

CSU Extension Activity Report Montezuma County 2014

Administrative

- The SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Educator for Montezuma County needed to leave the position due to health concerns. Unfortunately, the Colorado Department of Human Services (administrator for the grant) decided to discontinue funding for all positions on the Western Slope. The position cannot be refilled.
- Tom received the Distinguished Service Award from the Colorado County Agents Association; Cheryl received the Meritorious Support Staff Award from Colorado ESP.
- Tom serves on the planning committee for the Western Colorado Pest Management Workshop. The workshop provides continuing education credits (CECs) for private, public, and commercial pesticide applicators.
- After a hiatus of several years the local Extension Advisory Committee was reconvened.

Agriculture/Horticulture

- The Colorado Master Gardener training in Cortez did not occur due to lack of applications. Twenty CMG volunteers continued with the program, serving Montezuma County with various projects such as the R & D Orchard in Yellow Jacket, the Plant Select Gardens at the Anasazi Heritage Center, and the School to Farm Project.
- Tom performs the “Ag Markets and More” Radio Program on KSJD community radio 3 out of 4 Friday mornings per month.
- Tom manages the Extension R & D Orchard in Yellow Jacket. The annual u-pick (about 500 people attended) sold 7,691 pounds of fruit. Three tours of the orchard were given to elementary school children, the Southwest Open School, and the Master Steward Program participants.
- The Extension Office in Cortez assists the Cortez Farmers’ Market in management, consulting, and operations.
- Five Agriculture workshops were held during the year: The Annual Beef Symposium in Pagosa, The Annual Weed Symposium in Durango (CECs were offered), The Annual Land Management Workshop (Tom presented on Wildlife Pest Management), A Forage Livestock Workshop in Dove Creek, and a Farm Bill 2014 Training in Lewis/Arriola.
- The annual Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop took place in early March at the SWCRC. Dan Fernandez and Jan Sennhenn (both retired) presented the workshop. Tom and Gus Westerman (new County Extension Director in Dove Creek) assisted with organizing the workshop and the pruning demonstrations. About 35 people attended.
- The CSU Extension Office in Montezuma County continues to offer Commercial Pesticide Applicator Testing through the internet in cooperation with the Colorado Dept. of Ag. and Metro Institute. The Extension Office proctored 53 tests in 2014.
- Tom helped to manage the local AgrAbility workshop held in November at the Southwestern Colorado Community College. Six people attended the workshop and Montezuma County has the greatest number of clients on the Western Slope due to the support of the County Extension Agent.
- Tom taught Grass Management for the Master Steward Program (joint CSUE, NRCS, and Dolores Conservation District effort) in Cortez and a Pest Management class for Backyard Food Production in Durango. Each class held 30-35 people.
- Tom helped to review the revised Montezuma County Weed Plan.

- Tom performs pest diagnosis and management consultations to county clients on various topics at the rate of about 30 per month (less during the winter months of course).

4-H

- Tom serves as advisor to the Montezuma County Fairboard that organizes and conducts the annual Montezuma County Fair. Board training was provided to the new Fairboard in November and several members attended the annual Colorado Fairs and Shows Convention. The Board has reinstated their membership in Colorado Fairs and Shows.
- The 4-H Shooting Sports Council for Montezuma County continues to develop. It has assumed control of the Archery Range at the Fairgrounds and is now selling user cards.
- Many programs were held in 2014, including 4-H 101 (January) and 4-H 201 (February) for new and returning 4-H families, Meat Quality Assurance Trainings, Horse Ethics Trainings, and of course, the Annual Achievement Night Celebration.
- All Extension staff, Fairboard members, and many volunteers worked in helping the Montezuma County Fair a successful community event. The 4-H program in the County had 249 members and 50 volunteer leaders for 2014. The County's 4-H project completion rate was 93%.
- The 4-H Achievement Celebration was held Saturday, October 11, at the County Annex. This is a great opportunity for 4-H members and their families to be proud of their accomplishments and is also good publicity for the program. Over 230 people attended.
- Tonya organized and held many public outreach events including 4-H Day on November 1 at the Montezuma County Fairgrounds, Pet Palooza at the IFA Country Store, Chamber of Commerce events, and many outreach efforts to local schools and churches.
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) activities have picked up in Montezuma County over 2014. The "Ute Mountain Ute Community Satellite Project" continued with one active high school student, however, a "Toys in Space" program (comparing the behavior of toys on earth with how they behave in space) over Spring Break in Towaoc was very successful with 34 children participating. The after school Chess Club at the Cortez Middle School reached 18 students. Tom worked with Dr. Barb Shaw (STEM Specialist) to bring STEMasters Training to elementary school teachers in the Cortez District. Three teachers completed the training which will help them incorporate STEM hands-on activities into their programs that will meet school standards. Montezuma County and Summit County are two of the most active counties in Western Colorado to use the resources of Dr. Shaw, Regional CSUE STEM Specialist.

Community Development

- Tom serves as a consistent member of the Community Advisory Team for the Heart and Soul Three Year Project for Cortez. The objective of the Heart and Soul Project is to engage community members in identifying values and directions for the future planning of Cortez. Tom led a community discussion of agriculture to help identify value statements and often served as leader and advocate for the agricultural community. Funded by the Orton Family Foundation, the project concludes in 2014 and a legacy group will be formed to carry the successes and vision forward as the community develops.

- The local food group, “Good Food Montezuma” decided to disband since local food issues were being adequately covered by other organizations such as Live Well Montezuma and Mancos Valley Resources.
- Tom is also a member of the Southwest Colorado Community College (SCCC) Advisory Board. SCCC has made good steps in meeting the needs of the community.
- Tom serves as the Montezuma County representative on the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs (CCIA). The Commission “provides an official liaison among all persons in both the private and public sectors who share a concern for the establishment and maintenance of cooperative relationships with and among” the Indian tribes of Colorado (C.S.S. 24-44-101).
- Wendy Rice, Family and Consumer Science Extension Agent in La Plata County, delivered a workshop on Radon detection and mitigation and a community meeting to present and discuss food preparation and preservation guidelines for the Montezuma County Fair Open Class participants.