Art and Culture

***Person Reporting:*Rachel Monteverdi     *Location:*Franklin *Date:*2013-08-09**       
  
In 2011, having experienced high turnover, this nonprofit serving all county citizens knew they were in trouble. The Franklin County Arts Council’s reputation had been tarnished and the group needed a new vision. As a result, the Franklin County CES Family & Consumer Sciences Agent (a board member) worked with the board to develop a new vision, set goals, collaborate with the community, and engage with new entities.

In 2012, research was conducted regarding a Quilt Trail initiative. The goal: to capture the history of the region and place the information online and in a book that can be sold; select specific quilt blocks that have meaning for each family/farm/business; encourage tourism so individuals have the opportunity to visit the local entity, read about the history, view the quilt block (4x4 or 8x8) and potentially become involved in local economic development opportunities. To date, 22 ‘quilt trail’ blocks have been sold to community members, a book is in development and a website is forthcoming. The group has gotten coverage on local and regional news stations, online and in newspapers throughout.

***Date:*2013-01-06     *Person Reporting:*Jamilla Hawkins     *Location:*Edgecombe**  
  
Edgecombe County has a rich agricultural heritage and is one of the areas in North Carolina that is concerned with the issue of ‘heir’s property. The tendency is for multiple family members to acquire land as an inheritance as the result of a death of a relative (who lacks a will) is most common among African Americans living in the South. After many generations and numerous descendants some parcels can be sold or transferred out of the family which often results in a “partition action.” Poor access to quality legal counsel and/or lack of ample financial resource is often to blame for not executing the proper “end of life” documents to prevent this.

Edgecombe County Cooperative Extension Service teamed up with the Southern Coalition for Social Justice to host a “Wills Drafting” clinic in February 2012. Over a weekend, twenty-seven (20) clients were served and over seventy-four (74) estate planning documents were drafted at no charge to the participants. The contribution of one-hundred and eighty-nine (189) hours of legal service, office space and supplies provided a value of over $35,000 to the county.

***Person Reporting:*Dee Furlough     *Location:*Tyrrell *Date:*2013-01-02**       
  
The Tyrrell County Hispanic/Latino Advisory Council strives to increase community development by supporting events and activities that encourages different cultures to work together for a common goal. Examples of recent programs are the Juntos (Together) program at Columbia High School that encourages students to graduate and pursue higher education, Eat Smart Move More Weigh Less which is a weight loss/management program, and La Posada which is a Hispanic Christmas tradition that over 200 people participated in locally. Participants are actively engaged in learning, volunteering and working next to folks of another culture.

***Person Reporting:*Leigh Guth     *Location:*Lincoln  *Date:*2012-06-27**       
  
The agent designed and conducted a series of facilitations for the Lincoln County manager and members of the African American community to explore ideas and issues on the re-use of a culturally important building. As a result of the series that concluded in March 2012, county commissioners identified a non-profit to occupy the building, meet the needs of the children in the area, and preserve the history of the Rosenwald School; these were concepts identified through the facilitation as important to the community.

Additionally, the county manager and staff applied for a grant to stabilize the building for reuse and had the written support of participants in the facilitation. The agent also designed and implemented a half day facilitation for the board members of two non-profits, one regional and one statewide, that were experiencing conflict around overlapping territories and competition for donors.

As a result of the facilitation, the board members agreed to create committees to identify positive action steps to be taken on the main items of contention. Facilitators and process management professionals in the private sector would have charged upwards of $1,200 for each of these engagements. Extension professionals providing facilitation are saving counties and non-profit entities resources.

***Date:*2012-12-28     *Person Reporting:*Doug Clement     *Location:*Cherokee**  
  
North Carolina Cooperative Extension collaborated with Cherokee County Government and Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition to provide a management plan for Heritage Park, a twelve acre site in Andrews, NC. Cooperative Extension provided research based information in the proper management of the property. Also the plan included a lease opportunity for a local farmer for hay which eliminated mowing of a portion of the property. By taking soil samples, following researched based practices, and elimination of mowing 6 acres of the property resulted in a total savings of 15,000.00 for the next 3 years.

***Date:*2012-12-27     *Person Reporting:*Tammy Kelly     *Location:*Lenoir**  
  
The Lenoir County Community continues to plan strategically to establish a way to provide access to arts education to the community. The Community Council for the Arts of Kinston and Lenoir County Cooperative Extension collaborated to provide a place for a Public Art display that would incorporate the rich history of Agriculture and Art in Lenoir County. A GrassRoots North Carolina Grant application was submitted to the Community Council for the Arts in the amount of $2,000. The Grant was awarded to the Lenoir County Cooperative Extension to work with a selected artist to paint a mural across the front of the Farmer’s Market Annex. The mural will provide a “place to visit” and view public art as well as to learn more about the history of Agriculture in Lenoir County and purchase local foods.

***Person Reporting:*Kevin Starr     *Location:*Lincoln *Date:*2011-12-30**       
  
Cooperative Extension started the Lincoln County Apple Festival in 1972. Today, Extension serves as the coordinating agency for the event, working closely with the festival's board of directors. While all Extension staff members contribute to the festival's success, our Administrative Secretary takes the lead role by handling the entire registration process and answering thousands of questions each year.

The County Extension Director facilitated the development of a new festival website which received over 9,000 visits in 2011. This year's festival drew approximately 60,000 visitors to downtown Lincolnton, resulting in gross sales to vendors in the range of $150,000-$200,000. This is the largest community event in Lincoln County and a major fund-raiser for many non-profit groups.