



# Marion County Texas

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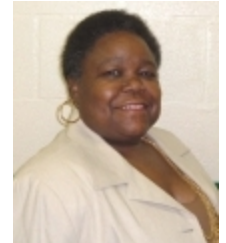
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Paulette T. Cooper, EA-CEP (4-H)

## December, 2007 Extension Programs:

3rd (Monday)	<i>Animal Issues Emergency Management Plan</i>	6:00 PM Kellyville	Page 2
13th (Thursday)	<i>AARP-New Officer Installation</i>	11:00 AM Don Juan's Mexican	Page 2
14th (Friday)	<i>Building Communities Series</i>	9:15 AM Kellyville	Page 2

## Greetings From Extension Office

Barbara Hampton, Paulette Cooper and Brock Fry at the Marion County Extension Office want to wish you and your family a very warm and family centered Christmas and New Year. We want to thank you all for making 2007 truly a year to remember. Thank you for attending the programs of the Extension office. We are here to serve you. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

## Raising "Cane" in Marion County!



Yes, you heard right Mr. R. B. McReynolds of Jefferson is raising cane. It all started 2 years ago when Mr. McReynolds was looking for a way to be productive on his farm. He started with a vision of a ribbon cane syrup factory. Then he took to work building a facility with a large brick oven about 12 ft long. On this oven is a cooking pan for cooking the sugar cane juice down to make

ribbon cane syrup. Out of a few trees he took and built a building. After all this work it was not finished and needed a press to squeeze the sugar cane. He found a No. 72 Chattanooga Plow Co. Press, patented in 1897 a true antique, and does the job well.

McReynolds planted a sugar cane patch roughly 100 ft x 200 ft. The types he planted were 10-25 hybrid which makes light colored syrup, and a purple cane that makes dark. From this patch McReynolds cuts his rows to the ground after harvest, then he covers them with leafs of the tree and a little dirt. This protects the plants for next year's production. There is only one harvest a year for sugar cane.



It takes a crew to make ribbon cane syrup. At least 2 people to run the press. The press uses the PTO of a tractor to work. The juice from the sugar cane goes into containers that are gravity feed to a foist, which then goes into the cooking pan located over a hot fire. Then you will need a person to turn on/off the foist, and start the juice into the cooking pan.

Two more people are needed to skim off the less dense product. It starts foaming over the fire this will be skimmed off as well. The juice then moves through the cooking pan



having a series of maze like columns. The syrup is cooking the whole time it is over the fire sending steam into the air from the juice. The master cook will be located at the last of the columns for final preparation before taking off the fire. The final product once done is pushed through a pipe that collects in a stainless still box. The box is used to mix the syrup while still warm.

Then you will want to place in small containers for shipping or distribution. Two people are needed to conduct this

process. A person is giving jars and placing jars from the person filling the hot jars of Ribbon cane syrup. A crew total of eight people are needed to have a continuous cooking process. This process goes on for hours until all the ribbon cane juice has been cooked.

Oh! What a production to make ribbon cane syrup. Yeah, deer do not eat sugar cane. You want to make this syrup while the air temperature is below 50 degrees, it helps preserve the juice while the cooking process takes place. It takes a lot of wood to keep the fire hot under neigh the pan. Did you know it takes about 100 gallons of sugar cane syrup to make 10 gallons of syrup? The crews seen in these pictures are making ribbon cane syrup for the local Masonic Lodge as a fund raiser. You may see locals selling it. \$5 for a pint and \$8 for a quart jars.

### Timber Landowners Association Meeting

Saturday, December 8, 2007, 10:00 AM in the Bowie County Courthouse Central Jury Room. This meeting is designed to combine the former Bowie, Cass, and Marion County landowner associations. Plan to attend if you are an owner of timber property.

Contact Brock Fry, 903-665-2124, or Russell Lykins, Texas Forest Service, Linden TX, 903-756-5571, for more information and directions.

### From the Garden

#### December Moon Phases

1st, Saturday, Last Quarter



9th, Sunday, New Moon



17th, Monday, First Quarter



24th, Monday, Full Moon



31st, Monday, Last Quarter



Do you have a gardening tip or problem? Call your friend, Brock, at the Marion County Extension Office, 903-665-2421.

### December Extension Programs (Continued)

#### Animal Issues

#### Emergency Management Plan

By Brock Fry

Animal issues committee meeting is set for 6 p.m. at Kelly Park on December 3, 2007. This committee helps in the development of the Marion County Animal Disaster Plan. If you would like to be a part of this committee you are welcome to come. This meeting will discuss scenarios during times of disaster and our responses.

### Building Communities Series

#### December Session

By Paulette Cooper

The local community development class is open to the public, and meets once a month on the second Friday from 9:30 to 11:00 A.M. The December class will meet on December 14 at Kellyville. The topic this month will be "Understanding the Community and How It's Changing - Demographics and More." The session is geared toward assisting those in attendance to learn the key ingredients and successful initiatives they might employ to help them work for and grow their community.

The past session discussed community preparedness, building on assets and how one should always evaluate their community to see what the needs, wants and desires of the residents are, how to get people involved and build on what they would like to see their community become in the next 10 to 15 years.

For program information contact Paulette Cooper, Marion County Extension Office, 903-665-2421, or [pcooper@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:pcooper@ag.tamu.edu). To register, call Barbara Hampton at 903-665-2421.

### American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) November Program

By Barbara Hampton

The December meeting of the Marion County Chapter #3694 of AARP will be held at Don Juan's Mexican Restaurant in Jefferson on December 13th at 11:00 AM.

New officers for 2008 will be installed at this luncheon. Anyone 50 years of age or over is eligible to be a member of AARP and is welcome to join the local chapter. The Chapter offers many benefits locally, including interesting and informative programs throughout the year.

Anyone interested in joining may call Letha Northcutt at 903-665-8508, Arcolia Jenkins at 903-665-9712 or Paulette Cooper or Barbara Hampton at 903-665-2421.

### Reflections:

#### Cattle Raisers Meeting

By Brock Fry

Cattle Raisers Meeting with Jason Banta, Ph.D., Texas Cooperative Extension Beef Specialist, Jeffery Koch, Ph.D., Cooperative Extension Programs Specialist for Ag and Natural Resources, and Hugh Soape, Ph.D., Cooperative Extension Programs Beef Specialist.



About ten producers came out to Kelly Park for this program. This program discussed bull selection, body condition scores, supplementing poor hay, and winter pastures. Responses were most favorable for this program. Many good educational and economic topics were discussed. Producers felt like they took sound information from this program. If you want more information about this program come by the Extension office.



## Building Communities Former JHS Graduate Returns Home

By Paulette Cooper



Dr. John Cooper, Jr., a 1988 graduate of Jefferson High School, recently returned home to visit family for Thanksgiving and had an informal chat with members of the Extension program's Community and Economic Development "Building Communities" class while here.

Cooper is an expert on issues related to disaster management and uses community-building tools to help communities design and carry out strategies to raise awareness and preparedness in advance of disasters like Hurricane Katrina. Cooper works for MDC, a non-profit with a mission to close gaps that separate people and places from opportunity (see [www.mdcinc.org](http://www.mdcinc.org)).

MDC is located in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, but Cooper travels across the United States working on projects related to disaster management and community building. He shared some of his experiences of working with small rural communities and expressed how excited he is that a Marion County group has decided to learn more about community building and how community building works.

Community building is a process intended to help community members become more connected to each other and more involved in the identification of issues impacting the future of the community, community goal setting and the implementation of strategies that redirect the future of the community. According to Cooper, with regard to economic development, education, and overall quality of life, "The most successful communities are those that develop leaders from within and ground their vision for the future in a careful assessment of local needs, assets, and opportunities."

## Wildlife Food Plots Report

By Brock Fry



On November 30, 2007 I visited the wildlife food plots located on the McNeely Ranch in Smithland, TX. I observed several things on this visit different from the last. Upon arrival the Rio Verde Lab Lab that once thrived a month ago has now died. Or has it? The proper term is gone dormant; and we hope to see it during the spring warm up. Lab Lab is a warm season plant. For now all we see are the skeletons of the plants that were protected by the control pins like is shown above.

The clover and oats were still doing well as seen in this photo. Several of the plots with these varieties had small amounts of cover. The wildlife have kept the plots eaten down through out the month of November. Short steams of oats and clover plants cover about 9 plots; yet at varying rates.



The plots have been visited by several animals including deer, hogs, raccoons, birds and some kind of dog. The plots are being used for wild life watching with a field stand seen here. On this visit all the pins were up right and undisturbed.



Keep watching this newsletter for future updates on our wildlife food plots.

## 2007 - 2008 Calendar of Upcoming Events

### December

3rd, Monday	<i>Animal Issues Emergency Management Plan</i>	Kellyville
14th, Friday	<i>Community Development–Understanding the Community and How It's Changing - Demographics and More</i>	Kellyville

### January

**There will be no extension program in January 2008. We are firming up plans for the 2008 program schedule.**

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