

Checking Math and December *JOE*

Abstract

In the opening section of this Editor's Page, "Checking Math," I tell a story about an obsessive youngster and her stickler father as a foundation for requesting that prospective *JOE* authors refrain from submitting manuscripts containing mathematical errors. In "December *JOE*," I preview articles that stress the need for Extension to anticipate and prepare for critical changes occurring in our world. I also spotlight articles that offer new approaches to standard tasks and effective responses to organizational change, and I delineate a variety of other topics addressed in the issue.

Debbie Allen
Editor, *Journal of Extension*
joe-ed@joe.org

Checking Math

From grade school through high school, I had my dad check my math homework every night. He patiently penciled tidy check marks next to right answers and emphatic Xs next to wrong answers, returned the paper to me to fix, and then repeated the process until there were no more Xs. Why did I have him do this (besides the obvious reason that I'm a bit on the obsessive side)? Partly because it can be hard to notice errors in your own work. But, more importantly, because checking math is no fun. However, would-be scholarly authors must check their math so that their published articles are accurate and credible. The point of my story, then, is to remind prospective *JOE* authors of the importance of checking math. This means making certain that percentages, sums, differences, and all other results of mathematical operations are correct and that graphical displays are accurate. It also means ensuring that numbers presented in different parts of a manuscript (e.g., the narrative and a table) are consistent with each other where applicable. I don't care whether you do the checking yourselves or get your dads (or moms or colleagues) to mark your papers—just be sure that the math in manuscripts submitted to *JOE* is error free.

December *JOE*

Extension must not only focus on the critical concerns of today; it must also anticipate matters that will be critical concerns in the ever-imminent onslaught of tomorrows. Select articles in this issue center on fated future needs of Extension clientele and suggestions for meeting them. One example is "[The Internet of Things and Big Data: A Litmus Test for Extension?](#)" The authors of this Commentary explore forces of change the likes of which humans haven't known since the Industrial Revolution. They pose questions Extension must answer to remain at the forefront of problem solving in a world that becomes more interconnected by the nanosecond. The Research in Brief article "[Extension Professionals' Perspectives on Supporting Feedstock Production for Biofuels: Concerns,](#)

[Challenges, and Opportunities](#)" addresses ways in which Extension can take small steps now to be on pace if the budding biofuels industry grows as expected. And the authors of the Feature "[Transforming the Knowledge Gap for Local Planning Officials: Impacts of Continuing Education in a Master Citizen Planner Program](#)" delve into Extension's role in the "quiet revolution" that will ensure effective community development in an era of increasingly complex land-use matters.

Readers seeking new ways to tackle standard tasks or ideas for responding to organizational change will appreciate another handful of articles. The authors of the Feature "[Using Importance-Performance Analysis to Guide Extension Needs Assessment](#)" turned a methodology normally used in recreation science into an approach for analyzing audiences and consequently determining priorities for communications and programming content. Authors of the Tools of the Trade article "[Online Orientation for 4-H Volunteers](#)" describe a means by which agents can provide consistent and comprehensive training to busy 4-H volunteers without having to develop unique training modules, hold individual orientations, or manage scheduling conflicts. Two entries in the Ideas at Work category—"Sharing Resources: A Bistate Extension Specialist Position" and "[Collaborative Writing as a Scholarship Activity: A Framework for Extension Faculty](#)"—underscore the need to adapt to adjustments in the internal workings of Extension. The former explains how sharing a consumer food safety specialist has allowed two states to score successes in the face of tightened budgets. The latter emphasizes how joining forces to confront the daunting endeavor of writing has helped field-based Extension faculty handle new requirements to publish in peer-reviewed outlets.

Other articles—10 to be exact—address a plethora of environmental issues, from tip-of-the-mind topics, such as climate change and water conservation, to those that receive less attention but are nonetheless crucial, such as saving pollinators, thwarting the spread of nuisance species, and helping farmers adhere to nutrient management plans. Additional subjects covered in the issue include youth development, local food systems and food safety, and diversity efforts.

Copyright © by *Extension Journal, Inc.* ISSN 1077-5315. Articles appearing in the Journal become the property of the Journal. Single copies of articles may be reproduced in electronic or print form for use in educational or training activities. Inclusion of articles in other publications, electronic sources, or systematic large-scale distribution may be done only with prior electronic or written permission of the [Journal Editorial Office, *joe-ed@joe.org*](#).

If you have difficulties viewing or printing this page, please contact [JOE Technical Support](#)