Dear Shelby Countian,

It is hard to believe I’ve just completed my first year as Shelby County Extension Director. It has been a busy year filled with new challenges, opportunities, and experiences.

I have always believed that the greatest asset an organization has is its people, and I believe that even more today. In attending meetings where I observed our agents, I was impressed with the knowledge they shared with clients on topics that ranged from nutrition, health, row crops, farm management, equine issues, horticulture, public speaking, bread baking, forestry, financial management, outdoor classroom topics, small farms and urban gardening. Our agents believe in the mission of our organization, and they are always willing to “go the extra mile” to help someone.

Extension in Tennessee has a 100-year history of evolving to meet the changing needs of the state. In the future, many significant changes are expected to occur at an unprecedented rate. There are six trends that will shape our state over the next 10 years. These trends will provide challenges and opportunities for Extension:

- Increasing urbanization, including a loss of farmland.
- Advancing technology in all aspects of Tennesseans’ lives.
- Rising rate of obesity for adults and children.
- Increasing population and diversity.
- Declining economy, including job loss.
- Increasing concern for environmental sustainability.

The key to Extension’s future is how it embraces these changes and opportunities, while remaining true to its mission.”

We want to be known as “Your Local UT Campus.”

Many thanks for your continued support.

Cathy C. Faust,
Shelby County Extension Director
**Financial Management**

Shelby County Financial management program participants pledge to make a savings deposit each month. Last year, this resulted in over $180,000 in savings account deposits. The participants also committed to reducing their personal debt, making nearly $180,000 in debt reduction payments.

545 Bankruptcy Clients; 300 TN Savers; 1616 On My Own students; 743 Career Preparation clients.

**Foods & Nutrition**

Last year, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) in Shelby County enrolled over 600 limited-income Tennessee families and 3,483 youth. As a result of education provided by EFNEP, 86 percent of families improved their diets while saving a total of $18,988.80 ($36.80 per family) a year on their food bills. For a small initial investment in nutrition education, participants learned skills in shopping, meal planning and food safety that will save them money for years and reduce their risk for obesity and chronic disease. A recent cost-benefit study showed that for every $1 spent on education, families saved $2.48 on their food bills.

UT/Shelby County Extension is teaming with Pinnacle Airlines’ MEM INFLIGHT (Pilots and flight attendants) in a fitness program called “Biggest Gainers” focusing on fitness gains and celebrating those who get closest to reaching their fitness goals. The program will address physical, emotional and nutritional fitness and will be supported by access to a personal trainer, wellness consultants, nutritionists, online monitoring and blogging, lunch-and-learn seminars and other online resources.

“Biggest Gainers” is designed to help folks maintain a healthy weight and active lifestyle, reduce stress, lessen risk of diseases, and provide an overall feeling of well-being. A reduction in on-the-job injuries and sick days taken hopefully will result. Since it is difficult for the Pinnacle Airlines flight staff to meet in person as a group, a Share Site has been set up. This new, unique learning environment allows access to the site anywhere/anytime and allows folks to have a discussion, ask questions, report progress, and receive educational information related to program goals.

Families learn basic food preparation skills that save them money and help them make healthier food choices.
Extension Highlights

Agricultural Update

Programs were held in Row Crops, Live-
tock and Forages, Pond Management and
Disaster Animal Response. A local agent
conducted a First Responder Basic Equine
Handling Training to help train police and
firefighters responding to livestock related.
Cotton and Soybean Variety Trials were
planted to find out which varieties perform
best locally. Over 30 varieties were tested.

A Master Beef Producer class, several horse
related management classes and forage pro-
duction classes were held throughout the
year. A Pond Management Workshop
teaching area pond owners about weed con-
trol, fertility, balances and stocking, and
construction was also offered.

Participants of these programs adopted
UT Extension recommended practices,
increasing their yields while reducing pro-
duction costs, learning best management
practices for raising livestock, and lessen-
ing their impact on the environment.

Master Gardeners

Since 1995, almost 1700 people have been
trained as Master Gardeners. The Shelby
County’s UT Extension Horticulture Pro-
gram’s Master Gardeners(474 active) donated
a total of 30,858 volunteer hours for the 2010
calendar year. At $20.84/hr rate for volunteers
in TN, that adds up to $643,080, our highest
total to date. The Master Gardeners operate a
gardening hotline phone service for the public
from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through
Friday at the Shelby County Extension Office.

Tennessee Yards and Neighborhoods (TYN)

The mission of the TYN program is to help communities
across the state meet their landscaping needs while also
helping to conserve and protect our state’s water resource.
Last year there were three TYN Home Landscape Work-
shops conducted at the Shelby County Extension Office.
These workshops served and educated close to 60 people
who were interested in learning how to have a healthy land-
scape. Some of the principles discussed in the workshop
included managing your soil, turf and mulch. The partici-
pants also learned how to use rain water, rain gardens and
rain barrels. Upcoming workshops will be offered in Bart-
lett, Collierville, and Millington. The workshops are $35
per person or $50 per couple. Horticulture agent Dr. Chris
Cooper conducts the Home Landscape Workshops with
Stormwater Enginee’s from the different municipalities.
Agricenter Education Program

The Educational Activities at Agricenter continues to flourish. In 2010, 4,700 students and teachers engaged in educational activities at Agricenter from West Tennessee and North Mississippi. We offer many different educational activities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Forestry. An educational activities list is available at www.agricenter.org under education. All trips are scheduled at no cost to the schools.

We also provide a summer camp for youth called Plant Camp. The campers learn about environmental interactions and the basics of good gardening. They learn about nature while having fun and are introduced to the amazing world of plants! This year a vegetable garden of potatoes, onions, squash, radishes, cucumbers, and beans was planted. The campers harvested enough to fill a plastic sack to carry home. One camper came back the next day and told us his mother made stew with the vegetables. He was beaming over the fact he had helped feed his large family.

The camp is open from 9:00 A.M. until noon but the hours are packed with many activities for the campers to experience and learn in the outdoors.

The 4H “On My Own” program is hands-on, a real life simulation letting young people get a taste of their future in a fun and exciting way. They are encouraged to make healthy and wise lifestyle choices similar to the ones adults face daily. The students participate in a personality test and career exploration. They also learn how to figure taxes, choose a savings account and how to prioritize their spending between necessities and luxury items reflecting the career and lifestyle they chose.