

**St. Martin Parish Advisory Leadership Council Meeting**  
**September 13, 2006**  
**Minutes**

**Alfred Guidry**, Parish Chairman introduced the staff which consisted of **Margaret Frey**, Extension 4-H Agent, **Amy Juneau**, Family Nutrition Program, **Glenn Thomas**, Area Fisheries Agent and **Chris Robichaux**, County Agent with 1890 Program.

The Parish Chairman then allowed council members to introduce themselves, which consisted of: **Tommy Romero**, Banker; **James Trahan**, CEO with FSA; **Mike Melancon**, sugarcane producer; **Curry Albert**, sugarcane producer; **Elsie Castille**, retired and representing FCS; **Joseph Darby**, agri-business; **Odell Trahan**, Parish Council; **Etta Brew**, retired representing FCS; and **Alice Guidry**, homemaker and member-at-large.

Members absent: **Len Eisenstein**, 4-H volunteer; **Hope Guidry**, 4-H Leader; **Kip Lastrape**, rice/crawfish farmer; and **Debbie Richard**, Master Gardener.

Parish Chairman discussed the following:

*Member Responsibilities:*

- Represent and identify the needs and issues of clientele you represent
- Advise LSU AgCenter LCES faculty on program direction for a more effective and efficient delivery of services to clientele in the area
- Assist in the implementation and evaluation of educational programs
- Assist in identifying opportunities for collaboration to enhance or expand AgCenter programs related to this initiative
- Attend ALC meetings as scheduled

*Member Roles:*

- *Ambassador*—keep the public informed about the LSU AgCenter and encourage people to participate in AgCenter programs.
- *Legitim�izer*—Gain support and approval for LSU AgCenter programs and resources from the clientele groups you represent.
- *Advisor*—Observe, listen, probe and then advisor AgCenter faculty on how to continuously improve programs and services of the LSU AgCenter

*Support Plan:*

As an ALC member, you will be provided with the following resources to assist you in fulfilling your roles and responsibilities:

- Orientation to the LSU AgCenter LCES and its mission, vision and goals
- Overview of current LCES programs and resources related to this initiative
- Timely feedback and response to all recommendations

After agents were introduced they were each asked to give a brief overview of their job descriptions.

**Alfred Guidry**, Parish Chairman/County Agent: I am responsible to oversee the daily activities of office employees, hold staff minutes as needed, make reports to School Board and Parish Council. I, also, make frequent talks to civic organizations and provide them with updates on the parish crop situations. I am, also, responsible for conducting educational programs for sugarcane, rice, wheat, soybeans and grain sorghum, which are all grown in the parish. Each year commodity meetings and field days are hold to provide farmers with the latest technology available.

Recommendations:

Agriculture:

- Farmers need assistance on how to get foreigners for farm labor. Rules and regulations are complicated and farmers would like to learn a step-by-step schedule for hiring foreign farm labor.
- A short course to teach Spanish people the basics of the English language. Farmers would also like to learn the basics of the Spanish language. A comment was made that Vita could help with volunteer training.
- One banker commented on how valuable the information he receives from the LA Cooperative Extension Service is to his business.
- The relationship between the LA Cooperative Extension Service and other governmental agencies has been excellent. Agencies work very well together.

**Margaret Frey, 4-H Agent:** The 4-H Club program is a very traditional one which still emphasizes project and record book completion, along with traditional achievement day participation. In 2005-06 there were 945 members in 29 clubs which included 5 Cloverbud clubs, 5 fourth grade clubs, 7 fifth-sixth grade clubs, 7 seventh-eighth grade clubs, 3 high school clubs, 1 combined grades club and 1 at large combined grades club. The parish program also has a very active Junior Leadership club made up of members from grades 7-12 parish wide. Last year there were 67 members.

In February the parish commodity cookery competition was held at the 4-H office. A total of 109 entries were judged. Seventy-five 4-Hers participated in an interactive food safety session entitled *Better Safe than Sorry* in which Dr. Sally Soileau discussed the mysteries of how germs spread and she relayed techniques to stop them in their tracks along with other safe food handling tips. The session also consisted of food safety interactive workshop activities that reinforced the lessons. Each participant received literature to share with family and friends as they learned to be nutrition/food safety leaders in their community. This year the contest day will be held at Breaux Bridge Junior High and will also feature the ambassador speaking contest.

At the regional Cookery Contest twelve contestants participated in 13 contests. Two of the 4-Hers won first place in the Rice Side Dish category and the Crawfish category. Three won second place in the Oyster category, the Shrimp category and the Quick and Easy Beef category. A third place was captured in the Rice Main Dish category. There were 5 blue ribbons and one red ribbon.

Parish 4-H record book competition was completed with 708 record books entered for competition. Achievement Day was held April 28 at Breaux Bridge High School. Seventy-eight

volunteers served as judges for the fifty-eight various contests. Approximately 700 4-H members participated in the competitive events which included demonstrations, judging contests, speeches, illustrated talks, and exhibits along with the club competition of talent and club yell.

Two hundred forty-six youth were honored at the Outstanding Leader and Member Recognition Reception held at Breaux Bridge High School in May. Certificates, medals, special awards and scholarships were presented along with outstanding club awards.

In June thirty four 4-H members competed in state competition and two participated in Clover College during 4-H University. Five adult parent leaders served as chaperones in the dormitories and provide transportation for the contestants to events on the LSU campus. Four members were named state winners in career interview and consumer foods judging. Members in automotive and livestock judging blue ribboned as high point individuals; Teams and individual contestant blue ribboned in the following contests: automotive, computer simulation, conservation illustrated talk, diesel equipment operators, fashion revue, outdoor skills, photography, small engine demonstration and soybean illustrated talk for a total of 23 blue ribbons for St. Martin Parish.

Summer camp at Camp Grant Walker in Pollock was attended by 80 St. Martin elementary 4-H members. Two adult volunteers and five Junior Leaders assisted the 4-H agents during the week of outdoor camping activities.

Adult volunteers are continuing the Shooting Sports program of the parish. One of the parents agreed to become the coordinator of the program. He will be assisted by another parent leader who will keep up the paperwork. There are also instructors for air rifle, BB, archery and shotgun categories.

- Leadership of the 4-H Program is excellent.
- School Board member praised the 4-H Program and recommended a banquet for leaders and their sponsors.
- Livestock Show and Sale is a great program and has a lot of local support and should be continued.

#### **FCS:**

- Recommends that an FCS person be hired for St. Martin Parish or at least an area agent. Presently, no FCS agent in a 5-parish area.
- Thanks to Mrs. Elsie Castille, retired home economist who continues to provide leadership for parish FCE programs.
- Recommends someone to do parenting skills for the parish.
- Nutrition should be taught in the parish. Possible partner with School Board to offer after school classes on nutrition, parenting, etc.

**Chris Robichaux, Ph.D., Horticulture:** As a County Agent with the SU Ag Center, job responsibility involves working in the area of horticulture. Sixty percent of the time is spent in St. Martin Parish conducting educational programs and the remainder is in Iberia Parish. Responsibility includes planning, conducting and evaluating educational programs with the

assistance of the Horticulture Advisory Leadership Council. Throughout the year, I conduct educational meetings, workshops, method and result demonstrations in the area of horticulture with the assistance of Extension Specialist. Timely information is provided through a weekly newspaper column (Teche News) and in a monthly magazine called Acadiana Lifestyle, quarterly newsletter called Horticulture Hints. A regular guest speaker on a local TV Program (Passe Partout) and radio station (KANE- 1240 AM).

In 1999, I initiated a Master Gardener Program in Iberia and St. Martin Parish. The program is designed to recruit and train volunteers to help meet the educational needs of home gardeners while providing an enjoyable and worthwhile service experience for volunteers. The Master Gardener program provides invaluable training and educational opportunities. Master Gardener programs are all volunteer organizations sanctioned by land grant institutions in each state which in Louisiana is the LSU Ag Center.

Experienced and beginning gardeners seeking up to date horticultural information can advance their gardening expertise and gain self satisfaction through volunteer efforts. The volunteer aspect of the Master Gardener program allows individuals to dedicate their time to enhance the quality of life for citizens of their community by using the science and art of horticulture.

The Master Gardener program is divided into two parts; instruction and service. In the first part, participants receive forty hours of intensive, practical horticultural training. A few of the following topics are covered in the program are:

- \*Soils and Plant Nutrition
- \* Basic Plant Pathology and Entomology
- \* Vegetable Gardening
- \* Fruit Culture
- \* Annual and Perennials
- \* Environmental Horticulture

After successfully completing the classroom portion, the Louisiana Master Gardener participants then volunteer a minimum of forty hours of service to complete the last part of the program.

**Glenn Thomas, Fisheries:** I'm a regional fishery agent for St. Mary, St. Martin, Iberia, Iberville and Assumption parishes, working with fisheries, natural resources and aquaculture.

**Amy Juneau, Nutrition:** I am responsible for the Family Nutrition Program in St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary parishes. I do programming at the Council on Aging, FNP schools, the local health units, the OFS office, and will soon be doing programming at the Head Starts in St. Martin Parish. I will soon be conducting a pilot study at the Council on Aging in Breaux Bridge and St. Martinville pertaining to the client's food consumption.

There being no other recommendations, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 on September 13, 2006.

