows and supports Cooperative Extension. He serves as chair of Farm-City Week activities, which annually recognizes outstanding citizens in Yancey County for their efforts. Jim is a member of the Lions Club, and has served as local president of that organization. He is a member of the First Baptist Church of Burnsville. He received the Farm Bureau’s Honor Agency Manager Award for Outstanding Sales Management in Yancey County. County: Yancey. District: West.

Visit the Advisory Leadership System Web site at http://als.ces.ncsu.edu/
Steva Allgood is proud to call North Carolina home. The daughter of Benjamin and Margaret Roark, she and her two sisters — her twin, Sarah Coley, and Peggy Thorburn — were raised in Kinston, where the family were St. Mary's Episcopal Church members. After graduation from Grainger High School, she attended Woman's College, now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Her first employment after graduating with a business degree was with GMAC’s Raleigh accounting department. At about that time, she met and married Younger Snead Jr. of Raeford.

Steva moved with him to Fieldale, Va., where he worked with Fieldcrest Mills and they had two sons, Tripp and Sam Snead.

Later, after relocating to Greensboro, she married a long-time friend, Larry Allgood. She secured a position with the Greensboro Area Convention and Visitors Bureau as director of services/administrative manager, a post she has held for 23 years.

As a result of Steva’s convention and visitors bureau job, she was asked to become a member of Extension’s State Advisory Council. For her, this is truly a rewarding experience and has given her the opportunity to be involved with an incredible group of dedicated and knowledgeable people.

During her SAC tenure, Steva has planned and implemented district and cluster meetings which at times host elected officials, as well as attending other events at which elected officials are present, all of which helps keep Cooperative Extension visible. Visiting counties outside of her district has also been rewarding, because it has given her an avenue to learn what neighboring areas in the state are doing.

Always open to suggestions, Steva continues to enjoy her association with Extension and all it encompasses.

If you have talked to her for more than five minutes, you have heard the story of Steva’s special Arabian horse, Prayer Boy (or Prayers Answered). From the day of his birth she knew the colt was special, even considering his major physical problems. His “never give up” attitude has been constant since his birth and his will to survive absolutely incredible, she says. Today, at almost six years, he is strong, healthy, highly intelligent and the love of Steva’s life, next to her family.

State Advisory, Strategic Planning councils met jointly for updates in Forsyth County

North Carolina Cooperative Extension’s State Advisory Council and Strategic Planning Council met June 3-to-5 in Forsyth County. The councils met together and separately to get updates on Cooperative Extension from both NC State University and NC A&T University.

One of the most enjoyable parts of our meeting was seeing Cooperative Extension in action and Forsyth County CED Mark Tucker and his staff were perfect hosts.

We toured the Forsyth County Extension Center and its demonstration gardens, and learned about geocaching, urban environmental programming, farmland preservation and the Stokes County purple sweetpotato.

We also toured The Arboretum at Tanglewood Park, and a residential group home for troubled youth there. Extension staff works with the home’s experiential director to provide opportunities for youth to learn and practice gardening and animal care. Many children at the home have experienced significant loss in their lives, and caring for animals helps them through the grieving process. Not only do the young people work in the garden, at meals they enjoy the vegetables they grow. Selling vegetables to local residents, the young people learn the practical aspects of food production, as well as establishing goals, and the satisfaction received from obtaining them.

The Forsyth County Master Gardeners have helped create and continue to help maintain the beautiful arboretum, where they also provide educational opportunities to Forsyth County students. Master Gardener volunteers also support the arboretum through fundraising efforts.

There is no better way than tours like these to see NC Cooperative Extension, NC State and NC A & T universities empowering people and providing solutions.