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Where We've Been...



Plants of Pueblo County Rangeland Tour

The rangelands of Pueblo County are quite diverse. The county stretches from the Wet Mountains to the Plains of Eastern Colorado. Elevation, climate and soils vary greatly in this expanse. In order to provide an opportunity for residents to become better acquainted and more knowledgeable about the natural resources surrounding them, a Plants of Pueblo County Rangeland Tour was held in August. Organized by Pueblo County CSU Extension staff Tom Laca, Ag and Natural Resources Extension Agent, and Linda McMulkin, Horticulture



Coordinator, with assistance from the Pueblo County Colorado Master Gardeners and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, a highly successful program was held.

Fifty-six participants came from various backgrounds and provided for a diverse and lively discussion. Because of the overwhelming popularity of this program, what began as a couple of vans soon turned into a bus and a van. We met and loaded the bus to head to our first stop,

The Doyle Ranch, State Land Board Property in Eastern Pueblo County. After a very interesting ride down muddy roads (thanks to the previous night's rain), we arrived at our destination. The group was split in two with Linda and Marge, a Pueblo County CO Master Gardener, taking one group to discuss grasses and plants that were of interest to gardeners and homeowners. Meanwhile, Tom and Rich from the NRCS took the second group to look at native plants and discuss range monitoring and rehabilitation. Groups then swapped places so that everyone had the same opportunity to learn what was being taught.

The next stop was Pueblo Mountain Park in Beulah. Here we had the chance to see more mountain type plants and more cool season grasses. Again we discussed grasses, legumes and forbs and their interaction with each other. We had the chance to view the plant community that was in near native state. This was also the site we chose to have lunch and enjoy the shade and forest views. The Turkey Creek Conservation District and South Pueblo Conservation District were gracious enough to donate lunch for everyone which consisted of a box lunch from McAllister's Deli.

Our final stop was the Hudson Ranch on Highway 78 between Beulah and Pueblo. As many of you know this year was an exceptional one for sunflower growth and this was a prime spot to talk about them. Discussion was held on their place in the ecosystem and what benefit, as well as harm, they can have on rangeland. The organization of the program allowed for discussion amongst everyone and this led to some great conversations among those that would normally be on opposite sides of the fence when it comes to land use issues.

Let's not forget about the bus rides. These also provided learning opportunities. Participants learned about plant and flower anatomy while in route from place to place. We learned the parts of a flower using sunflowers picked on sight. We also learned about the parts of grass plants while in transit.

This class was very popular and proved to be well accepted. Participants agreed that it was very educational and well worth their time. One younger participant even stated that it helped her make up her mind to pursue a degree in Range Management as she furthers her education. We will continue this class next year and hope to hold it twice in the year so that we can point out changes over time.



Where We've Been...

Pueblo County 4-H Agent Devin Engle Wins "Search For Excellence Award"

Pueblo County 4-H Extension Agent, Devin Engle, received the "Search for Excellence in Teen Programming Award" in September. The award was presented by the Western Region of the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents and it was peer 4H Agents from the Colorado Association of 4-H Extension Agents who nominated Devin for this prestigious honor. The nomination focused on Devin's efforts to form the Pueblo County 4-H Youth Leadership Society. Following is an excerpt from the nomination which summarizes this group:

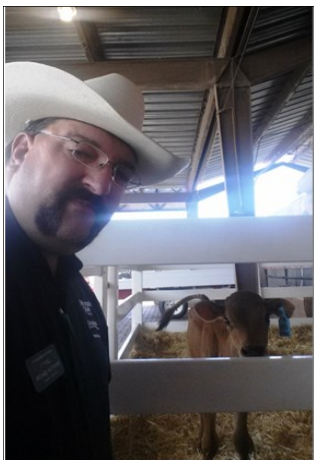
"At the heart of teen programming in Pueblo County is the Pueblo County 4-H Youth Leadership Society. This is a county-wide group aimed at giving members ages 13-18 a place to brainstorm their needs and wants as well as those of their community, and to act on them. Through the Leadership Society, members have been encouraged to participate in more leadership conferences and camps and in more county, state and district activities. Teen participation in leadership conferences has increased 46% in the past year. Participation in educational contests has also increased dramatically, as has participation in district leadership roles."

The Leadership Society has been a great growth and life skills opportunity for the youth who have participated in it. We are very proud of these teens and we are very proud of Devin Engle for the leadership and mentoring she has provided to this group. Congratulations, Devin, on receipt of the "Search for Excellence in Teen Programming Award."



4-H Agent Devin Engle inspires 4-H teen members to become leaders.

Pueblo County Sixth Graders Learn About Animal Agriculture



Michael Fisher's selfie photo-bombed by a calf.

The Western Heritage Foundation hosted a learning event at the 2015 Colorado State Fair, where they invited sixth grade classes from Pueblo County schools to come to the fair and experience numerous educational stations that taught lessons about agriculture and the history of the western lifestyle. The stations were Water, Hunting, Food/GMO/Nutrition, Colorado History, Cowboys and the West, and Ranch Animals. Three hundred twenty-four youth participated in the two day event, along with fifty-one teachers and adult chaperones.

Tom Laca and Michael Fisher, from the Pueblo County Extension office presented for the Ranch Animals educational station. They introduced the 375 urban attendees to dairy cattle, beef cattle, sheep, goats, swine, chickens, and market rabbits. The groups learned about how ranchers care for their

animals and provide quality welfare to keep the animals healthy and productive. Discussions were also held about how animals are utilized in animal agriculture and various food and non-food products that are provided by livestock.

Where We're Going...

“Dare to Be You” 4-H Camp for Tweens

Coming up November 20-22 is the annual **Dare To Be You 4-H Camp** hosted by the South Central 4-H District, a group of 24 counties from southern Colorado. 4-H members age eleven to thirteen from within the district are invited to participate in this fun two-night camp. With support from 4-H staff, camp activities and workshops are being designed by South Central 4-H District teen officers. The 2015-2016 officer team includes youth from Pueblo, Chaffee, Otero, Elbert, Prowers and Saguache Counties.

For many years the camp has been held utilizing a hotel on the north side of Pueblo as well as the Dining Hall and Auditorium on the Colorado State Fairgrounds for workshops. Since the dorms on the State Fairgrounds have been recently remodeled and now include heat, the group has opted to use the dorms instead of a hotel, cutting costs by nearly fifty percent!

Centered around the popular *Hunger Games* series, this year's camp theme is “4-H is Catching,” with related workshops such as food science and cake baking, physical fitness and survival skills, and archery. Members will also help rake leaves on the State Fairgrounds throughout the event and participate in social activities including games and a dance.



Past “Dare to Be You” camp participants say this is one of their favorite camps!

Upcoming Events

Call 583-6566 or visit <http://pueblo.colostate.edu> for details.

Family and Consumer Programs

- World Cultures Through Food– Feat. Sweden, Nov. 17 or Nov. 20, 5:30-8:30 p.m., \$20.00
- Crockpot cooking, Dec. 1, 6:00-8:00p.m., \$10.00
- World Cultures Through Food– Feat. Pennsylvania Dutch, Dec. 11 or Dec. 18, 5:30-8:30 p.m., \$20.00
- High Altitude Baking, Dec. 15, 1:30-3:30 p.m. or 5:30-7:30 p.m., \$10.00

Horticulture Programs

- All Pueblo Grows Seed Library, collecting and packaging seeds, call 719-583-66566 for details

4-H/Youth Development

Ongoing Club and County Programs:

- Deadline for new members is March 1. For club information, call 719-583-6566.

EFNEP– Expanded Food and Nutrition Program

- Nutrition classes– Ongoing-call for schedule

Ag/Range/Natural Resources

- Site visits and consultations– Ongoing, upon request
- A Lasting Legacy –A Workshop for Farm and Ranch Families, Dec. 3, 9:30-3:30 p.m., \$25 for 1st family member/\$10 for additional family member

Pueblo Youth Naturally

- To be announced soon.
Call for actual dates and detailed information.



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Saying Goodbye to Staff

In a two week time period during the months of August and September the Pueblo County Extension office had to say goodbye a couple of times.

In August we wished Anne Casey, 4H STEM/School Enrichment



Anne Casey

Agent goodbye as she resigned to pursue other opportunities. Anne had served three years as the Regional STEM Specialist and followed that up with two years as the 4H STEM/School Enrichment Agent in the Pueblo County office. During her time here, Anne provided a wide variety of exciting and unique programming ranging from robotics and GPS/GIS training to movie making and fiber education. Anne was also responsible for organizing the ever popular “Adventure Day Camp.” We wish Anne well in her future endeavors.

In September, the office wished Linda McMulkin a happy retirement. Linda had been our Horticulture & PYN Coordinator for 11 years. She has been known throughout the County for her



Linda McMulkin

expertise in plant care and identifying plant diseases. Hers is also a recognized face at Western Landscape Symposium, the Home & Garden Show, the Chile Festival, Xeriscape Tours, and a whole host of other local festivals. Linda has also been integral in helping the local chapters of Colorado Master Gardeners and Native Plant Society. In addition to horticulture duties, Linda had managed the Pueblo Youth Natural program. This was an opportunity for kids to get outdoors and learn about Colorado’s nature and history. Linda also insisted on first aid classes for teen counselors who helped with the program. This really paid off when the group came across a hiker having a medical emergency and was able to provide life saving care until emergency medical responders could arrive. We wish Linda a very happy retirement.