2007 Success: A Year in Review

NC Cooperative Extension
Cherokee County Center

Our Staff:
• Cindy Chastain, Extension Secretary
• Donna Ware, Extension Administrative Secretary
• Doug Clement, CED
• Shannon Coleman, 4-H Youth Development Agent
• Teresa Wiley, Family & Consumer Science Agent
• Keith Wood, Agriculture Agent
• Michele Allen, Program Associate

In the year 2007:
The Cherokee Co. Center of the NC Cooperative Extension provided programming to 3,807 participants. Source: 2007 ERS Report

Energy Conservation Workshops
Rising energy costs strain most peoples budget and individuals are seeking information on conservation and alternative energy sources. Based on perceived needs and results of a regional needs assessment, extension agents in six western counties and the Cherokee Reservation partnered with individuals from the WNC Small Wind Initiative, local power companies, and local business owners to provide information to help individuals make informed decisions relating to home solar energy systems and energy conservation. Over eighty people attended two regional workshops providing information on various solar energy topics such as passive collectors, photovoltaics, and do-it-yourself techniques for the home and farm. Over ninety percent of those that filled out evaluations indicated they would implement some of the program ideas. Based on evaluations, follow up workshops are planned.

‘Hooked on Fishing’
A minority community in Cherokee County has been identified by the sheriffs department as a population in need of drug prevention programs provided to area youth. Cherokee County 4-H, with help from the Texana Community Club and the Cherokee County Sheriffs Department, held a day camp called “Hooked On Fishing—Not On Drugs.” Twenty-one youth completed the weeklong program, which showed them that there are other things that they can become involved with to help them stay away from drugs. At the conclusion of the program 93% of the youth participating said that they had not only learned about fishing, but also learned how to say no when approached about drug use.

Ag Agent Keith Wood shares a recent catch with a newfound friend at the “Hooked on Fishing…” event in 2007.
**Waiting on Water**

In 2007 drought caused significant problems in Cherokee County residents. Shallow wells and springs ceased to supply some residents with water. North Carolina Cooperative Extension and Cherokee County Emergency Management coordinated efforts to supply residents with cooking and drinking water. Volunteers throughout the county provided assistance at local community clubs to supply water to residents. The project is currently ongoing and will continue until the drought ceases to exist.

“Shallow wells and springs ceased to supply some county residents with water.”
- CED, Doug Clement

---

**Scott Hogsed Day, 2007**

A group of concerned sportsman wanted youth to learn to respect game laws, conserve their natural resources, and discover the fun of outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing. The Cherokee County 4-H program joined eleven other agencies/groups to help for the third year to plan and implement the Scott Hogsed Youth Conservation and Education Day. This day was to educate youth ages 7–17 from the entire region on conservation of natural resources and teach youth respect for hunting regulations of game animals and to show them how much fun it can be to participate in these activities. **There were 500 youth plus their chaperons with a total of approximately 1500 youth, families and volunteers.** Quality events cost parents approximately $25.00 a day for their youth to attend, but because the event was free families saved $30,500. Volunteers taught the events and each child received quality prizes donated by area businesses and event sponsors.

**Tri-State Goat College**

Area goat producers are seeking reliable information to help improve the quality and profitability of their herds. NC Cooperative Extension agents from Cherokee, Clay, and Graham counties coordinated another two-day goat educational clinic. Specialists from NC State, UT, NRCS, NCDA, Auburn University, Bekeart Fencing, along with other producers helped with instruction. Over 30 participants from North Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia attended the Tri-State Goat College 2. The program offered information to producers at a variety of levels, from those wanting to start a herd to those with large herds. All participants received a resource manual on goat production and management, two lunches and had opportunities to win several door prizes. **All participants indicated they gained knowledge to make some changes in their operations.** Follow-up evaluations are planned in the next six months.

**Service with a Smile**

Cherokee County Center has provided training to businesses in the county. **Most businesses Western North Carolina depend on tourism as a part of economic development.** Customer service is the key in having tourist return to the region. North Carolina Cooperative Extension cannot afford both time off for employees to participate in the training and a cost for the program. The training, according to a survey conducted, has an estimated worth of 200.00 per individual which is provided free to a business which has resulted in a net value to businesses of $40,000.00.

"The project shows the importance of the land-grant university system and the community colleges' roles in community and economic development in North Carolina,"

Dr. Harvey Fouts on the Qualla-T Customer Service Training Initiative
Interest in alternative energy is rising in western North Carolina. The unstable economy, rising oil prices, and high electric bills have hastened this interest. To help offer solutions to these problems, Cooperative Extension developed an “Alternative Energy Series”, and the second program in this series was entitled “Using Wind & Water Power for the Home and Farm”. The “Alternative Energy Series” is part of a collaborative effort from six counties and the Cherokee Reservation. This team also partnered with individuals from the WNC Small Wind Initiative, local power companies, private individuals, and local business owners. Sixty-five individuals attended two identical programs at two different locations and gained knowledge relating to micro-hydro electrical systems, RAM pumps, and wind-generated electricity. All forty-four participants that returned evaluations stated they increased knowledge on wind and hydropower and all but four said they would implement some program ideas. More workshops in this series are planned.

Above: Agriculture Agent, Keith Wood and guest presenter Brent Summerville of ASU demonstrate how to determine a stream’s suitability for a hydroelectric generator.

Cherokee County parents struggle every summer to find a place for their children to go when school is out. Cherokee County 4-H along with Texana Community Club, Ranger Community Club, Shiloh Stables, and Cherokee County Government provide programs and locations to have 4-H Summer Fun Day Camps. These day camps provide experiential learning programs from manners to horse care and from how to express yourself to making bread. Seventy-nine youth participated in the programs saving parents approximately $2,500 compared to the local school program cost. Cherokee County 4-H will continue to provide low cost high quality day camps during the summer.

Right: 4-H Summer Camp participants mix summer fun with learning!

“Eighteen individuals gained a greater knowledge of various management practices…”
- Ag Agent, Keith Wood

‘No Horsin’ Around’

Pleasure horse owners in the area typically own less than three horses, lack basic care and management skills and have just become horse owners. Extension agents in Graham, Clay, and Cherokee counties have been working to provide this group of individuals with quality programs. With the assistance from NRCS, NCDA&CS, specialists from NCA&T, NCSU, University of Georgia, Purina Feeds, Farriers and Veterinarians, Cooperative Extension held it’s first Tri-State Horse College for horse owners. Eighteen individuals gained a greater knowledge of various management practices, as well as viewed live demonstrations on riding preparation, shoeing, tack, and floating teeth. Vaccinations and general health care were also discussed.
Disaster Preparedness Training

Businesses and individuals are better prepared in the event of a disaster. Disaster plans have been developed and volunteers have been trained to assist during a disaster. The preparation of a community to be self-sufficient during a disaster and to assist in the community will prove to be an important asset in the initial onset of a disaster. Emergency Management could potentially not have the capability to handle all situations so volunteers providing size–ups of the community to the EOC will be an important part of the readiness plan.

Pesticide Training

Both private and commercial pesticide applicators need recertification credit hours to maintain their pesticide licenses. Knowing how to properly mix, load, and apply pesticides helps protect applicators and the environment. Five recertification classes were offered this year through the efforts of agents in Graham, Cherokee, and Clay counties. A pesticide license study review was also held for those wanting to acquire a new or additional license. As a direct result of these efforts, sixty–three individuals have received credit hours toward the renewal of their pesticide license in the three–county area. All four people that attended the study session passed their exam and can apply for a license.

Energy Efficiency Workshops

With rising energy costs, area residents and businesses are looking for up to date and new information on energy conservation. Cooperative Extension and the North Carolina State Energy Office teamed up to offer free workshops to help local residents and businesses reduce energy costs. In the first workshop, participants focused on residential energy robbing areas including getting ductwork checked, outside air leaks, purchasing Energy Star appliances, installing programmable thermostats, and cleaning refrigerator coils. The second workshop focused on areas where business owners could save energy such as electronic lighting, efficient heating, programmable thermostats and shutting down equipment when not in use. Surveys at the end of the workshops indicated all gained new knowledge and skills. Everyone stated they would install energy efficient appliances and light fixtures. A six–month follow-up evaluation will be sent out to verify if energy conservation measures have been made.

What a year 2007 was for us at the Cherokee County Center of the NC Cooperative Extension! Looking ahead for 2008, we plan to continue to expand on our previous program successes and offer new, high-quality, research-based programming to meet the needs of the Cherokee County population and in doing so, continue to “help people put knowledge to work.”