

4-H Newspaper Supplement Is Model of Volunteer-Business Cooperation

When a large volunteer group such as 4-H wants to get its message across to the community, the best place to look for help may be only as far as the local daily newspaper. That's just what the Washoe County 4-H Leader's Council did when they wanted to promote their annual springtime county fair.

What resulted was what has become known locally as the 4-H supplement. In cooperation with the advertising department of the Gannett-owned *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 4-H in Washoe County has found, for the past 3 years, a vehicle to promote its fair, tell the 4-H story, and at the same time build revenues and good will in the community for the newspaper.

The promotion for the fair was the first reason for why such a publication was needed. For years the county achievement day and livestock show had operated separately with marginal success for each. Then, in 1981, they were combined into one 3-day event. A need was created for a way to increase traffic to the larger event. Leaders decided that maybe the local newspaper could help.

The supplement that emerged as a 12-page tabloid has grown to become one of the 20 or so special supplements during the year, and has been enlarged to 16 pages.

Work on the publication begins at the end of December with an organizational meeting with the advertising management. A date, usually the Monday prior to the Friday opening of the fair, is chosen and a deadline schedule for copy and advertising submissions set up. The 4-H leaders are responsible for selling the ad space, Extension's Public Information Officer writes the copy and gathers photos, and the newspaper performs the layout, printing, design, and distribution.

Many elements go into the creation of this 60,000 circulation supplement. Story ideas are gleaned from the 4-H leaders, and agents and the state 4-H office are consulted as to what might play well in telling the story. The newspaper artist helps conceptualize the cover design and layout well in advance of publication, consulting with the Public Information Officer. Photos are taken from the files or, if time permits, shot to order.

Innovation is a key to success. A section on famous national and local former 4-H'ers was accompanied by a clip-out coupon asking readers to tell about their 4-H experiences. The response gave an indicator of readership and also started a file for future alumni contacts. The center double truck of the

tabloid was a marriage of donated ad space, selected copy, and photographs that gave the impression of adlessness.

Like every venture of this type it has its problems. Not every leader is happy with the ad split (70 percent advertising, 30 percent copy, an apparent Gannett standard for advertising supplements) or story selection. Story order may not fit copy space. Advertisers have page preference. It is not a jet-smooth ride.

The effort and hassles are worth it, however. The tabloid resulted in at least two interviews, both on local radio. The supplement itself serves as a program guide for the fair and is used by the Public Information Officer when soliciting television and other media for coverage of the event just prior.

The 4-H supplement idea is one whose time has come. Marrying volunteer efforts to business pride in the community is a way to gain both notice to and create a high profile for the program.

*Paul E. Maynard
Washoe County Extension
Reno, Nevada*

Library Tapes Another Outreach Method for Extension

When the Washoe County Extension Office wanted to find a way to work with an expanded clientele, use video production time more efficiently, and find a cooperative venture with another government agency, they looked only as far as the local public library.

"Extension News and Views" is a half-hour, twice monthly public service television program produced by the Extension office in cooperation with a local independent television station. Its intent is to provide information from the various subject matter areas to the general public through the mass media—to both inform and entice the audience to seek out Extension for more. Since the production time for this program is essentially "free" (given by the station in exchange for the public service), it was thought that the expense and effort should be put to its best use. A second purpose was found for the tapes.

That second purpose revolves around the film department of the Washoe County Library System. The librarian was looking for a way to enhance interdepartmental cooperation to emphasize to the county commission that the libraries' services were worth continued funding. The county Extension office

agreed. So was born the library project, an unnamed cooperative venture between the two departments.

The first step in the process of creating tape series that would be comprehensible and useful to the public was to take an inventory of the existing tapes. Once a master list was made of the nearly 40 titles of tapes (since dubbed onto 3/4-inch cassettes), they were categorized into series that would be cohesive in style. Study guides, workbooks, or fact sheets were planned to be matched to each series. Each series or potential series was mapped out to see if future production could lend itself to filling in holes that would complete each group.

The first series that fit together for release was a series of three programs first broadcast in 1982. Fact sheets already existed to accompany the tapes from the library. The "Child Care Selection" series was born in time to supply the public with pertinent, timely information about how to choose caregivers for youngsters. The tapes were three segments of "News and Views" that featured the author of the fact sheets (a state Extension specialist in family and child development) and noted community leaders in the same field. Each of the tapes was dubbed from the 3/4-inch tape original to 1/2-inch, VHS format home tapes. Each tape was labeled with Washoe County Extension's logo and other identifying marks and packaged with the study sheets to be delivered to the film department.

The tape series are available throughout the state through inter-library loan and plans are being made to market them in Beta format as well. The number of times a series is used can be tracked by the library to give an indicator of popularity of a given series.

As for the division of labor, each county agent in his or her respective subject matter area is responsible for the development of the study guide series.

The program has a bright future in that it helps the public and makes the tax dollar, in terms of labor and effort, stretch further. An additional bonus is in encouragement of agents to want to produce television programs, because they know that it will be seen more than once. It's a complete, well-rounded and directed program growing out of existing resources.

*Paul E. Maynard
Washoe County Extension
Reno, Nevada*