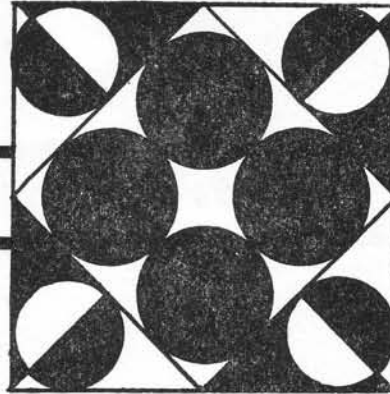


## Idea Corner



“On a Clear Day . . .”

“We are killing ourselves with our own pollution. We must stop!”

“You have to be kidding! There is no reason to worry about our pollution. It is just that there are too many people on the bandwagon against pollution. It is over-publicized!”

In an effort to help local 4-H Club members understand pollution, an Area 4-H Environmental Quality Conference was held at Lebanon, Missouri, August 11, 1970. Leaders and 4-H members from throughout the Lake of the Ozarks area, a five-county area in central Missouri, were invited to attend.

The incentive for organizing the conference was that a 4-H activity—District Achievement Day—had been discontinued. The state staff recommended an area educational event be devised in place of Achievement Day. General guidelines were formulated at the state level and distributed to the youth staff.

With these guidelines in mind, area youth agents, Bob Heitmeyer

and David Kohls, planned an educational event. It was decided, after discussing the idea with 4-H leaders and sensing public opinion, that the topic should be pollution—a timely topic and one easily visible in this attractive farming and tourist area.

But, where do you begin when dealing with a topic of such magnitude and so many ramifications? The objectives of this conference would be to create awareness, stimulate interest, and include unbiased facts.

Each 4-H Club in the five-county area was encouraged to participate. They were encouraged to have a local, in-club focus on pollution in their areas and prepare a report for the conference. This served two purposes: (1) to make each club more aware of the problem through involvement and (2) to bring reports to the conference that provided a clearer picture of just what pollution is in the Lake of the Ozarks area.

“For our club’s clean-up day, we decided to clean up a one-mile section (on one side) of the river

which flows near our community. This is an area used for swimming and recreation. Twenty of us 4-Hers picked up 352 beer cans, 115 sheets of paper, 13 oil cans, 60 pop cans, 35 plastic containers, 19 beer bottles, 17 coffee cans, 4 shoes, 6 milk cartons . . . and 21 paper cups. We also discovered that in our community, open trenches carry the raw, untreated sewage to empty directly into the river," was reported by one club. Another reported on the recent Earth Day activities, in which the 4-H members participated through their school's sponsorship. These reports, which individually would have had little significance, collectively provided impact and continuity to the conference.

Jack McCall, area environmental health agent, St. Louis, discussed world pollution—a difficult task to accomplish in an hour. "The earth is similar to a spaceship traveling through space," was Jack's theme. A question-and-answer period followed. "What about our upper atmosphere? Is it polluted the same as our lower atmosphere?" "How does DDT, distributed in middle latitudes, reach the penguins at the South Pole and the Eskimos at the North Pole?"

Similar questions were put to two other program participants, Jack Smith, Missouri Water Pollution Board, and Harvey Shell, Missouri Air Conservation Commission. "This slide shows a river in South Missouri, polluted by waste disposal from a nearby mine," commented Mr. Smith. Showing another slide,

he said, "Here's a picture of a river, near Jefferson City, a beautiful and still unpolluted river." He explained the water pollution situation in Missouri, including the state laws governing pollution control.

Harvey Shell began his discussion by saying, "I had my choice of speaking before two different groups today; one, a group of adults, the other group was you, the young people. I chose to speak to you because you are the ones who really need to know about pollution. It is you young people and your children who will really face the problems of pollution." He went on to discuss the definitions of air pollution and some of the major contributors.

Summarizing the day's information and activities, Sam Bradford, Lebanon Community Betterment Board, requested and received from each participant, his most outstanding impression of the day. Many had difficulty deciding the most important fact or idea; so much information had bombarded them during the five-hour conference.

Each 4-H member will have time to reflect on and categorize this information. Follow-up activities are being planned to spread the effect of this conference to each member's local area. This has been only the first step to make area 4-H members more aware of and interested in the confusing but important topic of pollution.

DAVID KOHLS

*Area Youth Agent*

*University of Missouri*

*Lebanon, Missouri*

## Reaching the Rural Businessman

In 1968, a group of Colorado businessmen told me about the types of management problems they faced. One problem was the lack of consulting services for small rural communities with daily management problems. Most management consulting services are located in large, metropolitan areas hundreds of miles away. These services cost from \$500 to thousands of dollars a day . . . too much for the average small business.

In Colorado, and many other states, Extension has held management schools to discuss the phases and problems of business. But when businessmen went home, they fell into the same old grind. They needed someone to show them how to apply available management tools to their situations.

Local businessmen said the Colorado State University farm management program had been successful in working with farmers and their management problems. They asked: Why can't we do the same thing for small rural businessmen? They could pay Extension for supplying a consultant.

The major problem that we were confronted with by the local people was: Can a business consultant, hired by Extension, work with various businessmen and do a competent job in helping solve management problems? What problems do a grain dealer, automobile dealer, flower shop owner, or drugstore owner have in common?

With these questions in mind and the help of the Small Business Administration (SBA), we studied various businesses in northeast Colorado. These businesses were located in 5 Colorado communities—Yuma, Wray, Julesburg, Holyoke, and Akron—with populations ranging from 1,600 to 2,000 each. A four-page questionnaire was used as a guide to ensure uniformity and allow comparability. It was found that the businesses did have major, common, management problems. In fact, many of the problems were similar to those that Extension farm management fieldmen were working with.

A committee of one businessman from each of the five communities, SBA representatives, and Colorado State University Extension administrators reviewed the information. They decided that establishing a local nonprofit business management association was possible. It could supply consulting services to businesses without any major problem.

This committee determined that it needed a \$25,000 budget to hire a consultant and cover expenses. Extension's experience in working with farm management associations was the basis for establishing the budget. Since this was a new program with no set guidelines, participation was limited to 20 or 30 businessmen to give the consultant time to develop the program.

A grant was secured from the Federal Extension Service to pilot a national program. This is a three-

year pilot study at which time local businessmen will assume full responsibility of financing the project. The objectives of this research project are to:

1. Set up a management association to provide adequate management consultation on business problems for small businessmen in rural areas.
2. Reduce the number of business failures in small rural areas.
3. Provide management consultation for new businesses in rural areas.
4. Help stabilize the economy of small rural communities.

In 1970, the Northeast Colorado Business Management Association was formed. The desired number of businessmen signed up. They paid a membership fee of \$25, plus an additional fee for services rendered. Then, each January the Board of Directors sets up an annual service fee schedule.

The association signed an agreement with Colorado State University to make an Extension business management specialist available to work with its membership full time. Information gained in this research can be used by the SBA in its work with hard-pressed businesses across the nation, Colorado State University Extension, and Extension nationally, in assisting small businessmen in rural areas with management problems.

I believe that to do our job in developing the natural, human, and

economic resources in rural America and to effect the quality of living we want, we'll have to strengthen the basic economy of the rural businesses. This should give the people living in rural America the opportunity to have at least the majority of the goods and services they need to give them the quality of life they want. What was one businessman's idea and dream became a reality . . . helping small rural businessmen.

THOMAS A. LAQUEY, JR.  
*Resource Development Specialist  
Golden Plains Area  
Wray, Colorado*

#### **Marriage Enrichment Course for Couples<sup>1</sup>**

With the cooperation of local ministers, Extension conducts a marriage enrichment course for couples. This is a series of six recorded lectures developed by the Family Enrichment Bureau of Escanaba, Michigan.

The group listens to one side of a record, then has coffee and discusses that material for awhile. Then the other side of the record is played and discussed. The group is adjourned in two hours.

Some topics included are: (1) married love, (2) formula for building love in a marriage, (3) communications in the home, (4) understanding ourselves, (5) human sexuality in marriage, (6) responsible family planning, (7) acceptance and maturity, (8) raising emotionally healthy children, and (9) sex education in the home.

Recently, some interested home economists and Iowa's family life specialist reviewed the course. They added a few films and a check sheet. Evaluation from those participating has been excellent.

BERTHA MAE KELLY  
*Extension Home Economist*  
Warren County  
Indianola, Iowa

#### Senior Citizens' Newsletter<sup>1</sup>

Since October, 1969, I've been writing a monthly newsletter for senior citizens. Its 3,000 copies are mailed to all counties in the area.

Response to this letter has been favorable from both the older people and the personnel of organizations and agencies that deal with the elderly. I try to keep the approach light and humorous—not "preachy"—and I've had good comments on this. Presented this way, many older people will accept information and advice they might otherwise reject.

The newsletter is called "Chips and Shavings" . . . meaning bits of information on several different subjects, with emphasis on nutrition. It's only one sheet, printed on both sides, in large type, with several pictures to break up the page.

At present this letter is sent on a limited basis to most counties since senior citizens are a large proportion of the population in southwest Iowa. An evaluation done in Cass County showed that almost all the recipients wished to continue getting it. Also, requests keep coming in from others who want to be

added to the mailing list.

We're especially trying to reach older people confined to their homes and those who don't belong to an organized group. There are many of these people (churches are an excellent source in compiling a mailing list) and a newsletter is a successful way to reach them.

BARBARA BUFFINGTON  
*Extension Home Economist*  
Mills County  
Malvern, Iowa

#### County 4-H Council<sup>1</sup>

Since starting to work with Extension 4-H programs, I've felt a need for better communication with club members. The county officers represent only a small proportion of my clubs. Contact through junior leaders and older youth activities was also limited. To fill the need, I asked each club to select a member to represent them on a county 4-H Council, to meet three or four times a year to evaluate 4-H events, make suggestions, and exchange ideas between clubs. The councils have now been in existence a year. I feel they've served a definite purpose and I plan to continue them.

RUTH PATTERSON  
*4-H and Youth Leader*  
Palo Alto Co., Emmetsburg, Iowa  
Kossuth Co., Algona, Iowa

#### Footnote

1. This was taken from "Success Stories from Extension Workers in Iowa," compiled by the 1970 Iowa State University Association Programs Committee, mimeographed.