Natural Resources and Environmental Issues

Volume 11 Abstract Proceedings of the Galaxy II Conference

Article 26

1-1-2004

New Tools and Technology - Education / Educators

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Recommended Citation

(2004) "New Tools and Technology - Education / Educators," Natural Resources and Environmental Issues: Vol. 11, Article 26. Available at: http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/nrei/vol11/iss1/26

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ACCESS EGOVERNMENT: AN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Sheila Craig* and Rae Montgomery

ABSTRACT:

The Access eGovernment program shows local governments how to make smart choices about planning and implementing Websites that meet the needs of citizens. The main focus is on planning information-rich Websites that connect the interested public to the work of government. Access Government is both an online guide and hands-on workshops that help local decision-makers think critically about their choices. Participants learn: what governments around the country are doing with their websites; what people really want from a government website; security and privacy issues that need to be addressed; and how to evaluate vendors who can help them design and host websites and secure transactions. Developed in 2001 by the University of Minnesota Extension Service, in partnership with the Association of Minnesota Counties and Penn State Cooperative Extension, the program materials have been used in several counties. A demonstration of the content materials and the outcomes of these county programs will provide Extension professionals an opportunity to explore using this technology program in their communities.

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TEENS REACHING YOUTH THROUGH INNOVATIVE TEAMS (USING INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGIES!)

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ABSTRACT:

Young people today are techno-savvy, much more so than the majority of adult Extension professionals and volunteers! Current "Nexter Generation" youth seek compact, short term sound and visual "bytes" that they expect to be delivered using the most current and emerging technologies. This linked seminar will introduce participants to a new Webbased Extension curriculum developed at North Carolina State University in active collaboration with National 4-H Council. The TRY-IT! Program (or, Teens Reaching Youth through Innovative Teams and Instructional Technologies!) is designed to engage teens and adults in Web-based self-directed learning that precedes and then strengthens and supports ongoing face-to-face teen-adult partnerships in delivering Extension educational curricula to younger youth. This first-of-its-kind technology-based curriculum consists of 25, 45 minute Web-based self-directed learning modules for teens and adults that result in each team member constructing an individual Leadership Portfolio documenting their individual and shared leadership growth. The Portfolios establish a shared foundation for an intensive TRY-IT! Team Retreat where face-to-face and inter-team activities further extend individual and team learning through high-touch strategies. Seminar participants will better understand opportunities provided by the Web for individualized, self-paced discovery learning; and become familiar with the new TRY-IT! curriculum.

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WHAT IS WATER? A NEW 4-H MULTIMEDIA PROJECT

Barry W. Fox *

ABSTRACT:

A new 4-H educational program is in pilot phase, What is Water? It is an animated, multi-media CD that introduces youth, grades 4-6, to the structure and properties of water. Bill, the Canada Goose, guides students through activities that investigate the importance of water, molecular structure, hydrogen bonding, states of matter, surface tension, solubility, heat energy and density. Vocabulary terms are introduced and a review quiz is provided for each section. Additional water facts and a final review quiz are also provided. This CD is the first in a series of four designed to address the Virginia fifth grade Oceanography Standards of Learning for public education. This session will present an overview of the project, a demonstration of the CD and ordering information.

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THRIVING WITH YOUR SPIRITED CHILD

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ABSTRACT:

Spirited children are those who either are "more" intense, sensitive, perceptive, active, persistent or moody than their peers or siblings. Extension Educators have met these children in their 4-H clubs, parent classes and other youth programs. Adults working with Spirited Children often think they have WILD, OUT OF CONTROL children. Often what is really going on is the adults and the children have inadequate tools to deal with the child's temperament. Thriving with Your Spirited Child is a new Extension curriculum based on the work of temperament theorists/educators like Stella Chess and Thomas Alexander, Mary Sheedy Kurcinka, Linda Bud, and Stanley Turecki. Seminar participants will gain a greater understanding of nine temperament traits, be able to identify positive (instead of negative) labels for these temperaments, and be able to apply effective strategies for positively influencing "spirited children." The presenters have impressive evaluation data from classes held in Wisconsin. They have a new educational tool including its technology on their Website. "Thriving with Your Spirited Child" curriculum materials include: a facilitator guide, parent resources, transparencies, a PowerPoint presentation, marketing materials and evaluations. Wisconsin parents are clamoring for these workshops, which reaches new audiences and can broaden the image of Cooperative Extension in your community. Participants need for, and satisfaction with, the project has been overwhelming. Extension Educators will come away from this seminar with the tools to create their own parent class as well as techniques that work with the child's spirit. Visit the Website http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/curriculum/spirit edchild/>.

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USING TECHNOLOGY TO LINK RESEARCHERS AND EDUCATORS: A WEB-BASED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT:

Online distance learning is becoming increasingly more visible as a part of higher education, and research shows that it is as effective as conventional classroom instruction in fostering learning. Similarly, this can serve as an alternative and effective approach to educating and training Extension agents. In fact, Extension agents' effectiveness in the field is enhanced by the desire and practice of keeping current in the research related to their work. As such, they often rely on conference attendance to learn firsthand from researchers in their field. This is often quite costly and exchange with the researcher is usually in the form of a didactic presentation, rather than face-to-face exchanges. With this in mind, Ohio State University Extension, in partnership with Alabama Cooperative Extension at Auburn University, conducted three electronic conferences (e-conference) in an effort to connect educators in the field and from multiple states with top researchers in selected areas of study in direct dialogue to promote up-to-date knowledge, dialogue about issues, and agreement on practical application. This workshop will review the development, implementation, and effectiveness of these family life e-conferences (http://hec.osu.edu/stepfamily; http://hec.osu.edu/teens). http://hec.osu.edu/couples; Lessons learned from these experiences and effective strategies for conducting online trainings for county educators will be discussed. Overall, e-conferences can serve as a cost-effective educational approach for communicating information and stimulating program and professional development.

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HIGH-TECH VOLUNTEERISM—MEETING THE EXTENSION EDUCATION NEEDS OF TODAY'S SENIORS

Carolyn Gregov Ph.D.*, Mary King and Jolynne Williams

ABSTRACT:

The need to reach a rapidly growing senior population with effective research-based health and life skills education within the constraints of dwindling resources generated the development of a database-managed volunteer extension education program for adults over 50 called the Healthy Living Educator Program. This program sends trained volunteers into their communities to teach and present science-based information on health management, nutrition, money management, sustainable living, and senior issues. The program was developed and tested in Sarasota County, Florida, which has one of the highest percentages of seniors in the nation. The University of Florida and community partners provided program development oversight and assistance. This seminar presentation will demonstrate (1) the computer database that allows one part-time program manager to successfully run a large volunteer education program; (2) some of the 50+ PowerPoint presentation curricula that ensure integrity of information and minimize the risk of misinformation; (3) the user-friendly, highly portable laptop-free projection equipment that reduces the risk of equipment failure and damage or misuse by volunteers; (4) the Educator Resource Manual, Program Manager guide, Software User's Guide, and all the forms, evaluations, and letters used in managing the program; (5) the ease with which information can be upgraded and/or changed to best provide multiculturally sensitive educational services in the heart of the communities being served.

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THE POWER OF ATTENTION

Jeff and Pamela Olsen*

ABSTRACT:

As Extension professionals we face a myriad of competing demands for our attention in our public and private lives. Attention is defined as focused mental engagement on a particular item of information. We all have the freedom to direct and manage our own attention. This seminar is designed to create a meaningful context for Extension professionals to apply the principles of attention management set forth in The Attention Economy, written by Thomas H. Davenport and John C. Beck. The authors suggest the single most important determinant of success today is understanding and managing attention. Attention management is not the same as time management. The authors have delineated attention into six types within three dimensions. Each pair contains two opposing kinds of attention: (1) captive or voluntary; (2) aversion based or attraction based; and (3) front-of-mind or back-of-mind. A web based tool for assessing and measuring the attention of an individual or a group will be introduced and explained. Understanding the dynamics of attention management will improve the effectiveness of Extension professionals. These principles can be effectively employed in managing our personal lives and when we plan, market and conduct our Extension programming for clientele. Through harnessing the power of our attention we can bring vital focus to the way in which we engage each day.

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A MULTI-STATE SHARED E-LEARNING SYSTEM FOR EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS? EXTENSION HAS IT! COME SEE WHAT IT CAN DO FOR YOU!

Mitch Owen*, Alan Barefield, Larry Lippke and Ray Kimsey

ABSTRACT.

Extension subject matter specialists, communications, and information technology specialists, and academic professors develop a wealth of education and training resources for use in teaching and Extension in the land grant system. As more and more content is placed online, the potential for collaboration is greatly enhanced, but in the development of these resources there are often duplication of resources and effort, lack of encouragement for collaboration, and inconsistent quality. To address these issues, the Association of Southern Regional Extension Directors (ASRED) in cooperation with the Association of Extension Administrators (AEA), agreed in late 2001 to support an effort to develop and launch a multi-state curriculum development project in the Southern Region focused on staff development. The Cooperative Extension Curriculum Project (CECP), relying on the commitment of each 1862 and 1890 land-grant institution to provide team members, has developed a framework for collaborative work in the southern region. In April of 2003, an interim learning content management system was implemented to support the creation of e-learning modules. Over 10 modules have already been contributed and are currently available for Extension workers to use in their personal development.

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