

LaSalle Parish
Advisory Leadership Council Meeting
Friday, January 23, 2009
10:00 a.m.

The LaSalle Parish Advisory Leadership Council met on Friday, January 23, 2009 in the Extension Meeting room of the LaSalle Parish Courthouse in Jena, Louisiana. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by co-chair Twyman Appleby. Present at the meeting were: Nobie Ross, Cindy Hailey, Cindy Powell, Elizabeth McPherson, Nelda Tarver, Marilyn Neely, Karen Creel, Twyman Appleby, Brenda Gardener, Jim Summers, County Agent and Kim Evans, Extension Agent. Members agreeing to serve but unable to attend were: Roy Breithaupt, Judge J. Christopher Peters, Murphy McMillin, Linda Franks, & Andrew Dunn.

Appleby welcomed everyone to the council meeting and members introduced themselves. Jim Summers then explained the purpose of the advisory council and thanked each one for being present.

The first item of business was to hear reports from various sub-advisory councils with the first being from Family and Consumer Sciences Advisory Council, which met on October 22, 2008. The council requested that current programs be continued to meet the needs of families in LaSalle Parish. Additional suggestions were to provide parenting education for high school students, provide programs for the adult caregiver, develop healthy habits for youth and adults, and encourage schools to participate in the Character Counts program. The council also identified and discussed other agencies and organizations that might collaborate with the Extension Service on these issues.

The Home Ground and Gardens Advisory Council met on November 25, 2008. Members of the council identified the following as concerns; disease, insect and weed identification and control, control of poisonous vines such as poison ivy and poison oak, safe and proper uses of pesticides and fertilizer. Members also stated that there was interest in growing citrus for home use, and felt that information was not readily available.

It was determined that a program needed to be presented on the basics of producing lawns, gardens and developing landscapes. This program will be presented in the spring of 2009 and will be conducted by the County Agent and local Master Gardeners. The program would cover such things as soil testing, site selection, and establishment.

The 4-H Advisory Leadership Council met on October 20, 2008. The council identified issues concerning youth and the 4-H program as: anger, health-drug abuse, abusing prescription drugs, lack of accepting responsibility, environmental concerns, food choices, lack of writing skills and lack of adult involvement in the 4-H program.

The three main areas of concern were identified as character, health and environment. The group determined that programs would be done related to health and environment and that the elements of character education would be tied to these programs. The elements of character are:

trustworthiness, responsibility, respect, fairness, caring and citizenship. Programs would promote one or more of these elements.

The LaSalle Beef, Pasture and Forage Advisory Council meets biannually and last met on November 29, 2007 and identified concerns and issues being: high cost of fertilizer, need for more information concerning the importance of liming and its benefits, lack of available outlet to purchase lime, shortage or lack of fertilizer and lime application equipment and need for better pasture management skills.

The council felt there was a need for parenting classes, especially for young parents. Also mentioned was the possibility of holding a parish wide livestock day. After discussion, it was determined that the use of a mini farm would be more feasible. The group suggested the AgCenter could assist in addressing the litter problem throughout the parish.

Summers then addressed the group concerning the seriousness of the current and future budget concerns of the LSU AgCenter. He stated that cuts had recently been made in the current budget and the budget for 2010 will likely have to be reduced. He informed the group that at the present time local funding for staff salaries and benefits was at the 10% level for LaSalle Parish and was at this level or higher in other parishes throughout the state. Summers also stated that the goal of the AgCenter's administration was to bring local funding to the 20% level by June 30, 2011. This would be in line with local funding with the rest of the Southern Region, which is around 21%.

Twyman Appleby was unanimously elected as chairperson of the committee.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.