

History of the Extension Education Association program

The Rusk County Extension Education Association held their Christmas Party at their December 11th, meeting with food, fun activities, and fellowship. Additionally, they made their annual toy drive contribution to the Rusk County Children's Advocacy and held a food drive for two local families.

On November 19th, the group served as co-hostess for the District V Extension Education Association - Fall Planning Meeting in Marshall, Texas. A delegation of members from the Rusk County Extension Education Association were in attendance to welcome the fifty-plus visitors.

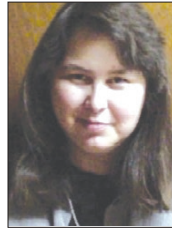
So what is an Extension Education Association? The story of the Extension Education Association Program in Texas began many years ago. Although the program has undergone several name changes since the first club was organized, the main purpose for its existence has remained the same – continuing education for women.

In 1912, the first Texas home demonstration agent worked with farm girls, and later with their mothers, teaching them how to grow, prepare and can tomatoes. By 1914-1915, Tomato Clubs were organized in most counties in the United States so rural women could meet and learn skills to improve the fami-

ly and community in which they lived. The club members in turn agreed to pass on to others what they learned in club work. From the early beginning, clubs have

relied heavily on lesson outlines and demonstrations. These resources enable club members to teach others. While home demonstration work was underway in Texas, efforts were being made to pass national legislation in support of Extension work in agriculture and home economics. The final passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, established the Cooperative Extension Service. In 1915, the Texas legislature accepted the Smith-Lever Act authorizing Texas A&M College to administer the Cooperative Extension Service in Texas.

In 1926, the club women organized into the Texas Home Demonstration Association and held their first meeting at the time of the A&M College Shortcourse at College Station. These women had two primary reasons for organizing; 1) They wanted to help a deserving 4-H club girl by giving her financial assistance for a college education; and 2) they wanted to



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learn the principles of parliamentary procedure so that they could preside over their meetings at the shortcourse.

During the darkest days of the depression, women found many satisfactions in club work such as saving money for food and clothing for their families, and the clubs provided social contacts when nearly every other group activity was cut off.

In the 1930s and 40s, as is still true today, programs were developed in response to timely needs.

Today members of the Texas Extension Education Association in Rusk County cherish their proud past and serve as strong 21st Century leaders in strengthening and enriching families through educational programs, leadership, and community service.

The local Rusk County Extension Education Association meets monthly on the Second Thursday of every month from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., in the Extension Office Meeting Room located in the Rusk County Courthouse Annex.

For more information and/or to become a member, please contact either the Club President Mrs. Cathy McKey, or Liz at the Rusk County Extension Office at 903-657-0376.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic levels, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.