Rural Schools Mapping Value-Added Enterprises on WWW

Alabama A&M University graduate students who are also agribusiness instructors in Alabama and Tennessee high schools are mapping natural resource based value-added enterprises on local street maps for viewing on the World Wide Web. Aided by an SRDC grant, Agribusiness faculty, staff and graduate students in the School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (SAES) at AAMU, started in 1993 with the objective of producing local school district maps of various rural enterprises, agencies and community facilities. These maps are constructed as digital layers for GIS databases that can be superimposed on available GIS boundary, street, water and point layers.

The project Final Report may be viewed @ http://saes.aamu.edu/gis-agb.htm. While no hard-copy reports are to be published and mailed to SRDC clients, there are several ways it can be reproduced electronically or in print. First it can be accessed on demand by requesting the above location with a Web Browser such as Netscape, Mosaic or even America On Line. The text menu that will appear on your screen includes the Final Reports item. Other items included are the original proposal and other selected project reports. Second, you may save or print the report via the Netscape File menu. For laser-printer output, simply select the “Print” option on your Web Browser. For graphics file (HTML) storage on disk and future browsing, select the “Save as” option and designate a directory for a selected text file storage, you may easily highlight text and then “copy and paste” from the document on your screen to your wordprocessor. In effect, these Web Browser features provide a highly flexible, cost-effective delivery system. As one target of this delivery system you can elect to act on this announcement or disregard it. If your interest has been piqued and you have access to a Web Browser, you may find it rewarding. If you are not interested at this time, you at least know about the project and can inform others. Thus, useful information is available while postage, paper and publication costs may be saved.

These pages are early informationage examples of interactive digital media that many rural community development projects or businesses are almost certain to be using soon to publicize local enterprises of all types, public or private. Huntsville, Alabama, Web users can already print the local rural enterprise map with accompanying directions, telephone numbers and product information. Enterprises include cut your own Christmas tree, pick-your-own produce, fishing and hunting enterprises, custom goat processing, country bar-b-que, canoe and water recreation, constructed wetland demonstrations, herb gardens and greenhouses, and bed and breakfast. Niche marketing direct to consumers or other small retailers, local or mail-order, can be Internet facilitated in every community of the country. Other web pages referenced in this report publicize mail order of local rural industry products from otherwise remote communities and GIS natural resource projects throughout the country.

The public domain Web Server that currently hosts these pages is on a Windows 3.1 operating system in a Gateway2000 with an Intel 75MHz Pentium Processor. Web Service and maintenance by nature are multitasking operations. Therefore, we hope to upgrade to a Windows NT operating system with a Netscape Web Server (free to universities) by the time you read this. Again, the location is http://saes.aamu.edu/gis-agb.htm.

This article was submitted by Gerald Wheelock, professor of Rural Sociology, Alabama A&M University and principal investigator of this project.

Leadership conference convenes in Puerto Rico

Southern Region Leadership Conference will be April 10-12 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The conference will benefit professionals from government agencies, universities and the private sector with interests in rural/community development. It will feature presentations based on research and project outcomes and programs. Plenary and concurrent sessions will focus on community leadership development, empowerment, leadership for rural economic development, ethical leadership, motivational leadership and current issues, changes and challenges. Plenary session speakers will be Janet Ayres, Purdue University and Connie McKenna, USDA (retired).

The University of Puerto Rico Agricultural Extension Service, Southern Rural Development Center, University of Puerto Rico Economic Development University Center, Farm Foundation and Puerto Rico Tourism Company are conference sponsors.

The registration fee is $95 and includes conference proceedings and materials, two continental breakfasts, two luncheons, breaks, a cultural activity and a welcome reception. Meetings will be held at the Radisson-Normandie Hotel which is offering a special conference rate of $95 plus tax and gratuities. March 8 is the deadline for conference and hotel registrations. Late conference registration is $125.

Continued on page 3
Sustainable agriculture/rural community life focus of sociology series

Sustaining the long-term viability of agriculture and rural community life is the focus of the latest volume in the Jai series on Research and Development. The sixth volume is entitled Sustaining Agriculture and Rural Community Development: Sustaining Agriculture and Rural Communities. The editor of this volume is Robert R. Schumacher, professor of Rural Sociology at Michigan State University, East Lansing. The editor is a leading sociologist whose work has focused on the economic and environmental aspects of rural communities. The 12 papers in this volume address a wide range of topics related to sustainable agriculture and rural community life, with a particular focus on the role of government and public policies in promoting sustainable development. The papers in this volume are written by leading researchers in the field, and provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of research in this area.
In Print

Joint Southern Region Program Committee meeting is the proceedings of the Southern Region Program Committee meeting held in December in Charlotte. Topics included “Setting the Context,” “Empowerment through Change,” “Setting the Stage for Evaluation” and “Performance-Based Budgeting and Cooperative Extension.” $4. Order Publication # 152 from the Southern Rural Development Center, Box 9656, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207.

Reconsidering Children’s Early Development and Learning: Toward Common Views and Vocabulary provides parents, teachers, school and community leaders information to help achieve a common vocabulary that expresses current knowledge and common views about the needs of children and the nature of their development. The National Education Goals Panel released the publication. The panel says the new report will allow local communities to share the most recent research on the learning of young children and will move the nation toward meeting the national goal that “by the year 2000 all children in America will start school ready to learn.” Copies are available at no cost from the National Education Goals Panel office, 1850 M Street, NW, Suite 270, Washington, D.C. 20006, (202) 632-0952, FAX (202) 632-0957.

Rural Development in the United States: Connecting Theory, Practice and Possibilities discusses key factors of rural development in the 1990s. The 304-page book presents a comprehensive evaluation of the economic, environmental and political implications of past rural development policies and a thorough consideration of the directions in which future development efforts should go. William Galston and Karen Baehr are authors of the book, the result of a multi-year study supported by the Rural Economic Policy Program of the Aspen Institute. Order from Island Press at (800) 928-1302.

Capsules is published periodically by Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) for educators, researchers, practitioners, local officials and private citizens interested in improving the quality of life in small communities and rural areas of the South. SRDC is one of four regional rural development centers in the nation and focuses specifically on rural problems of the Southern region. Located at Mississippi State University, SRDC provides support to the experiment stations and extension services of 29 land-grant universities in 13 Southern states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Capsules is a forum for sharing ideas and news articles and information about forthcoming events to the editor.

H. Don Bodnax Director
Jacqueline Tindale Writer/Editor
Sandy Payne Editorial Assistant

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Capsules
Southern Rural Development Center

Volume 16 Number 2

SRDC Board of Directors has new members

The Southern Rural Development Center has ten members serving on its Board of Directors. Associations of the directors/administrators of Southern Extension Services and Experiments Stations recently named two new members, and the Board elected a new private sector representative.

- Pedro Rodriguez Dominguez, associate dean and deputy director of the Puerto Rico Agricultural Extension Service, was named to replace Wally Walls, director of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, who rotated off the board after serving a threear year term.
- Thomas Klink, associate dean of the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station, was named to replace Ed Powers, University of North Carolina/Greensboro, who served a three-year term. This is Klink's second time to serve on the SRDC Board.
- Dennis Robertson was elected to represent the private sector. He replaces Jack Milani, who retired from TexasA
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SRDC staff is very appreciative of the loyal support and direction given by Walls, Powers, and Milani. Other members of the Board include:

- Chair Hiram D. Palmer, director, Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service;
- Vice Chair Walter Armbruster, manager director, Farm Foundation;

- James A. Boling, associate dean of research, University of Kentucky;
- Lawson Carter administrator Cooperative Extension Programs, Florida A&M University;
- Leroy Davis, administrator, 1890 Extension Programs, Alcorn State University;
- Chester Fellows, executive associate director, Texas A&M University; and
- Vernon H. Hunt, director, Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station.

The focus and guidelines of the board during 1996 were especially meaningful. The national review of the Center held in June demanded a greater involvement of the board members this year. They willingly and ably gave much time and attention to making the review a positive experience. Thanks again!

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Fall 1998.

Center enters internet, look at our home page

http://www.ces.msstate.edu/~srdc

SRDC has joined the Internet through the world wide web. For those not yet "linked" to computers and electronic transmission of information, the world wide web (WWW) is a special part of the Internet that uses hypermedia. This means it is interactive and graphical. Where most of the Internet is textbased, the web uses pictures, sound, animation and video. Information is shared using home pages, also called web pages or web sites. The SRDC has a new home page. Our URL (location) is

http://www.ces.msstate.edu/~srdc

The Center is committed to entering the modern world of electronic communications. General information about the Center and our programs are on line. We have links to the other three Centers and related rural development information.

Capsules is now available via our home page. As yet we do not have sound, animation or video on our home page, but we do have a few pictures. As time and expertise allow, we will expand into more complex additions.

Please visit our home page and let us know what you think. We want to have information available that is beneficial to users.

Alabama • Arkansas • Florida • Georgia • Kentucky • Louisiana • Mississippi • North Carolina
Oklahoma • Puerto Rico • South Carolina • Tennessee • Texas • Virginia Islands • Virginia
Program set for Linking Family & Community

The program has been planned, speakers have been announced and registration materials are available for “Linking Family & Community.” The multi-disciplinary conference is scheduled for June 12-14, 1990, at the Seabrook Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky. 

At the three general session, the deputy director of Community, 4-H and Human Nutrition/USDA, Jenee Hobbs, and the acting deputy of Rural Economic & Social Development/USDA, Marvin Konyha, will set the stage for linking family and community programs. In the keynote address, John Kretzmann will share the skills necessary for building community by discovering and mobilizing the assets of local residents and associations. With more than 25 years as a community organizer and community development consultant, Kretzmann co-authored with John McKnight, “Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets.”

In developing the conference agenda, the planning committee issued a “call” to identify model programs. Submissions were re-reviewed with final selections to be presented at concurrent sessions. Topics include building networks of families & neighbors, strength based family development, promoting community health, facilitating the transition from welfare to work, focus on community housing, multi generational community development, developing skills for employment, community coalition for ongoing families, outreach for working families, mobilizing community leadership, and developing youth for stronger communities.

The special poverty simulation, “Life in the State of Poverty,” will be offered as a preconference workshop. The preconference will be limited to the first 70 registrants submitting the $25 registration fee. Due to the uniqueness of the simulation no latecomers will be admitted.

Another feature will be a resource fair post session where registrants can interact with colleagues offering successful program ideas.

Sponsors will offer several mini grants for community program proposals that evolve out of the conference. Grant applications will be completed at the meeting, with recipients announced during the final session.

Sponsors include others Rural Development Center; Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service; National 4-H Council; Farm Foundation and Western Rural Development Center.

Early bird registration is $75 until April 30. After that registration is $100. The fee will pay for breaks, meeting rooms and a notebook of materials offered during the conference. Registration materials are available from the Southern Rural Development Center, Box 9056, Mississippi State, MS 39762, phone (601) 325-2207, FAX (601) 325-8815.

USDA colleagues recognized during Black History Month

Twenty African Americans were recently honored in an “African Americans in Agriculture” exhibit sponsored by the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. The exhibit coincides with Black History Month (February). Individuals honored include USDA colleagues Alma Hobbs, deputy administrator for CSREES Forests, 4-H, and Nutrition; Esse Finney, acting administrator (retired) Agricultural Research Service; Leondrey Williams, Extension administrator Southern University (former administrator, Extension Service and associate acting administrator) and Marvin McKinley, Mississippi State University, Southern Forest Experiment Station.

The exhibit also highlights accomplishments of the 1890 land-grant institutions. The Museum and its Black Creativity Advisory Committee worked in partnership with the Association of Research Directors at the 1890 land-grant institutions to coordinate this effort.

Home -based entrepreneurship course at MS State

Mississippi State University is offering a summer session course in home-based entrepreneurship May 28-June 1. The course serves consumers and products that have potential for home-based businesses, with an emphasis on business management, marketing and management skills necessary to operate such businesses. A course outline is available from instructor Beth Duncan, home-based & entrepreneurial business specialist, Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service. Contact her by phone at (601) 325-3081 or by e-mail at betd@ncas.mstate.edu.

In Print

Growing New Ventures, Creating New Jobs: Principles & Practices of Successful Business Incubation gives specific guidance about topics such as the mix of participating companies, achieving financial self-sufficiency, structuring a governance system, links to community resources, appropriate incubator facilities and developing the right kinds of assistance programs for entrepreneurs. $28.95. For more information or to order, contact the National Business Incubation Association at telephone (614) 593-4331; FAX (614) 593-1863.

Guides to Rural Data: Revised Edition by Priscilla Salant and Nita J. Waller acquaints researchers with up-to-date data they can use to analyze and understand rural communities. This completely revised edition explains how to find and obtain the most current information on rural America both in published form and electronically. The authors identify data sources and illustrate how those data can be used to analyze social and economic change. $22.95. Order from Island Press, Box 7, Dept. 2PR, Covelo, CA 95426-0001.

Directory of State Extension Small Farm Program Coordinators 1995 gives the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the coordinators of state extension and small farm programs. Specific small farmer outreach programs and the directors are also given. For more information contact Debbie Ebodage, Ag Box 2260, archaeology, 0200, telephone 202-401-4385, FAX (202) 401-2880, or e-mail debodage@resea USDA.gov.

NAO fellows program seeks applicants

The National Association of County (NAO) is again offering an opportunity for current NAO staff member with an interest in rural development policy to spend 9-12 months in Washington, DC. The "fellow" serves as a liaison between the CSREES Cooperative Extension System and local government and works with the NAO legislative affairs staff. The fellow’s role is to assist in organizing and institution must continue to provide salary and fringe benefits during this special assignment. The starting date is August 1. Applicants must be recommended by their administrators/directors. Applicants’ resumes and cover letters must include the nominee’s resume, and one or two letters of recommendation from his or her administrator/director.

Administrators/directors’ offices should have a policy description. Approved applications should be sent to Ted Maher, CSREES/USDA, AG box 915, Washington, D.C. 20250-0915. March 15th is the deadline. Maher’s e-mail address is tmaher@resea USDA.gov.

A good source of information on county level data may be found on the World Wide Web. The U.S. Department of Commerce Information Sharing Project by Information Services at Oregon State University. Their web address is http://govinfo.fer.orst.edu. Some of the data include:

- Regional Economic Information System (REIS) data by county, 1989-1993.
- 1992 economic census data by county;
- population estimates by county, 1990-1982;
- 1990 census of population by county, northwest California;
- 1992, 1997, 1992 Census of Agriculture by county (we do instant aggregations for zip code);
- a wide range of economic and social data, much like county and state data;
- foreign import and export data by commodity by U.S. customs district.

Those interested in rural and region development individuals might also want to check out David Krabill’s list at Ohio State. To subscribe send your message to david krabill@ohio-state.edu.
On Schedule

Region Leadership Conference, April 10-12, San Juan, Puerto Rico. This conference will feature plenary and concurrent sessions on community leadership development, empowerment, leadership for rural/educational development, ethical leadership, motivational leadership and current issues, changes and challenges. Janet Ayres, professor of Agricultural Economics and leadership specialist, Purdue Extension Service, will be the keynote speaker. Guest speaker Constance McKenna will speak on motivating others to take action. For more information contact Carmen Gonzalez phone (809) 832-8055 or fax (809) 265-4130.

Developing Naturally: A Community Development Workshop will be May 1-2 at the Clemson University Madam Center. The workshop is designed for furnish information and tools to link area economic development with natural resources stewardship. Nationally recognized naturalists, developers, conservation officials, planners and researchers will address subjects such as the relationship of natural resources and quality of life, keys to successful nature based development, building community consensus by maintaining visual quality, planning for nature based community tourism, habitat enhancement, natural amenities in livable places and other related topics. Registration fee is 75$. Those who wish to attend should contact Donna Arterburn or Tom Potts at (864) 656-4700.

Linking Family & Community Strengths, June 12-14, Louisville, Kentucky. This interdisciplinary national conference will provide information and opportunities for collaboration among family life, family resource management and family planning practitioners. Registration brochures will be available in March. To insure getting a brochure, contact the Southern Rural Development Center.

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"School Choice in Rural Areas" study completed in two states

Following are two conclusion sections of final reports produced from a study funded by the Southern Rural Development Center. The two-part study titled "School Choice in Rural Areas: Implications for Local Area Growth and Public Finance" was conducted by researchers in the Departments of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Clemson University (C.S.C.) and the University of Georgia. Principal investigators in South Carolina were William L. Barkley and Mark Henry with research associate Shuming Bao. In Georgia, Warren Kinsel and Andrew G. Keeler were principal investigators with Marc White, research assistant.

Georgia. Many fear that an educational crisis exists in U.S. public schools as evidenced by falling test scores, lack of discipline, violence and other indications that the public educational system is not delivering the level of service parents and pupils demand. Policies that would make it easier for students to switch to private schools have been advocated as a way to increase competition into the market for educational services. Privatization of the school choice argument is that if house-holds could freely choose which school to patronize, competitive schools would either improve themselves or lose students and face the prospect of closing their doors. However, a precondition for competition among households must respond to a choice policy in numbers large enough to place pressure on the public school system, and private schools must be able to absorb additional stu-dents. This research attempts to answer these empirical questions. This study analyzes primary survey data from private schools as well as Census tract-level data for households and additional data that describe public school conditions. Statewide data from Georgia are used. Two features make this study unique. The first is the incorporation of a private school survey to analyze private school supply. The second is the level of aggregation employed in the data set that is at the tract/county level.

The results indicate that pri-vate schools' current excess capac-ity is about 4,850 vacancies. The demand model indicates that 41,000 income tax credit would encourage nearly 2,000 students to switch to private schools. In other words, the proportion of school-aged children in private schools would increase from 4.4 percent to 4.68, for an increase of 0.28 percent. There-fore, private schools would be able to absorb all of the additional students who would take advantage of this school choice policy, and there would be no inci-dent or questing by prospective students.

However, these estimates of additional students and vacancies represent extremely small propor-tions of the 1,040,000 school age population. These are propor-tions that, if accurate, mean the school choice policies we have simulated cannot lead to effective competition between public and private schools. Our intuition says that public schools would have to experience enrollment declines that would lead to teacher layoffs and building closures before ad-ministrators would experience competitive pressures. Determi-nation may be felt when enrollment declines are in the range of five to ten percent. Further research could review the literature in school consolidation to obtain better estimates of how enroll-ment decline causes school closure.

Finally, the demand model indicates that parents are sensi-tive to indicators of public school quality in making their schooling decisions. The model indicates that improvements in the local school district's student/teacher ratio, standardized test scores and teacher salaries lead to fewer stu-dents switching to private schools. Public school administra-tors should recognize that their clientele indeed pay attention to these and other measures of school performance.

South Carolina. The purpose of this study was to determine if local residential and job growth were influenced by school choice quality after controlling for inter-re dependencies between population and employment change and other potential determinants of change. Findings for rural South Carolina indicate school quality does matter, especially in the more geographically isolated rural tracts. Both population and em-ployment growth were relatively large in hinterland tracts with lower student-to-teacher ratios and population growth was continued on page 2
Crafts can play important role in rural community survival

What do you think of when you think of crafts? Is it a little old lady weaving a sweater or knitting a scarf? For most of us, these images are symbolic of the types of "businesses" that are of major importance to those who live in rural communities. However, in some areas of the country, crafts play an important role in the survival of rural communities.

A recent study by Dinah Dave and Michael Evans of Appalachian State University proves this point. They looked at the economic impact of craft producers in 25 western North Carolina counties under the direction of Handsalecraft, a program to encourage traditional crafts and marketing of products. Their results are quite enlightening.

Their study is divided into four sections: Professional Producers - there are 739 professional crafts producers in the 20-county area, each had an average growth of $34,775. Their economic impact on the community is $52,609,725. There were also 3,306 second income producers, each having an average annual growth of $665,745.

The economic impact that the study is estimated at $72,737,381.

Consumers were divided into two groups. The first group attended two craft fairs in the area. An estimated 18,676 families visited these craft fairs, spending an estimated average of $135. Those consumers contributed $1,550,886 to the area economy.

The second Consumer Group attended two entertainment fairs or festivals in the area. Each family spending an average of $46. The total impact to the community was $1,030,538. Retailers, as expected, contributed the largest number of dollars to the economy. They were 820 retailers who dealt in crafts. These included galleries, gift shops, craft dealers, etc.

Their average annual income from craft sales was $48,444. Their annual impact on the western North Carolina economy was $70,884,080. Adding this impact to other impacts previously listed brings the total dollar impact of crafts on the 20-county area to $121,887,792.

Mid South prospered 1992-1994, future cautioned

More than half the sub-state economies in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi are out-performing the nationwide average using a composite that includes income, economic growth and credit. Recent economic growth. One third of the Mid South's 53 Counties are growing at rates of 10% or more, as reported by the Commerce Department indicated that rates of growth experienced in 1992-94 cannot be expected to continue. According to state-level projections, the Mid South will fall behind U.S. rates of growth between now and 2005.

More even disquieting, some negative numbers may be confirming a recent economic growth projections through the year 2005. This is released at the same time the Commerce Department indicated that rates of growth experienced in 1992-94 cannot be expected to continue. According to state-level projections, the Mid South will fall behind U.S. rates of growth between now and 2005.

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School Choice continued from page 1

greatest in fringe tracts with schools reporting high average test scores.

The findings for rural tracts indicate that investments in local schools is a promising strategy for local growth. Yet, critics argue that local growth increases at the margin and that rural communities remain isolated. Economic development was most rapid in areas with no public services and infrastructure, but the rate of increase is relatively low. The very few new competitive firms are likely that rural location alternatives are numerous enough and that the cost of doing business is high. The lack of access to services that firms do not have to settle for lower costs and easier to relocate to denser and more cost effective environments.

In conclusion, the importance of school quality as a rural economic development policy is a matter of debate. The future course of rural communities for residents and jobs will be intense, and advantages go to communities perceived to provide good schools and the resulting quality of labor force and quality of life.

Southern Region Leadership Conference. April 10-12, 2004. Puerta Rico. Sessions will focus on community leadership development, empowerment, leadership for rural development, education, culture, leadership, political, ethical leadership, motivational leadership and current issues, changes and challenges. For more information contact Carmen Gonzalez (908) 832-9055.

SouthernHideaway.com / SouthernHideaway.com

Developing Naturally: A Community Development Workshop. May 1-2, Clemson University. The workshop is designed to inform and involve and result in area economic development with natural resources. Registration fee is $75. Contact Donna Arterburn or Tom Potts at (864) 656-4700.

A Changing Rural Health Delivery System. March 20-21, Birmingham, Alabama. This meeting of the Southern Extension Research Information Activity Exchange (SREIAE) is open to all interested persons. Registration fee is $25. Please register your participation with SRD, Box 9548, Mississippi State, MS 39798, telephone (601) 325-3027, FAX (601) 325-8915.

Linking Family & Community Strengths. June 12-14, Louisville, Kentucky. This interdisciplinary national conference will provide information/opportunities for collaboration among family, family resource participation with BRDC, Box 9565, Mississippi State, MS 39765. Telephone (601) 325-9257, FAX (601) 325-9357, E-mail: link@se.edu.


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In Print

1995 Combined Annual Report is an annotated listing of selected research and Extension projects of the four regional development centers. The combined report is published annually to highlight the work of the centers and to tell the collective story of their regional activities. A companion piece, Combined Publications List, is a listing of publications available from the four Centers. This year's editions are published by the Southern Rural Development Center.

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SRDC sponsors translation of Community Voices

The following article was written by Cassi Steele, program specialist for the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M University (Texas). Steele was principal investigator for the SRDC funded project described below.

The project, "Awareness Among Community Voices (AFAEL)," was funded by the Southern Rural Development Center through the Cooperative Extension Program at Prairie View A&M University to Cassi Steele, program specialist. Prairie View A&M University in Texas has generated a leadership training program with multicultural application for use in diverse communities. Translator Consuelo Flores, Una Vida Mayor program assistant, working under the supervision of Project Director Amparo Navarrete, translated 15 units and an introduction from the Community Voices material developed by North Carolina State A&T Cooperative Extension Program in 1990 with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The curriculum, "Voices de la Comunidad," was field tested in Brazoria County, Texas. I set among twelve women who were excited and talking all at once. I could not understand a word they were saying—well, I did understand the word 'agua' and knew they were discussing something about community water. I felt empathy for their isolation. They could not speak or understand very much English in their all English environment. If only for a brief time, I felt as they must feel all the time as they try to do business in a community where everything is an unknown to them.

These women around me had come together in the Holiday Lakes community, just south of Houston, Texas, to participate in the "Voices de la Comunidad" leadership program and to study English as a second-language. Their instructor, Lydia Degdale, an Una Vida Mayor program assistant for the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, conducted the leadership training in Spanish and then worked with the home-makers on their English-speaking skills for two hours a week for 12 weeks. They well understood that until they could speak English, they could not solve the numerous problems they had identified in their immediate community through their leadership training.

Most of the problems existed because someone could and did take advantage of the residents in this rural and separate community. They had been held hostage because they could not communicate with the authorities. This community, despite few services and little maintenance, continued on page 2.

Center Director Brodnax retires after 11 years of service

Dr. H. Doss Brodnax, director of the Southern Rural Development Center since April 1985, recently announced his retirement effective June 30, 1996. Doss is relinquishing his position to become a full time farmer/collaborator and future entrepreneur.

Doss received his bachelor and master's degrees from the University of Georgia. He was graduated from the University of Florida in 1972 with a Doctor of Philosophy Degree. While studying at Florida, Doss worked as agricultural economist in the Farm Production Economics Division of the Economic Research Service, USDA. Upon completion of his Ph.D., Doss came to Mississippi State University (MSU) as associate economist for the Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service. At MSU he also served as adjunct professor in two departments: Agricultural and Extension Education and Agricultural Economics.

Doss is married to Martha MacGregor. They have two children. Hal is a recent Mississippi State University graduate in agricultural economics, and Moira is a junior at the University of Mississippi.

As anyone who has been around Dr. Doss knows, he has several interests centering around agrarian themes. He is an avid collector of antique (some might just say "old") farm implements and equipment. He owns, and drives for special events, several buggies, wagon, go-karts and surreys. He has enough animals around his farm to rival a zoo.

continued on page 2.
Community Voices

has the highest tax rate in the county. Residents agreed that the water service outages and power failures were not adequate. To add to that problem, the city office was closed on Friday, the day their water bills were due. Bills were considered late, with a fee, if paid in the box outside the office. They could not pay their bills early because they received pay checks on that day. The city clerk refused to work with the residents until they could speak to her in English. By learning English and group processing skills through "Voices de la Comunidad," this situation was resolved. On Friday, the close of this program 12 Hispanic women passed their English proficiency test, forging a neighborhood action group and agreed to work on significant community problems such as little or no road maintenance. The school bus did not come through their subdivision to pick up the children, and the community did not have.

continued from page 1

security personnel. However, they no longer felt safe or helpless in dealing with these situations.

Several months later, this group rescued 20 Hispanic leaders from new areas of the county and hosted a full-day retraining that demonstrated the value of developing community leadership. Four teen-

agers contributed to the day's events, indicating that youth should be included in leadership develop-

ment.

The program philosophy of this visual and participatory curriculum states "there is strength in union and power in knowledge." Side effects have been the building of self-

esteem, changing the way people deal with people and bonding communities together.

The translated curriculum could be a tool in promoting the assimilation of Hispanics to the existing cultural climate through developed leadership. One hard copy and a computer disc of the program are available for $50. For additional

information contact Project Coordinator Carol Brokaw, Project Director Ampero Navarrete at telephone (404) 572-2637 or FAX (404) 852-2637, Cooperative Extension Program, Box 3059, Prairie View, TX 77446. Mrs. Steele and Mrs. Navarrete are available to conduct the two-day facilitator training that will help assure a successful program in each community. When ordering materials make checks or purchase orders to Cooperative Extension Program and send to the attention of Mrs. Barbara Jefferson.

Doss continued from page 1

He wants to build and run a "country store." With as many plans and pastimes as Doss has, it is evident his retirement will be busy.

Under his leadership, the Center worked with faculties at 1980 and 1982 universities in addressing many issues critical to the region. The work of several task forces established under Doss' tutelage was especially successful in focusing attention to complex problems of the rural South; problems such as: structure, finance, leadership development, small scale farms, job creation and retention and health.

During his 11-year tenure, Doss has been active in many national, regional and state rural development committees and organizations and many individual faculty members and staff recognized Doss' support of the Center and his contributions by hosting a reception in his honor June 24, 1996. Funds and contributions were raised from two to four in the clock in the afternoon at the Center, 6 Montgomery Drive, Mississippi State University. Doss requested no gifts. However, you may wish to contribute to projects supported by the Rupert Johnston Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Mrs. Cathy Lammons, Office of Development, P.O. Box 6149, Mississippi State, MS 39762.

International work requires cultural awareness of local country

With increased international duty assignments, some U.S. university professors are working within different cultures. According to Barbara Burcher, a Chung Hill, N.J., communications trainer and author, the most tolerant breed can cause significant damage to a working relationship. In an "Inter- 

ational Protocol and Presentation Skills" seminar she underscores these five common mistakes.

1. Not doing homework. You are expected to figure out how to function in the host country. Are you the visitor and must adapt. Read and study before you go. Many culture specific guidebooks describe local customs.

2. Expecting business to be done the "American Way." Many cultures do not embrace our philosophy of getting right down to business, place the same emphasis on the value of

In Print

Good Schools Improve Rural Development Prospects by David L. Banker, Mark S. Henry and Shuling Bao, looks at the role of local school quality in economic development in South Carolina using "x"-ray data. Contact RURIS and others. School quality was measured by high school test scores and student teacher ratios. Findings indicate that school quality does matter, especially in the more geographically isolated rural areas. Available from SDSIC, Order No. 16, 32, (Call 601) 325- 3207, FAX (601) 325-8815 or e-

mail sandyp@nces.msstate.edu.

The Rural Perspective on Potential Climate Change is finding themself closest to the Rural Health Care Coalition of the U.S. House of Representatives by the Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) Rural Health Development Expert Panel. It includes background information describing Medicare issues especially important to rural health with preliminary analyses of potential changes in Medicare policy. It is not

Names in the News

LINDA WILLIAMS Willis was appointed administrator of the Fairview A&M University, effective February 1. She succeeds HOVER CARDEEN, who retired last year.

THOMAS J. HELMS has been appointed executive director of the Southern Association of Agricultural Extension Directors. Previously Helms served as associate director of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station. He succeeds NEVILLE CLARK, who plans to work full-time for the Texas A&M Agriculture Program and to pursue international activities.
Capsules published periodically by Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) for educators, researchers, practitioners, local officials and private citizens interested in improving the quality of life in small communities and rural areas of the South. SRDC is one of four regional rural development centers in the nation and focuses specifically on rural problems of the Southern region. Located at Mississippi State University, SRDC provides support to the experiment stations and extension services of 29 land grant universities in 13 Southern states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Capsules is a forum for sharing please send news articles and information about forthcoming events to the editor.

H. Doss Brodnax, Director
Jacqueline Tiddale, Writer/Editor
Sandy Payne, Editorial Assistant.

Mississippi State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, handicap/physical, or veteran status.

Doss says goodbye

For 11 years I have been helping direct the Southern Rural Development Center's activities. It is with mixed emotions that I decided to participate in the "early retirement" opportunity offered by Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service. I personally wanted to express my thanks and appreciation to each of you for your commitment and dedication to improving the lives of individuals in our rural areas. I hope we have made a difference through the efforts of SRDC.

As many of you know my hobby is farming and raising exotic animals (mules). My plans include continuing this interest. I may have to get another job to support my "hobby." We hope to visit Starkville (T. Roy's) in a few years. Martha and I invite you to come to Starkville, Mississippi, for a visit.

Your Friend,

Doss

Study looks at branch-plant approach to economic growth

Following is the executive summary of the project report written by Donald Tomaskovic-Devey and Jacqueline Johnson, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, North Carolina State University. The complete report of the project, Southern Rural Development and the Branch-plant/Local Firm Development Options, is available from the Center.

The branch-plant approach to economic growth has generated significant employment across the South and has helped to create favorable conditions for the transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy. This industrial transition is based on industrial job generation often accomplished through the strategic recruitment of national and international firms to establish branch production facilities in Southern states. However, policy analysis and academics have argued that the buffalo hunt for branch plants is a limited route to economic development and social growth in the South. This approach has been criticized for recruiting and reinforcing rural poverty, leading to a neglect of human capital development, and for encouraging state and local governments to focus their creativity, energy and economic development budgets on the needs of outside rather than local employers. As a result, economic development that followed this approach to industrialization has been uneven, favoring urban areas over rural ones, whites over blacks and men over women.

This study addresses the contemporary efficacy of branch-plant recruitment strategies through a comparison of the jobs created and the human resource practices of locally owned establishments with national, outside owned establishments in North Carolina. North Carolina represents both the best and the worst in recent Southern growth and development. North Carolina shares with other Southern states a history of rural elites dominating the state, a more recent history of Sunbelt economic boom, largely confined to urban areas, and a sense of needing to change quickly before being left behind as the international economy comes to rely on other regions of the world for routine manufacturing production. Its coastal plain region remains deeply mired in poverty, while the urbanizing areas of the Piedmont region boast some of the most livable cities and development successes of the Sunbelt boom.

addition North Carolina has a record of heavy outside firm recruitment, and in recent years it has typically been one of the top two or three states in the country in industrial recruitment. North Carolina ranks first in the nation in the percentage of the workforce employed in manufacturing but at the bottom in manufacturing wages and unionization.

Continued on page 2

Co-interim directors named for Center

Co-interim directors have been named for the Southern Rural Development Center. Jerome Burton, associate division director of Extension at Alcorn State University (Mississippi) and associate director of SRDC, and John Lee, professor and head, Department of Agricultural Economics at Mississippi State University, jointly will lead the Center through September 30, 1986. H. Doss Brodnax retired June 30 after serving 11 years as director of the Center. A new director will be named by the Center's host state. Five states are preparing proposals for hosting the Center. Mississippi State University and Alcorn State University have served as host for the Center since its inception in 1974. Stay tuned.

Phillips named SRDC board member

Richard E. "Dick" Phillips has been selected by the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors to fill the unexpired term of Hiram Palmatree, director of Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service who retired June 30. Phillips is also director of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service.

Phillips, a native of New York, holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in agricultural engineering from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in agricultural engineering from Michigan State University. He has experience in the farm machinery industry and for the past 33 years has been with Cooperative Extension in five states. During the past 12 years, he has held full time administrative positions in Pennsylvania, Montana and North Carolina. Phillips is a registered Professional Engineer and has authored more than 100 publications in the area of farm structures and their environment. He is a senior member of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers. Welcome Dr. Phillips!

Alabama • Arkansas • Florida • Georgia • Kentucky • Louisiana • Mississippi • North Carolina • Oklahoma • Puerto Rico • South Carolina • Tennessee • Texas • Virgin Islands • Virginia
Branch-plant continued from page 1...

Overall this study does not support the contention that outside establishment bring in significantly better jobs than those offered by locally owned firms, once establishment size and core sector have been controlled. Not withstanding these significant differences in returns to education, tenure or training, any differences in earnings between branch workers in both firms are marginal and are mostly linked to the organizational resources of the larger, outside firms, which are more likely to be operating in the core sector of the economy. While locally owned firms may provide marginally lower returns to job tenure, resulting in a marginally lower economic status for their long-term employees, this is largely the result of the lack of organizational and economic resources that smaller, locally owned firms may have to offer their employees.

These findings suggest the assertion that branch-plant recruiting because they create better jobs than those offered by locally owned firms should be challenged by healthier skepticism. Outside firms seem to come to North Carolina to profit from local norms of low wages and low skills rather than to change them.

POLICY PROPOSALS. The data in these analyses clearly show that job skills and human capital traits, such as education and experience, are rewarded regardless of firm ownership. In addition, changes in production techniques linked to the internationalization of the economy are leading to higher skill expectations among employers. Thus, development strategies for poor, rural areas must address the limitations of low-skilled and poorly educated workers. Development policies that nurture the skill base of the local population are much more likely to provide first world comparative advantages in the international economy than are the current, more widespread rural policies of hunting for low-wage, low-skill branch plants.

Policy conclusions in three general areas are addressed in this report:


This project was supported by a grant from the Southern Rural Development Center. The analysis and writing of the study could not have been completed without the generous cooperation of the North Carolinians who responded to the North Carolina Establishment Employment Survey. North Carolina Employment and Health Survey was funded by the Farm and Rural Life Study in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology at North Carolina State University, supported by the North Carolina Agricultural Research Service and the North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service.

On schedule

Rural Sociological Society 59th Annual Meeting, August 15-18, Des Moines, Iowa. "Harvest of Rural Society: Healthy Families and Communities" is the theme program of the 1996 meeting. For information on local arrangements, contact Bob Meier, Iowa State University, (515) 294-8870 or rmeier@iastate.edu.

NCRRCD develops transportation curriculum

The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, in collaboration with USDA has received a final award titled Transportation Action: A Local Input Model to Engage Community for Planning. The Transportation Action model seeks to provide many technical information with a decision making process that assists rural communities in transportation planning. The process includes creating public dialogue, identifying transportation issues and developing solutions. Successful completion of the program should provide a blueprint for local action.

The model consists of 10 steps through which community might gain more transportation and take a more proactive role in planning its transportation future. Included in the 10 steps are four meetings. A suggested agenda is provided, along with preparation material for the facilitator, camera-ready copy of exercises for community participation and masters for overhead transparencies.

Transportation Action was written by Timothy DuBois, NCRRCD, Formal Ayres, Purdue University, with assistance from a curriculum development team that consisted of Ellen Stommas, USDA; Robert Works, Minnesota Department of Transportation; and Patricia Weaver Kansas University Transportation Center.

Transportation Action: A Local Input Model to Engage Community Transportation Planning (RND 174) is available through USDA-ERS. Cost of the booklet is $20.00. Check payable to USDA. Contact: USDA. (515) 294-2303 fax, jstewart@iastate.edu.

WRDC revises, renames Coping With Growth series

Evaluating Fiscal Impact Studies (WREP 7) has been revised to Old Coping With Growth Series of the Western Rural Development Center. The name was changed to Coping With Change to indicate the relevance of these materials in the face of population growth rather than growth. The information in this publication was revised to include the most recent findings with regard to predictions of fiscal impact, such as "sensitivity analysis."

Developed by specialists in Idaho, Oregon and California, the information in this twelve-page booklet is designed to help communities in the early stages of official weigh the usefulness of it. Data provides community leaders with some possible objectives and uses of fiscal impact analysis: an example of how the baseline and scenario information is used: assumptions about capital construction costs and non-local aid; as well as suggesting three questions to ask in a fiscal impact study.

Other titles from the original series that have been revised include: WREP 23. The Public Policy Process; WREP 30. Programming Capital Improvements; WREP 31. What does the Impact Statement Say about Economic Development? WREP 44. Community Needs Assessment Techniques; and WREP 45. How to Read the Trends in Your Community. Copies may be obtained from WRDC, 303 East Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011-1070; telephone (515) 294-8870; E-mail rmeier@iastate.edu.

Champion community recommendations given

Champion Communities. To receive a copy, the National Center for Appropriate Technology and the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development examined the needs of rural communities that applied unsuccessfully for an EZ/EC designation. They organized their recommendations into a report titled, Emerging Champions: A Report to the USDA About America’s Champion Communities. To receive a copy of the report, Champion Community News, contact either Karen Heady or Adam Zodrow at the Champion Communities Project Office, P.O. Box 3657, Fayetteville, AR 72702; telephone (501) 442-8284; e-mail ccm@itm.net.

Reprinted from Pathways from Poverty Newsletter, No. 5, May 1996.
Extension educators and community partners work together

Nearly 200 extension educators and community partners gathered in Louisville, Kentucky, on June 12-14, 1996, for a national conference titled "Linking Family and Community Strengths." The primary purpose of the conference was to improve extension educators’ ability to partner with extension colleagues in other areas of specialization, as well as with outside organizations and agencies. In particular, community development, family resource management and family development extension staff focused on building capacity in families and communities.

This concept was supported by keynote speaker John Kretzmann, co-author of Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets. His message focused on families and communities as the solution to not the cause of, local problems. Building Communities from the Inside Out suggests that communities cannot be rebuilt by focusing on their needs, problems and deficiencies. Rather, community building starts with the process of locating the assets, skills and capacities of residents, citizens, citizens’ associations and local institutions.

The conference opened with comments from CSREES-USDA administrators Aloma Hobbs (Families, 4-H and Nutrition) and Manv Konyha (Rural, Economic and Social Development) and community partner Susan Gust (project director of the Retiree Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota). The closing session offered both the extension perspective and the community perspective as well, with comments from Collen Heffran (acting associate administrator of CSREES-USDA) and Mike Wisdom (executive director of the San Luis Valley Development Resources Group in south central Colorado).

Eleven concurrent sessions provided participants with ideas and tools to develop integrated family and community development programming. Each session also provided information on the research base that undergirds integrated family life, family resource management and community development programming. Topics included Building Capacity in Families and Neighborhoods, Strengths Based Community Assessment, Facilitating the Transition from Welfare to Work, Mobilizing Community Leadership and Multi-generational Community Development.

Conference co-chairs were family economists Louis Parker, Washington State University, and Michael Ripundra, Kentucky State University. Doss Brodnax, Bonnie Teater and Jacque Tisdale from SRDC were members of the conference planning committee. National program leaders Jane Schuchardt (family economics) and Randy Williams (community economic development) were on the planning committee as well.

The conference was an outgrowth of a project funded by Southern Rural Development Center. Linking Family and Community Strengths was sponsored by the four regional Rural Development Centers, CSREES-USDA, the National 4-H Council, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Farm Foundation. A strength of the conference was the participation of numerous community partners made possible by this funding. Ten to 16 seed grants will also be available to conference participants and their partners on a competitive basis.

This article was written by Julie Stewart, communications director of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, who represented her Center at the conference.

Rural Health & Safety SERA-IEG Completes Directory

The Southern Extension and Research Activity-Information Exchange Group-19 (SERA-IEG-19) has completed a directory listing individuals in the southern region who have expertise on health care issues. A grant from the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) supported the project. The directory is available on-line through the SRDC home page at http://www.ces.msstate.edu/~srdrfl/.

The directory consists of university personnel and others in each state and territory who are recognized for their knowledge in rural health and safety. Southern Extension and research faculty, university and medical school faculty, health and human services professionals and state officers of rural health policy are included as recognized authorities and potential collaborators in the area of health care. This article was written by Julie Stewart, communications director of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, who represented her Center at the conference.
SRSA issues call for '97 papers

The Southern Rural Sociological Association (SRSA) has issued a call for papers for its 1997 annual meeting. The theme of the February 15-19, 1997 meeting is "Rural Development and Emerging Roles of Land Grant Universities: Research, Teaching and Public Service." The meeting is scheduled for Birmingham, Alabama, in conjunction with the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists (SAAS) conference.

To prepare a paper, abstracts (on 8 1/2 by 11" paper or 3 x 5" card) must be submitted and received by October 11, 1996. Send abstracts to Bob Mosley, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Box 8107, NCSU, Raleigh, NC 27695 or E-mail at Robert.Mosley@ncsu.edu.

Volunteers are needed also for session chairs and as discussants. Contact Mosley by telephone at (919) 515-9011 or by FAX at (919) 515-2620.

Extension educators and community partners continue from page 1

Nutrition, Fitness

Mental

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Agricultural Health and Safety

Community Health Volunteers

Community Health Systems Development

Health Education Models and Curriculum Models

Other

The directory is the result of the directors of the Cooperative Extension Services and Experiment Stations in the South appointing a task force in response to concern for health care and the proposed changes in health care policy in the United States. The Community Decisions for Health National Extension Initiative further pointed to the need for a group to address health related issues. No listing of experts was available in rural health and safety.

The task of developing a rural health and safety directory was outlined at the first meeting of the SERA-IEG in September 1993. They formed a subcommittee with Sara Begby of Clemson University as chair. Begby became the principal investigator of a successful proposal submitted to the Southern Rural Development Center to complete the directory. Other members included Danna Edlow, Florida A&M University; Jaree Loyd, North Carolina State University; and John Michael, ED/USDA Washington, D.C., Volunteers from the original SERA-IEG plus appointees by Experiment Station and Extension directors provided state contacts responsible for obtaining information. Details on health care services were assembled into the directory now available via computer. Members of the SERA-IEG will update the listings annually with SRDC maintaining the directory.

More information via computer


Kellogg Collection available on-line

After two years of development, the W. K. Kellogg Collection of Rural Community Development Resources is available to practitioners, scholars, students and citizens who want to locate resources that focus on a wide variety of rural topics. The collection was created by the Heartland Center in collaboration with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Architecture and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln libraries.

The collection contains rural and community development materials funded by the Kellogg Foundation and other selected sponsors of recognized rural programs. Guidebooks, manuals, workshop materials, reports, books and organizations include government, private organizations, regional rural development centers, universities and colleges and Extension Services.

A World Wide Web Home page has been created for the collection. An annotated bibliography of the collection is available via the home page. The home page URL is http://www.unl.edu/kellogg/index.html. The materials are divided into seven categories:

- Community Development
- Strategic Planning
- Leadership Development
- Economic Development
- Land Use/Real Resources
- Health Care and Telecommunications/Education.

Links are provided for each of the categories that users can go directly to the category and associated materials.

The Heartland Center is continually accepting material nominations for the collection. If you want to nominate materials for the collection send an E-mail message via the home page or via a Heartland Center, 941 "O" Street, Suite 920, Lincoln, NE 68508 or call (800) 927-1175 ext. 805.

In Print

1996 Rural Education Directory lists organizations with a strong rural focus including national associations, agencies, centers, clearinghouses, federal education programs: rural education journals, state and/or federal rural education projects, state and/or local funding, state and/or local rural education organizations with rural resources. 412. Order it from ERIC/DRESS, Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1200 University Station, C.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325-1348.

Local Schools of Thought, A Search for Purpose in Rural Education is written by Clark Webb, former associate professor at Wayne State. After a decade of attending rural schools, he believes that rural schools, technical improvements do not seem to be the way to go. This book looks beyond improving technique to examining purposes, and to the role the individual teachers and administrators need to make a difference. 812. Order it from ERIC/DRESS, Appalachia Educational Laboratory, C.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325-1348.

Southern Rural Economic Development and the Branch Plant/Local Economic Development Opportunities by Donald Tomaskovic-Devey and William Johnson, North Carolina State University, is the finalist report of an SSRC-funded project. Available from SRDC, Box 9656, Mississippi State, MS 39762 or contact Sandy Payne by telephone at (601) 325-3207 or E-mail her at: smpayne@msstate.edu. All of the reports' videos are included. Submitting

Rural communities gain internet access and training

Rural clients can also put their businesses and services on-line and even list information in sections resembling classified ads.

In addition, the seven schools will receive five computers that will be placed in rural communities and made accessible to clients. Computer and World Wide Web training will be provided to clients in these areas.

Mary Jordan, director of information systems for RBSDC, said through the use of computers, government officials wanted to focus on the needs of rural and individual communities and provide access to information that is normally received via mail.

Using the Internet seemed an ideal way to make government applications and resources from agencies like the Small Business Association and the Department of Commerce available, she said.

While the overall goal of the project was community outreach, it has also created jobs, made contacts at the local and national levels and established a partnership with the universities.

ASU, MSU continue as host institutions for SRDC

After the retirement of Director Doss Brodnax, the Southern Rural Development Center Board of Directors asked for proposals to host the Center. Two proposals were received. After considering both proposals, it was the decision of the Board to accept the proposal from Alcorn State University (ASU) and Mississippi State University (MSU) to continue to host the Center. Under the accepted proposal’s objectives, the Center will provide strong leadership to regional rural development interests, be aggressive in serving the needs of member institutions, attract funding to member institutions and regional rural development efforts, enhance communications and coordination among disparate rural development efforts in the region and strengthen partnerships among the region’s 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions.

The ASU/MSU proposal also calls for conducting a national search for an accomplished and noted rural development leader to serve as Center Director.

It is the intent of the proposal to provide the salary, benefits and type of appointment to attract the best candidate. A position announcement has been prepared and is available upon request from the Southern Rural Development Center. The Director of the Center will be an employee of Mississippi State University. Mississippi State University is an affirmative action employer.

"Linking Family" grants transform learning into action

One thousand-dollar mini grants will be awarded to 13 participants of a June 1996 conference. "Linking Family & Community Strengths." The primary purpose of the national meeting held in Louisville, Kentucky, was to improve Cooperative Extension Service educators' ability to partner with Extension colleagues in other areas of specialization, as well as with outside organizations and agencies. The ultimate goal is to build capacity in families and communities.

These grants, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Farm Foundation, will allow recipients to transform learning into action. Ideas for action formed during educational sessions of the conference will be turned into activities in several states. The following mini grants were awarded:

- Building from Within, Cheryl Zinny and Cynthia Crawford, Missouri;
- Training Community Leaders To Develop Family and Community Strengths, Beverly Butterfield, Virginia;
- Life in the State of Poverty: Perceptions and Realities, Judith Unch, Arkansas;
- Information Outreach To Ease Transition of Self Sufficiency for Idaho's Welfare Recipients, Linda Kirk Fox, Idaho;
- Linking Family and Community Strengths: Programs that Work, Annette Fitzgerald and Maria Pippins, Connecticut and Delaware;
- Building on the Strengths of Native American Families and Communities, Carolyn Krueger, Wisconsin;
- Colorado Pathways from Poverty, CPPF Team, Colorado;
- Linking More Resources for Strengthening Families and Communities, Lou Stitziel, Colorado;
- Making the Switch from a County Needs Assessment to a County Strengths Assessments, Colleen Benefield, Ohio;
- Ohio Linking Family and Community Strengths Conference, Barbara Brehm, Ohio;
- Connecting Children in Working Families, Peggy Harrington and Irene Leech, Virginia.

Linking Family and Community Strengths conference sponsors were the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Farm Foundation, the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service/USDA, the Southern Rural Development Center, the National 4-H Council, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development and the Western Rural Development Center.
Article reports micro-region approach to rural economies

How have rural economies been performing? How will they be able to perform better than others? Accurate measurement of the performance of the nation’s rural counties is compared with the performance of the nation as a whole. The main section describes the performance of the nation’s rural counties and then a summary of the results is drawn. But such an aggregate approach has drawbacks. One conceptual weakness is that rural places usually compete for economic activity with the metropolitan area at the center of their economic sphere, not with all metropolitan areas. In short, the usual “macro” view of the rural economy may overlook critical "micro" information and linkages.

An article in Economic Review (quoted here) by Mark Henry and Mark Drabensott in a micro-region approach to measure and explain rural economic performance. In the first section of the article, rural economic performance is measured by assessing the extent of the rural economy within a framework of multicounty economic regions. In the second section, factors are considered that appear to affect economic performance in rural places have been enjoying solid job growth. The concluding section (printed here in entirety) considers the implications of the findings for public and private decisionmakers.

Conclusions. A micro view of rural economic performance shows that employment has grown faster in a surprising number of rural places than in the neighboring metropolitan center. The notion’s 334 counties which contain a major metropolitan area and a surrounding rural area have been growing faster in total job growth in the rural area from 1989 to 1993. One area was even more widespread in manufacturing where 155 had faster job growth in the rural area.

An examination of the factors behind the growth points squarely at rural industry clusters as a major source of growth in rural areas. Urban spillover is also a factor in many of these industries. Local input markets and quality of life also matter somewhat in this case, but probably more than the results indicate due to limitations in the data. Yet, the repeated successes of industry clusters in the general and industry results underscores the importance of having a critical mass of business firms in the same industry.

The importance of industry clusters to total employment growth is confirmed by similar findings for metropolitan areas. O’Hara and Satterwhite find that these industry clusters to be the major factor explaining urban employment gains from 1977 to 1984. Their results suggest that firms derive competitive benefits from being near similar firms. These benefits are likely to include a pool of specialized labor and the ability to share industry information quickly and at low cost.

The results of this and other studies highlight the importance of industry clusters, but they do not reveal the underlying locational advantages that give some rural areas an initial advantage in a particular industry. While the empirical model used in the analysis does not identify these locational advantages, the findings show that industry clusters are important to continued economic growth in rural areas that gained an initial foothold in an industry. In short, industry clusters appear to reinforce the advantage a particular area has in a given industry (Danzig and Rosenbloom).

Rural areas normally are thought to have two key features—remoteness and small-scale—that slow economic growth. The important role of industry clusters in rural job growth throughout the 1980s suggest that successful rural communities find ways of overcoming the small scale. Put simply, the rural areas that grew in the 1980s employed those with a head start in a vital industry.

The finding has far-reaching implications for public and private decisionmakers. Public decisionmakers are often torn between efforts to specialize and efforts to diversify. Although many issues impinge on that decision, this result from this study suggests some thresholds of critical mass in an industry is vital to employment growth in many rural areas. Thus, a greater focus on economic development options keyeds to specific industries has merit. Communities that already have a foothold in a particular industry might consider ways to enlarge that presence. Communities that have no leading industry might consider how to develop one. A look at the industry clusters in 1997:

Private decisionmakers might expect a further consolidation in rural economic activity. Economic activity in rural America appears to be concentrated in a small number of industries. By focusing on those key industries, communities can enhance their impact on the local economy. For example, policy makers and businesses interested in attracting new manufacturing to rural areas may wish to identify the industries that are already an important part of the local economy. In many cases, these industries are dominated by a few large firms that have a significant impact on the local economy. By targeting these industries, communities can increase their chances of attracting new businesses and jobs.

The authors contend that metropolitan dwellers are aware of the many costs associated with urban congestion and much money is spent to solve these problems, but most cities are hard-pressed to address the underlying causes. Occasionally a suburb will try a slow-growing low-density zoning or building permits, but too often this does little more than a finger in a leaky dam. Housing costs are a significant problem. Rural areas, for their part, try to attract industry through various subsidies and tax breaks. The federal government, likewise, has attempted to lure economic activity to nonmetropolitan areas. Success has been minimal and piecemeal.

To make informed policy decisions regarding settlement patterns it is necessary to compare the rising costs of metropolitan congestion with the disadvantages that plague nonmetropolitan areas. If firms save money by locating in metro areas, how large is the savings compared with the costs that expansion creates? How much larger does a nonmetro area have to be before firms supplying inputs to relocating businesses are large enough to be active in the market and an area can be considered for relocation? This question is addressed in a publication released by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCD). The Economics of Population Settlement: Cost of Alternative Growth Patterns by A. Allan Schmid and Joseph T. Puro, consists of a series of analysis that point reached before the nonmetro area suffers diseconomies in provision of public services?

The Economics of Population Settlement: Cost of Alternative Growth Patterns (RPR 172) is available for $5 from the Southern Regional Center for Rural Development, 040 East Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011-1070.

Repeat that, please.

Use of “voice mail” is increasing. Learn to leave messages that clearly convey what you want the listener to know. Give your name, slowly, at the beginning and end of the message. Immediately repeat your phone number when it is a part of a voice-mail message.
Economic forecasting model available at no cost

Yale University Professor Ray C. Fair has devised a powerful economic forecasting system. Previously available at a yearly fee of $5,000 for commercial users and $750 for educational users, Fair has decided to make the model available online at no cost to students and educators. FairModel is available on the World Wide Web at http://fairmodel.econ.yale.edu/.

FairModel is a computer-based model of the U.S. economy, made up of 131 equations and reams of actual and predicted economic data covering the years 1952 to 2001. Users can experiment on a scale even politicians only dream of. For instance, you can adjust the income tax rate and see how the Gross National Product and other measures of economic activity are affected.

Professor Fair says models like his did require powerful mainframe computers to crunch the numbers. Now all the computation can be done on the Internet in a matter of seconds. Although great efforts have been made to make the site user-friendly, reading the Online documentation is recommended before activating the model.

extension agents, high school teachers and adult leaders of youth organizations have a new resource available to guide them in creating and implementing youth leadership and community development projects.

Building a Foundation for Community Leadership: Involving Youth in Community Development Projects, a publication recently released by the Southern Rural Development Center, is the culmination of five years of work by Florida and Kentucky. The workbook was developed so that communities can work to mobilize their youth as partners in community development projects.

A group of economists in the West have used recent developments in regional economic modeling to look at the effects of rural and urban economies of reduced timber harvests in Oregon and of limited grazing on public lands in northern Nevada. Rural-Urban Interdependence and Natural Resource Policy, a publication just released by the Western Rural Development Center, reports these studies in detail.

The 60-page volume opens with a chapter that discusses the modeling process. Three recent developments have facilitated the study of regional economies and permitted greater understanding of ways they interact.

- A core-periphery spatial economic paradigm.
- Software to estimate core-periphery trade.
- Government policies that regulate timber, fisheries and other natural resources have a direct and obvious effect on the economic well-being of rural people. But how does legislation to protect endangered species, for instance, affect folks who live in cities? Is there a connection? If so, what is it and how does it work?

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Announcement of a Position Opening

DIRECTOR
Southern Rural Development Center
Mississippi State University

Mississippi State University (MSU) invites applications for the position of Director of the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC). As one of four regional centers, the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) works with 13 Southern states, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands to initiate, foster and facilitate regional research and education efforts that contribute to an increased quality of life for residents of the Southern region.

Duties and Responsibilities: The Center Director is responsible for carrying out policies and procedures established by the SRDC Board of Directors; managing the Center’s budget, activities and programs; collaborating in the generation and development of state research and extension programs; promoting the Center’s mission, capabilities and program with primary funding organizations, potential financial supporters and clientele; providing supportive leadership to public and private rural development activities in the South; seeking funding and other resources to support state and multistate development activities of the participating states and institutions; and fostering more effective and better funded partnerships among the region’s 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions.

Qualifications: The Director must have an earned doctorate in Agricultural Economics, Rural Sociology, or a closely related area. It is preferred that the candidate have an established record of grantmanship, knowledge of the USDA/land-grant system, administrative experience, and an established record in rural/regional development research or Extension activities. It is also important that the Director have strong interpersonal skills as well as strong skills in effective oral and written communications.

Salary and Benefits: A nationally-competitive salary will be offered, commensurate with training and experience. The University offers a comprehensive benefits package.

Application Procedure: Applicants should submit a letter specifying academic interests and administrative philosophy, a curriculum vitae, three letters of recommendation and materials demonstrating accomplishments and writing skills to:
Chair, SRDC Search Committee
Mississippi State University
Box 8656
Mississippi State, MS 38792

Application deadline is November 1, 1998 or until position is filled.

Mississippi State University is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer.

Visit SERA in Birmingham

The Southern Extension/Research Activity Task Force on Rural Health (SERA-TF-53) has scheduled a meeting for November 7-8 in Birmingham, Alabama. The theme of the meeting is "Preparing for Rural Managed Health Care: A Community Strategy." Preliminary plans for the two-day session focus on case studies from three states. Presenters will include state Extension specialists, local practitioners and a speaker from the Community Decisions for Health National Extension Initiative.

You do not have to be a member of the task force to attend this meeting. Make your own room reservations at the Holiday Inn Birmingham-Airport by calling (205) 581-8800. To register, the meeting call the Southern Rural Development Center at (601) 325-3207 or E-Mail boxset@mces.msstate.edu.

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No, you don’t add water and get a newsletter, but there’s a way you can receive Capsule Reader results. You can see, a subscription to this newsletter is now available through the Internet. White Capsule has been on-line under the heading "Newspaper and Newsletters." The Subscription Page for several months. It is now possible to subscribe for monthly delivery to your own electronic mailbox.

Accessing Capsules through the Internet is fast and free for the user. After Capsule is written, several days are required to get it printed, folded, addressed and mailed. Electronically, it is ready to send immediately. The newsletter is mailed bulk rate, one of the lowest and least reliable means of delivery. Electronic delivery is instantaneous. Postage costs are high, but there are no additional costs for using electronic mail (E-Mail). If you have access to E-Mail, please consider subscribing to our listserv.

The SRDC staff thinks you will be happy with this new service, so give it a try!

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Announcement of a Position Opening

National Center for diversity workshops planned

Director Joanne Bankston of the Cooperative Extension System National Center for Diversity has announced the schedule of Fall and Spring public workshops. All workshops are presented at the Cooperative Extension faculty on the campus of Kentucky State University in Frankfort, Kentucky. The registration fee for each workshop is $150 and covers two 4-hour refreshment breaks and materials.

Using a Cultural Competence Approach to Enhance Family Wellness
- November 7-8, 2001
- Participants will learn about (1) the concept of diversity and how elements of the concept can be useful in family “dis-eases”; (2) How to develop competencies to help families create and build on their strengths to claim their own empowerment; and (3) The “myths” associated with diversity and the need for a “new” and “objective” research; and (4) Cultural environmental dynamics that affect groups of people in the society.

In-Reaching to Diverse Audiences and Communities
- December 12-13
- Participants will (1) Gain understanding about the diversity of families in Kentucky; (2) Examine models used to create community diagnosis and needs assessments; (3) Learn strategies for identifying social networks in a community or neighborhood; and (4) Develop skills for working in collaboration with diverse audiences; and (5) Build an action plan for working with a diverse audience.

Understanding Learning Styles to Enhance Teaching and Program Development
- January 23-24
- Participants will learn (1) how the learning cycle can be used in the development of curriculum, lesson plans and evaluation of community programs; (2) how to assess instructional activities that support different aspects of the learning cycle; (3) the importance of cultural learning styles; and (4) how to create a context to enhance learning experiences by taking cultural and unique individual experiences for enhanced learning experiences.

Worldviews: Global Forms of "Being Through Indigenous Knowledge" - February 20-21
- Participants will (1) explore the concepts of diverse world views on the macro level (cultural) and micro level (individual); (2) Learn the importance of "world views" as a specific way to understand and address solutions for transforming educational programs; (3) Use experiential learning methodologies to stimulate individual and group self-awareness; (4) Assess the education implications world views have for the creation of Multicultural Extension Programs; and (5) Identify how the diversity offers new perspectives and support the "mission" and goals of pluralistic learning.

Creating a Culture of Inclusion
- March 27-28
- Participants will (1) examine current trends that support the need for diversity education; (2) Analyze the dilemmas and opportunities presented by organizational change efforts; (3) Clarify and develop personal and organizational responses to diversity issues; and (4) Learn how to be a partner in creating a culture of inclusion.

4-State Heartland Conference
addresses sustainable community development

The 4-State Heartland Community Conference, "Forest and Woodland Resources for Sustainable Community Development," is scheduled October 31-November 1 in Fayetteville, Arkansas. The conference looks to bring together region-wide, long-term forest assessment and planning efforts with community-based planning and development to foster sustainable community development on a region-wide basis.

The 1996 conference will feature a keynote address by Ruth McWilliams, assistant director for program operations, Cooperative Forest Staff, Forest Service/USDA. Panel discussions by resource persons and agency representatives, special presentations and poster displays will address the overall theme of sustainable community development.

Woodlands and forests are an important resource of the 4-State Heartland Region (Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma) and of its attractive natural environment. The three National Forests of the region will soon release their long-range forest plans, and have launched a region-wide assessment in preparation. This will guide the use of these forests well into the next century. Everyone interested in these issues should attend.

To get more information contact 4-State Heartland Community Development, AERS, A227, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

Instant newsletter now available from SRDC

No, you don’t add water and get a newsletter, but there’s a way you can receive Capsule Reader results. You can see, a subscription to this newsletter is now available through the Internet. White Capsule has been on-line under the heading "Newspaper and Newsletters." The Subscription Page for several months. It is now possible to subscribe for monthly delivery to your own electronic mailbox.

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Census study concludes family farms alive and well

When country music star Willie Nelson croons a farewell to family farms at the Farm Aid concerts, his words may be premature. A Mississippi State University study concludes family farms are alive and well. “There has been an expansion of corporate farming since the 1980s, but there also has been an apparent resurgence of the family farm in some areas,” said sociologist Frank Howell of the Social Science Research Center at Mississippi State University.

He and researcher John K. Thomas examined agricultural census data for more than 3,000 U.S. counties. Thomas is a member of the Texas A&M University rural sociology department. Using nearly 20 variables, they compiled data from three successive census studies: 1982, 1987 and 1990. They published their findings recently in the journal Rural Sociology.

“We wanted to track the transformation of U.S. agriculture from the 1980s, when the Midwest first began to show signs of crisis,” Howell said. Their work builds on earlier studies that classified types of farms. Unlike earlier studies, their research looks at changes in a business context and identifies three types of predominant farming organizations.

The small-farm, generally seen as the heart of farming and characterized by small acreage and family ownership. These farms often are operated full time by their residents.

The farming firm, which involves operators who often lease land and use large-scale production. This type of farming is becoming more common in Florida and California.

The corporate-commercial farm, prevalent in California and Florida and characterized by high gross farm sales, many hired workers and its own research and development operation. Howell and Thomas discovered that the crisis of the 1980s, often perceived to be the death knell of the family farm, actually signaled transition. Their analysis showed that farming, like other industries, adjusted to the shock out of market demands.

“As in other businesses, the most competitive survive,” Howell observed. The researchers conclude that the farm crisis was the beginning of the business shake out, with a movement from predominately small farms to a mixture of other types.

“All types of farming were affected,” Howell said. “There has been an expansion of corporate farming, but there also has been a resurgence of the family farm. In some areas, family-owned enterprises are the dominant form of farming.”

The study shows that more than one-half the counties characterized by small farming operations in 1982 were still in that category a decade later. “Only a small number of counties actually made a revolutionary shift to another type of farming,” Howell said. In future work the two researchers will assess the impact of type of farming organization on a community’s well-being.

Their recent work was supported by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station at Texas A&M University and the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station at Mississippi State University. You can access the study on the World Wide Web at http://www.ssrc.msstate.edu/taxchanging.htm. Point the browser to “The Dimensions of U.S. Agriculture: Visualizing Trends in the Farming Nebula, 1982 to 1992.”

Excerpted from Mississippi State University MEMO, Volume 21, Issue 9, September 23, 1996.

Managing Change in Agriculture Extension’s newest initiative

The Cooperative Extension System’s new national educational initiative, Managing Change in Agriculture (MCA), builds on innovative, educational programs already underway in several states. It commits the Extension System to devote a significant share of its resources to educational programs that help agricultural producers, families, agribusinesses and rural communities understand change and develop creative strategic responses to those changes.

The primary objective of Managing Change in Agriculture is that people in the agricultural sector have successful, profitable businesses contributing to the well-being of their families and communities.

Managing Change in Agriculture focuses on strategic thinking and decision-making processes that enable people to understand change and its implications, develop and evaluate alternative responses, make decisions and implement them. It applies these processes to four critical management areas:

Managing the Agricultural and Natural Resource Business, continued on page 2
Tuskegee announces PACW schedule

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently released its projections for 2007. BLS does not specifically project rural employment but that its national projections have rural implications. BLS projects employment loss in agricultural manufacturing, industries with larger shares of rural than urban employment. The prospects for employment by industry and industry-specific occupations depend primarily on major economic developments. BLS considers three scenarios: low growth (1.8%), moderate growth (2.3%) and high growth (3.0%). BLS projects 18 million new jobs under the moderate-growth scenario. Most of these jobs will be in the service sector. Half will be in the service industry of the service sector, which is in the hotel and other lodging and personal services industries. Large employment gains are also expected in the health services, business services and retail trade industries of the service sector. BLS stresses, however, that there will be job openings for workers in all industries and at all levels of education. More than 18% of public school teachers without complete employment are expected to replace departing workers.

Among the projected growth industries, agricultural employment is expected to remain relatively high levels of education or training; executive, administrative and managerial, professional, technical, and related support. Rural areas have proportionately fewer of these workers than urban areas. Rural areas also have a larger share of workers employed in precision production, craft and repair and operators, fabricators and laborers. Occupational groups expected to have substantial job loss employment growth in these groups.

Below the major group level, projected growth rates vary widely among specific occupations. The five occupations expected to generate the most jobs are cashiers, painters, cleaners, retail salespersons, waiters, waitresses and registered nurses. About 10 percent of rural employment is in these five occupations, which is about the same share as for urban employment. The five occupations expected to lose the most jobs are purchasing agents, word processors, bookkeeping clerks, bank tellers and sewing machine operators who sew garments. Rural areas have a slightly larger proportion of employment in these occupations than urban areas. Employment loss is expected to be 3.4 percent of rural employment versus 2.8 percent of urban employment.

Over the last 10 years, employment in rural areas has decreased as a share of total U.S. employment. Although a large share of rural employment is now in occupations expected to decrease the most by 2007, the employment in industries and occupational groups with projected declines is slow to be concentrated in rural areas. This suggests that rural economic growth faces disadvantage in their positioning for the expected work force changes over the next 10 years. Recent experience, however, showed that many rural areas were able to in-crope employment through manufacturing, although manufacturing jobs decreased nationwide. If rural areas do not use their competitive advantages or do not adapt their industry and occupational structure, rural employment will continue to be a shrinking share of the national labor force.


Less than 1 percent of the treated water produced by water utilities is actually consumed. The remainder goes on, in water mains, down toilets and drains.

Sustainable Agriculture Conference set

The Sixth Annual Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SAWG) Conference and Trade Show takes place January 16-19, 1997, at the Radisson Hotel in Gainesville Florida. The Florida Organic Growers and Consumer’s Association, a member of Southern SAWG, is hosting the meeting. The conference includes more than 20 vendors and three farm tours. Workshop topics will focus on production methods, marketing strategies, policies and research that contribute to sustainable agriculture and will feature family farmers who found ways to keep their farms profitable while lowering their impact on the environment. For more information contact Jean Mills, Southern SAWG, at (205) 333-8604.

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On Schedule

Southern Extension/Research Activity-Information Exchange Group (SERA-IEG 19), November 7-8, Birmingham, Alabama. This rural health care group will discuss "Preparing for Rural Managed Health Care: A Community Strategy." The meeting is not limited to group members. To register call the SRDC at 601-325-3207 or e-mail bonnier@mcad.mastate.edu.

National employment projections have rural implications

Employment in all major occupational groups is expected to increase to moderate levels except agricultural occupations that are projected to lose 112,000 jobs by 2007. BLS projects that three of the four fastest growing occupational groups projected to experience relatively high levels of education or training; executive, administrative and managerial, professional, technical, and related support. Rural areas have proportionately fewer of these workers than urban areas. Rural areas also have a larger share of workers employed in precision production, craft and repair and operators, fabricators and laborers. Occupational groups expected to have substantially less job loss employment growth.

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Infrastructure SERA-IEG convenes at SAAS

Declining rural communities, fewer jobs, limited access to information and services and out-migration of youth have forced rural America to rethink its future. Future sustainability of rural communities depends in significant measure on their capacity to deploy financial, physical and intellectual assets efficiently and effectively. Communities need to plan for modernization of institutions that enhance future development opportunities. What knowledge and experience is available to help community development professionals guide community decision-making? The "Rural Infrastructure as a Cause and Consequence of Rural Economic Development and Quality of Life" Southern Extension/Research Activity Information Exchange Group (SERA-IEG) is seeking to provide answers.

SERA-IEG-16 will meet with the Annual Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists (SAAS) meeting in Birmingham, Alabama. The group recently announced their educational agenda for the February 1-2, 1997, meeting. Topics of discussion are "Defining Sustainable Communities," "Practical Application: The Virginia Model," "Communities in Economic Transition," and "National Initiative Update: Communities in Economic Transition.

Plan to attend the SERA-IEG meeting during SAAS.

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H. Doc Bredman
Director
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Capsules is published periodically by Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) for educators, researchers, practitioners, local officials and private citizens interested in improving the quality of life in small communities and rural areas of the South. SRDC is one of four regional rural development centers in the nation and focuses specifically on rural problems of the Southern region. Located at Mississippi State University, SRDC provides support to the experiment stations and extension services of 29 land-grant universities in 13 Southern states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Capsules is a forum for sharing: please send news articles and information about forthcoming events to the editor.

H. Doc Bredman
Director
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Cappedes Volume 16 Number 10

Reference Book on Well-Being Reveals Major Differences Among Regions

Which major region of the United States has the largest population? Which has the most rural and nonmetro residents? Which has the highest poverty rate? Which has the largest share of the nation's poverty? Which has the highest poverty rate and the largest share of people without high school diplomas? Which region has the largest share of unemployed? The largest share of youth and elderly dependents? If you said, "The South," to all of the above, you win.

Unfortunately, socioeconomic quality of life in the South does not win. In the effort to eliminate poverty and improve educational attainment, the South loses by great distances relative to other major U.S. regions. All regions are not equal in terms of important socioeconomic conditions. Too often, the social scientific literature makes it seem that impoverished conditions, including poor rural conditions, are spread rather evenly throughout the United States. They are not. For example, the South has 34 percent of the U.S. population and 41 percent of the nation's poverty. It has 45 percent of the nonmetro population and 55 percent of the nation's poverty. The region has 53 percent of the nation's African-Americans and 67 percent of those who live in poverty. The South has 91 percent of the nation's Blacks and 95 percent of their nonmetro poverty.

The Reference Book on Regional Well-Being: U.S. Regions, the Black Belt, Appalachia, by Ronald C. Winkerley and Libby V. Morehead, published through the Southern Rural Development Center, examines poverty, education, unemployment, and dependency with data from the four U.S. regions and two southern subregions. Using census data, the volume analyzes each condition in terms of race, region, and rurality. Along with the text, results are presented in 3 maps, 15 spreadsheet tables, and 36 graphs.

All U.S. regions have appreciable levels of poor socioeconomic conditions in their nonmetro areas. But regardless of geographic region and in nearly every comparison, whites are better off than blacks, metro residents are better off than the nonmetro, and nonmetro whites are better off than nonmetro blacks. But of particular regional concern are the South, the Black Belt, and Appalachia where many poor quality-of-life conditions are not concentrated at their highest rates and in their largest national shares. Many researchers have called attention to the problems associated with race and rurality, but few identify the differences among regions. This analysis demonstrates some general circumstances that contribute to the disproportionately large share of the nation's poor quality-of-life conditions in the South and Black Belt.

First, this region and subregion contain large populations. The South has over one-third of the U.S. population and is growing. Viewed separately from the larger South, the Black Belt nearly matches the populous northeastern United States.

Second, rates for poverty, low educational attainment, and the like differ across the nation's regions and demographic spectrums. The South and Black Belt are home to nonmetro and racial subpopulations that suffer the worst rates for socioeconomic conditions.

Third, the high rates and the large subpopulations-at-risk compound, or interact, to produce disproportionately large concentrations of poor socioeconomic conditions in the South and Black Belt.

Poverty. The poverty rates—the percentage of people who are poor—are notably higher in the South than in the Northeast, Midwest, and West. Among each of the other major regions, the percentage share of the nation's poor is about half or less of what it is in the South. The disparities observed for the South as a whole are intensified in the 623 Black Belt counties of the South. The Black Belt's poverty rate is the highest in the country; it is higher than that of any major U.S. region or Appalachia.

High school graduation. Similar conclusion for the South and Black Belt can be drawn from regional rates and national shares of those not graduating from high school. The highest rates of not graduating occur in the Black Belt, Appalachia, and the South in general. The highest rate of not finishing high school is for the Black Belt's nonmetro blacks; 54 percent have not completed high school. Furthermore, the South has a 40 percent share of all who do not graduate in the United States, including 58 percent of the blacks who do not finish high school.

Unemployment. Unemployment rates for the four major census regions are similar. Nevertheless, the South carries the largest national share of the unemployed, and southerners are the working poor. The nation's worst unemployment rates are located in the Black Belt South and Appalachian subregions. Nonmetro unemployment rates are worse. More than half the metro and nonmetro region and subregion except the Midwest where they are equal. Black unemployment rates run two or three times higher than for whites in all regions and subregions.

continued on page 2

Alabama • Arkansas • Florida • Georgia • Kentucky • Louisiana • Mississippi • North Carolina • Oklahoma • Puerto Rico • South Carolina • Tennessee • Texas • Virgin Islands • Virginia
Get out those calendars

Mark your SAAS schedule to be in the South E Room at theSheraton Civic Center Hotel for Monday, February 3, 1997, at 1:00 p.m. The Southern Rural Sociological Association (SRSA) and the Southern Agricultural Economics Association (SAEA) will meet for a joint symposium you shouldn't miss.

The title of the session is “Strengthening the Applied Research Base for Rural Development Action Programs.”

The purposes of the joint symposium are to: review current needs for applied rural development research as seen by those who have to plan and deliver programs, identify potential funding sources, and identify researchers in southern institutions who have an interest in responding to new rural development research opportunities.

David Freshwater, University of Kentucky, will serve as moderator for the session. Presentations will include the following:

- “Opportunities for Applied Rural Development Research to Guide Extension Planning and Programming: A USDA Partnership” by Associate Administrator Collen Heffeman, CRSES/USDA.

There will be an open discussion chaired by the moderator with the presenters as a resource panel. Symposium attendees will have an opportunity to respond to a proposal to establish a southern rural development research partnership.

Reference book continued from page 1

Dependence. Dependence is a recent addiction to the study of regional quality of life. Nonmetro dependence ratios are higher than the metro ratios, and African-American dependence ratios—driven by youths—are higher than those for whites. Regional, race, and rurality converge to show differences in dependence that correspond to differences in poverty and education. In the South and Black Belt where nonmetro black dependence ratios are especially high, poverty and high school graduation rates are at their worst.

Making regions visible. In combination, region, race, and rurality signal an ongoing crisis in quality of life not only for the Historic South, but also as a long-standing problem that affects the nation as a whole. To improve socioeconomic well-being nationally, solutions must be targeted at specific conditions within regions.

Because a place is southern, rural, or Black Belt does not mean that its poor conditions should be accepted as a matter of course. The lack of programs to be addressed in all regions, but the extraordinary concentration of southern and Black Belt impoverishment often goes unmentioned or if unrecognized by those who study rural development, by those who write rural development policies, and by those who devise rural development programs.

The people and places of the rural South have suffered poor socioeconomic conditions for a long time.

The director search continues

The search for a new director of the Southern Rural Development Center continues. After advertising the position nationwide, applications poured into the Center for the Screening Committee’s review. The deadline for applications has passed and the Screening Committee is busily reviewing applicant materials. No date has been set for the announcement of a new director, but we’ll keep you posted. We’re as anxious as you!

On Line subscriptions still available

Capsules is available through the Internet. As we reported earlier, you may subscribe to or get the SRDC newsletter electronically, and you’ll receive it as soon as it is completed. Otherwise, hard copy will be mailed via bulk rates—sometimes an unreliable and slow method of delivery. You choose!

While it is a fact that some people still prefer to access the Internet, those who have the capability, should seriously consider this new opportunity. Thanks to those who are already taking advantage of this offer. By the way, the price of Capsules remains the same. It’s free to all subscribers. The steps to the electronic mailing list for Capsules are simple and are given below.

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Reference Book on Well-Being Reveals Major Differences Among Regions

Volume 16 Number 10

November/December 1996

Which major region of the United States has the largest population? Which has the highest poverty rate? Which has the highest poverty rate and the largest share of the nation’s poverty? Which has the nation’s highest poverty rate and largest share of people without high school diplomas? Which has the lowest share of unemployment? The largest share of youth and other dependents? If you said, “The South,” to all of the above, you win.

Unfortunately, socioeconomic quality of life in the South does not win. In the effort to eliminate poverty and improve educational attainment, the South loses by great distances relative to other major U.S. regions.

All regions are not equal in terms of important socioeconomic conditions. Too often, the social scientific literature makes it seem that impoverished conditions, including poor rural conditions, are spread rather evenly throughout the United States. They are not. For example, the South has 34 percent of the U.S. population and 41 percent of the nation’s poverty. It has 45 percent of the nonmetro population and 55 percent of the nation’s poverty.

The region has 53 percent of the nation’s African-Americans and 57 percent of those living in poverty. The South has 91 percent of the nonmetro blacks and 95 percent of their nonmetro poverty. In summary:

- “Southern Black Belt Region on Regional Well-Being: U.S. Regions, the Black Belt, Appalachia,” by Ronald C. Wimbler and Libby V. Coons.
- Published through the Southern Rural Development Center, examines poverty, education, unemployment, and dependency within and across the four U.S. regions and two subregions.
- Using census data, the volume analyzes each condition in terms of race, region, and dependency. Along with the text, results are presented in 3 maps, 15 spreadsheet tables, and 36 graphs.
- All U.S. regions have appreciable levels of poor socioeconomic conditions in their nonmetro areas. But regardless of geographic region and in nearly every comparison, whites are better off than blacks, metro residents are better off than the nonmetro, and nonmetro whites are better off than nonmetro blacks.

In the six regions of the South the disparities observed for the South as a whole are intensified in the 623 Black Belt counties of the South. The Black Belt’s poverty rate is the highest in the country; it is higher than that of any major U.S. region or Appalachia.

High school graduation. Similar correlation for the South and Black Belt can be drawn from regional rates and national shares of those not graduating from high school. The highest rates of not graduating occur in the Black Belt, Appalachia, and the Northeast South.

The highest rate of not finishing high school is for the Black Belt’s nonmetro blacks: 54 percent have not completed high school. Furthermore, the South has a 40 percent share of all who do not graduate in the United States, including 58 percent of the blacks who do not finish high school.

Unemployment. Unemployment rates for the four major census regions are similar. Nevertheless, the South carries the largest national share of the unemployed, and the South and Appalachia have the working poor. The nation’s worst unemployment rates are located in the Black Belt South and Appalachian subregions. Nonmetro unemployment rates are worse in rural southern counties, and subregion and subregion except the Midwest where they are equal. Black unemployment rates run two or three times higher than for whites in all regions and subregions.

continued on page 2
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Reference book continued from page 1

Again, and at yet another century's close, they still do. The Reference Book on Regional Well-Being makes region as well as race and rurality more visible to those who do research, make policies, or administer programs to improve quality of life. Like race and rurality, regional differences can no longer be ignored.

The complete report of this SRDC project is available from the Center for $15.00 plus $1.50 shipping. Order SRDC #203 from Southern Rural Development Center, Box 9556, Mississippi State, MS 39793, 601-325-3250, E-mail sanjoy@mces.msstate.edu.

Heartland discusses sustainable community development

About 115 people attended the 1996 Four-State Heartland Community Development Conference in Fayetteville, Arkansas. "Forest and Wood Resource for Sustainable Community Development" was the theme of the annual meeting.

The goal of this year's conference was to bring together and stimulate dialogue among groups carrying out local community development, various resource persons and organizations, and U.S. Forest Service personnel conducting the Ozark/Duichita Highlands Assessment.

Ruth McWilliams, USDA Forest Service Cooperative Forestry Staff in Washington, D.C., gave a keynote address that set the stage for the discussions. She discussed the recently-released "Sustainable Americas" report of the President's Council on Sustainable Development and challenged the conference participants to focus upon sustainability and upon effectively involving citizens and community groups in collaborative planning and decision-making. The area's local State Fore and Rural Development Council Directors reported briefly. Case studies were presented of community development activities including tourism, ecotourism, wood products-related community development and others.

The Southern Cooperative Extension Services in the four states - Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma, sponsored the conference. The Southern Rural Development Center was one of several agencies that supported the conference. Next year's conference will be in Pittsburg, Kansas. It will focus upon the identification and measurement of community change and movement toward sustainability.

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Board accepts RRDPAC's statements

At the request of the Board Directors, members of the SRDC's Rural Regional Development Program Advisory Committee (RRDPAC) developed a draft document with issues, vision and values statements. Randy Williams presented a draft document to the Board of Directors at their fall meeting. The Board members refined and accepted the document. The following statements now reflect "what we're about.

Our Leadership Philosophy
We believe in the region's people as our most important resource and improved economic and social opportunities for those people as SRDC's most important product.

Our Vision
The Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) serves as a catalyst for change throughout the region, fostering and encouraging opportunities for increased numbers of citizens to work and enjoy a higher quality of living.

Our Mission
The mission of the SRDC is to serve as a proactive leader and primary facilitator of rural development research, education and policy dialogue that will improve the socio-economic conditions of the Southern region. The SRDC fosters innovative and creative approaches to sustainable rural development.

Our Values
The SRDC operates in a diverse environment and embraces inclusive and representative values.

Grassroots Participation
Collaboration between the Public and Private Sectors

Diversity and Pluralism
Effective Use of Monetary and Human Resources

Empowerment of People and Communities

Equity in the Allocation of Resources

Human Capital Development

On Schedule

94th Annual Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists (SAAS), February 1-5, 1997, Birmingham, Alabama. For additional information contact Vernon Boggs, (504) 231-6295 or E-mail Vboggs@vtdmail.com.

Southern Rural Sociological Association, February 1-5, 1997, Clemson, South Carolina. For information on participation (present paper, discuss paper or chair a session) or local arrangements, contact David Barkley, Faculty of Economic Development, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina (864) 656-5797, E-mail DBARK@CLEMSON.EDU.
Board accepts RRDPC's statements

At the request of the Board of Directors, members of the SRDC's Regional Development Program Advisory Committee (RRDPC) developed vision, mission and values statements. Handy Williams presented a draft document with the statements to the Board of Directors at their fall meeting. The Board members reviewed and accepted the document. The following statements now reflect "what we're about."

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Southern Rural Sociological Association, February 1-5, 1997, Birmingham, Alabama. The theme for the 1997 Srsa meeting is "Rural Development and Emerging Roles of Land-Grant Universities: Research, Teaching and Public Service."

Registration is on-site at the Sheraton Civic Center Hotel along with registration for SAAS.

Southern Regional Science Association 39th Annual Meeting, April 17-19, 1997, Memphis, Tennessee. For information on participation (present paper, discuss paper or chair a session) or local arrangements, contact David Barkley, Faculty of Economic Development, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina 29634-0355, (864)656-5797, E-mail DBRKL@CLEMSON.EDU.

Happy Holidays!

The staff at the Southern Rural Development Center takes this opportunity to express our thanks for your continued support and interest and to wish you and yours the most pleasant and safest holiday season ever.

Capraule is published periodically by Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) for educators, researchers, practitioners, local officials and private citizens interested in improving the quality of life in small communities and rural areas of the South. SRDC is one of four regional rural development centers in the nation and focuses specifically on rural problems of the Southern region. Located at Mississippi State University, SRDC provides support to the experiment stations and extension services of 29 land-grant universities in 13 Southern states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Capraule is a forum for sharing plans and news articles and information about forthcoming events to the editor.

Jacqueline Tindale, Editor/Editor Sandy Payne, Editorial Asst.
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