I am pleased to announce that Jo Simpson has won the Minnie Miller Brown Award, the highest award given in the State of North Carolina in the EFNEP program (Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program). Ms. Jo is better known as Professor Popcorn by all the students and teachers in Yancey County. She sees every student in kindergarten through 5th grade to help teach nutrition. Every year her evaluations show her program is helping students learn about the importance of healthy nutrition. I am also proud to share that Jo Simpson and Brenda Wilson also won the North Carolina Team Award for their efforts with the EFNEP program. Brenda provides the important administrative support needed when you are working with over 1000 students! Congratulations to both Jo and Brenda!

A grant for $60,000 was submitted to the Specialty Crop Block Grant for equipment needed to outfit an Ag Center. It will be late fall before grant recipients are announced. Other fall grant possibilities are being explored closely. Along those lines, Extension has been working very closely with Rita Early, the Dean of the Mayland Yancey Campus, and Dr. Boyd, new Mayland President, about possible projects and collaborative efforts between Yancey Extension and the college that will help grow agriculture in the county. The newest numbers from the NC Department of Agriculture list the value of agriculture in Yancey at $7.6 million! Extension and Mayland believe there is plenty of room to grow this number, and are working together to make this happen. Mayland College is a valuable asset in these hard times and a good investment.

Agriculture & Natural Resources

Stanley Holloway, Agriculture Agent

May has been quite busy as producers and home gardeners are gearing up for planning and planting for the coming season. The number of calls for agricultural information has continued to increase with all sorts of farming/gardening questions. The interest in home gardening continues to grow in part as a result of rising food costs as well as food safety concerns. Two small-scale vegetable production workshops were held with 12 participants attending. The participants received a comprehensive knowledge base on general home gardening from planning and preparation, planting and care, to harvesting and post harvest considerations for various vegetable crops. Evaluations indicated that all participants gained knowledge and would use their knowledge gained to enhance their production systems.

A number of local producers are pursuing new marketing opportunities. To access these new markets, GAPs (Good Agricultural Practices) Certification is required. Yancey Extension staff has been assisting these growers in writing their farm plans, conducting water testing, and getting lined up for the required third party audits. By obtaining GAPs certification, one grower was able to secure a marketing contract for his produce that will represent close to $100,000 in revenue.

The Yancey County Cooperative Extension is still working towards the development and implementation of a local grown agricultural products aggregation and distribution center. At this point in the process, a
Agriculture & Natural Resources
Adam McCurry, NC A&T Agriculture Technician

May is when local farmers workload really increases as they plant a variety of crops. The farmers have a lot of questions for us at Extension, which cover topics from ground preparation, seed issues to transplant. We also get a wide range of home garden questions. The foot traffic through the office has been heavy this year as well as the numbers of phone calls. This is also the time of year when livestock producers begin hay production and we get questions from hay producers as well as people looking to buy hay. Stanley Holloway and myself finished up our spring workshop series on May 19th with a small-scale vegetable production workshop. This year we offered a total of fourteen research-based educational workshops during the spring and late winter. Weather has been favorable for our local farmers with no harmful late frost, sufficient rain and no storm damage, hopefully it will continue.

Yancey 4-H Narratives

4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) 
Jo Simpson, 4-H Program Associate

Youth EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Program) is winding up for this year’s school calendar. EFNEP reached 1010 students grades K-5 for the 2010-2011 school year. As a result in participating in EFNEP this year 83% of youth now eat a variety of foods, 88% increased their knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition and 95% increased their ability to select low cost nutritious foods. I am delighted with these results.

Another cooking camp is being planned this summer “Cooking Up The “Good Ole Times” to be held June 20-23. Youth ages 8-12 will be preparing their own lunches each day and in the afternoon they will discover the awesome past through storytelling, music and horse and buggy rides. While walking the quilt trail they will be learning about the quilt designers and the buildings displaying the quilts. They will also be visiting the local museum, NuWray Inn and Garden Deli.

This month I attended the Multi-State Nutrition Education Conference being held in Charleston, West Virginia. I was awarded the Minnie Miller Brown Award for 2010, the highest award given to North Carolina EFNEP assistants. I also had the pleasure to share the Team Award with our secretary Brenda Wilson. Brenda deserves to be saluted for all the help she has given me so we can deliver a dynamic program year after year.
4-H AfterSchool:

Bald Creek Academy

- Susie Hedrick, Glenna Taylor, 4-H Program Assistants

In the After School program this month we are bringing our various projects to an end. Jo Simpson made tacos with the youth. She discusses the different food groups with them to encourage healthy eating habits. Richard Chuvala concluded his Mountain Challenge program on teambuilding and the youth had the opportunity to spend their “VISA” bucks they had earned during the year. They were able to buy items from the 4-H store (the store items Richard provides). Dr. Daniel Barron visited with the youth; they always enjoy his visits and the stories he tells. Adam and Stanley, our Ag people at Extension helped the children plant two apple trees at the school and gave them the history behind each tree they planted. The children were treated to a field trip to the Riverside Roller Rink. They had a great time skating and got plenty of exercise. As always, the children were provided snacks each day, were allowed time for homework, and enjoyed outside play.

This is the last full month of After School at Bald Creek for this school year. Our final day will be June 2.

Bee Log Afterschool

- Debra Erickson, Daniel Semon, 4-H Program Assistants

The year has flown by!

This month we built and launched water bottle rockets. The youth enjoyed learning about rockets and building their own. We also taught them about Aerospace to go along with the rockets. Mother’s Day gifts were made using cookie recipes in jam jars. Here the youth learn about measuring ingredients, differences between wet and dry items and when to add them in the recipe.

Jo Simpson came out again this month and showed them how to make Tacos and why it’s important to put vegetables & fruits in their diets. Rich Chuvala came to do his program and reward them for their efforts. Frisbee golf, sand art, paper mache piggy banks and more were a part of our enrichment programs.

For the end of the school year treat, we took the youth to the Skating Rink in town and had an ice cream party. We were pleased to have a few parents join us, and even skate with their children. This was a huge success, with 22 youth attending. So, here we are at the end with a successful year behind us.

4-H School Enrichment

- Sybil Chapman, 4-H Program Assistant

This month has been busy getting Fire Safety coordinated with the teachers at all the elementary schools and the EMT’s, Firemen and Rescue Squad. There are 197 fifth grade students who will learn about first aid because twenty volunteers give their time to teach.

The following is a recap of School Enrichment in the elementary schools for the 2010-11 school year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Enrichment Curriculum</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Students (Taught)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bug Out</td>
<td>2nd grade</td>
<td>109 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Counts</td>
<td>2nd grade</td>
<td>107 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character counts</td>
<td>3rd grade</td>
<td>147 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil Solutions</td>
<td>3rd grade</td>
<td>189 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Safety</td>
<td>3rd grade</td>
<td>155 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic of Electricity</td>
<td>4th grade</td>
<td>165 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eco-Wonders</td>
<td>5th grade</td>
<td>197 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>5th grade</td>
<td>197 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CareerSmarts</td>
<td>7th grade</td>
<td>12 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1278 students</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**4-H Discovery**

**Linda Semon, 4-H Program Associate**

4-H Discovery Clubs held their awards day to celebrate their accomplishments. 4-H Discovery had 207 members enrolled this year in 12 Chartered 4-H Clubs and after-school groups. Over thirty-two 4-H Volunteers donated their time monthly to assist 4-H Discovery programs. Some of these volunteers have donated over 35 hours a month.

I am working with local farmer and trained 4-H Volunteer, Elke Sparakis who is starting the 4-H Baa-Humm Club. Elke owns and operates Wellspring Farms which is a fiber animal farm located in the Bee Log community of Burnsville, raising llamas, sheep and angora rabbits. Some of the plans for 2011 include competing at the Mountain State Fair llama show and sheep show and participating in Burnsville’s Old Timey Days Festival. The club will focus on livestock care, showing, and learning about fiber (farm to market) and much more.

I am developing a four day summer camp in June with NC Real Enterprises to reach youth ages 12-19. They will participate in an active learning session of hands-on activities to help them gain entrepreneurial skills and encourage them to start a small business.

As the West District President I have been helping plan the 2011 State Conference for the North Carolina Association of Extension Program Assistants, Associates and Technicians to be held in Blowing Rock in August.

I attended “GIS/GPS” training in Greensboro May 2-3 at NC A&T State University, the “Soil to Seed” workshop in Mills River on May 17 and took four 4-H Volunteers to the West District meeting and workshops in Haywood County May 14.

**Mountain Challenge**

**Richard Chuvala, 4-H Program Assistant**

We are currently in the process of wrapping our program up for the 2010-2011 school year. Each elementary and middle school group picked how they would like to celebrate their last day and over 50 participants collectively managed to earn over $2000 towards various incentives using their VISA Card. We are currently collecting information that can be used to report on the impacts of our program and I hope to have that information ready by the next narrative.

The SOAR class at Mtn. Heritage has traveled to AB-Tech and UNC-Asheville to learn about college requirements and to tour their campuses. They also celebrated an end of year cookout at Ray-Cort Park with 20 current and past SOAR students attending. They had a good picnic and reflected on this past year’s successes.

I also have been working with Centro de Enlaces’ Healthy Latinas. This month I showed 7 teenage Latinas how to cook a quick, healthy and delicious stir-fry using various vegetables and meat that can be found locally. We are planning to do this again in June and hope to share and learn about healthy habits.

**YC 4-H “Summer Blast”**

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