

RAINS COUNTY POST

May 2004

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Left to right: Stephen Gowin, Kay Player, Shirley Weeks.

This month we are spotlighting the Rains County Agent's Office.

Name: Stephen Gowin

Occupation: County Extension Agent - Agriculture.

Place of birth: Dallas, Texas.

Family: Son of Ronnie & Sue Gowin, married to Keri Gowin, 2 daughters, Aubrey (3 years old), & Avery (1 year old).

Pets: 1 dog & 2 cats.

Date that you became a County employee: December 15, 2003.

Brief description of my job responsibilities: Provide educational programs for youth & adults.

My favorite place to vacation is: Our deer lease.

My hobbies are: Hunting & fishing.

My favorite thing about Rains County: The people.

The people who influenced me the most were: My children.

Words that best describe me: A good father.

One thing that I've always wanted to do: Hunt in Colorado.

If I could have any job in the world it would be: Retired.

My favorite t.v. show is: N.Y. P.D. Blue

My favorite movie of all time is: Lonesome Dove.

Name: Shirley Weeks

Occupation: County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Science.

Place of birth: Houston, Texas.

Family: Husband, John Weeks, 2 daughters, 3 sons, 2 son-in-laws, 3 daughter-in-laws, 13 grandkids, 2 step-grandsons, 2 step-great grandsons, 13 foster kids.

Pets: 1 dog, and several mice that have managed to escape my mouse traps.

Date that you became a County employee: May 1, 2001.

Brief description of my job responsibilities: Economist, teacher, manager, inventor, program chairman, investigator, researcher, student.

Community Activities: Where needed, Rains County 4-H Clubs, Rains County Fair Association, Happy Homemakers, Piecemakers, Keep Emory Beautiful, Keep Point Beautiful, Emory Civic Club, Point Civic Club, Chamber of Commerce, Garden Club, Farmer's Market.

My favorite place to vacation is: Colorado, Wyoming, & Montana.

My hobbies are: When I have time, I enjoy crafts, sewing, reading, painting, traveling, collecting rabbits, and going to garage sales.

My favorite things about Rains County: The people & the lakes.

My pet peeve is: People that hurt small children.

The people who influenced me the most were: Pioneer women. I lived in a house without electricity, water, indoor plumbing or a cooking stove with three babies for a year.

One thing that I've always wanted to do: Fly an airplane or go into a store and buy anything that I wanted without looking at the price tag first.

Four words that describe me:
Unpredictable, goofy, crazy, loveable.
If I could have any job in the world it would be: Santa Claus. I love giving gifts and seeing the smiles on kids' faces.
My favorite movie of all time is: Star Wars & Hatari.
The craziest or funniest thing that I have ever done: Climbed a water tower & stood at the top, or the time a group of us climbed into a neighbors hog farm and rode the sows.

Name: Kay Player
Occupation: Secretary to County Extension Agents.
Place of birth: Dallas, Texas.
Family: Husband, Ken, my parents Allen (Cobb) & Imozell Stuart, 1 brother (who by the way is single & looking for Miss Right!)
Pets: 4 dogs, 2 cats, 2 donkeys, cows & calves.
Date that you became a County employee: July 1, 1997.
Brief description of my job responsibilities: Assisting both of my bosses with reports & projects ranging from A to Z & everything in between! Our office is also responsible for the Rains County Fair Association, Rains County 4-H Clubs, Rains County EEA Clubs, & Rains County Cattleman's Association.
My favorite place to vacation is: Skiing at Wolfe Creek, Colorado, & Branson, Missouri.
My hobbies are: Raising cattle with my husband & my Dad, snow skiing, and collecting antique brooches.
My favorite things about Rains County: The friendly small town atmosphere, & the beautiful land.
My pet peeve is: Irresponsible pet owners who neglect to have their animals spayed or neutered, people who dump their dogs & cats as if they were trash, and people that lie.
The people who influenced me the most were: My parents.

One thing that I've always wanted to do:
Travel to Alaska.
If I could have any job in the world it would be: A full time cattle rancher.
My favorite t.v. show is: Farm & Ranch News with Rick Hirsch.
My favorite movie of all time is:
It's a Wonderful Life, Wizard of Oz, Urban Cowboy, & Grease.
The craziest or funniest thing that I have ever done: Several years ago, two of my Dad's 2,000 pound bulls were fighting out in the pasture. I tried desperately to get them to stop their fighting but they were totally ignoring me. I got so mad at them that I jumped on my 4-wheeler & drove as fast as I could between the bulls hitting them as they were butting head-to-head! Needless to say, I **finally** got their attention and they stopped their fighting! I escaped the incident with a big dent on my 4-wheeler and I feel certain that those bulls received really bad headaches!



THANKS FOR YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE!

Sheila Floyd.....9 years
Avis Jones.....3 years
Cheryl Buffington.....3 years
Shirley Weeks.....3 years
Gary Phelps.....2 years
Blake Cooper.....1year



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

LaNelle Freeman.....May 3
Nancy Brixey.....May 7
Linda Wallace.....May 15
Amy Wallace.....May 20
Jerry Huskey.....May 26
Laura Pate.....May 30



NEW COUNTY EMPLOYEES

John Wallace.....Sheriff's
Department

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NEW ARRIVALS

Barbara Miller is a Great-Grandmother! She had a great granddaughter born on May 10th, and a great grandson born in November 2003.

Congratulations to Barbara!

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COUNTY HOLIDAYS

May 31.....Memorial Day

July 5.....Independence Day

September 6.....Labor Day

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Understanding and Treating Seasonal Allergies

Sneezing, runny nose, itchy, watery eyes—seasonal allergy sufferers know these symptoms all too well. For many people dealing with allergies, these symptoms may be a way of life.

As they sneeze and suffer, many

wonder why their bodies are reacting this way. Certain substances, called allergens, trigger allergic reactions in some individuals. Mold spores, dust mites, pet dander and pollens such as trees, grasses, weeds and ragweed are some common allergens. The allergens react with antibodies causing histamine and other chemical substances to be released, which will cause various symptoms. These symptoms include sneezing, runny or stuffy nose, itchy or watery eyes, and itchy skin. Often allergy symptoms will trigger sinus, respiratory and ear infections.

While some sufferers are plagued with an occasional seasonal allergy, others suffer year-round. Trees pollinate in the spring, grasses pollinate in the spring and early summer, weeds and ragweed in the summer and early fall. Dust mites, mold, and pet dander are major causes of indoor allergens which trigger perennial (year-round) symptoms.

Allergy Prevention

Awareness and avoidance of common allergens is key when treating allergies. Certain environmental precautions can greatly reduce an individual's suffering. For example, to reduce the effects of dust and dust mites, mattresses, box springs and pillows should be encased in allergy-proof covers. Feather and down pillows and comforters should be avoided.

Stuffed animals, clutter, shelved books and other dust collectors should be minimized. In addition, High Efficiency Particulate Arrestance, or HEPA, air cleaners work well in removing allergens from the air. Of course, it would be nearly impossible to make an entire house dust-free, but these simple precautions can be taken to create a dust-free bedroom.

Keep doors and windows shut and the air-conditioner on to avoid triggering pollen allergies during the spring and summer. Pollen allergy sufferers should avoid cutting grass and limit their exposure to wooded areas. Using a de-humidifier will also reduce mold, another common allergen. Pet dander is a year-round allergen, which is best reduced by keeping pets outside. Indoor pets should be bathed regularly and kept out of the allergy sufferer's bedroom. Other possible irritants, such as cigarette smoke or heavy perfumes should be avoided.

Some allergy sufferers become so accustomed to their symptoms that it becomes a way of life, and they accept the inconveniences of seasonal sniffing and sneezing. Usually after treatment, they will realize the improvements in their quality of life and productivity. Your physician can best determine a method of treatment that will suit your lifestyle.

Treating Allergies - Over-the-Counter Medications

Some of the most common treatments for seasonal allergies are over-the-counter antihistamines and decongestants. Unfortunately, many of these drugs cause drowsiness or may lead to excessive dryness of the nose and throat.

Prescription Medications

Physicians can prescribe non-drowsy antihistamines. Prescription steroids and steroid nasal sprays, which work to decrease inflammation, are another treatment for allergies.

Shots

Allergy shots are usually administered if environmental precautions and medications have failed to provide relief. The shots are given in a series designed to reduce sensitivity to allergens, beginning with a weak dosage once or twice a week and then progressing to stronger doses less frequently.



Tips for Saving Money on Groceries

Do you want to do all you can to cut your grocery bill? Would you like to have a few more tricks up your sleeve for saving on groceries? If so, here are five tips to help you get out of the grocery store with more food while

spending less money:

1. Go Shopping Alone.

This one may be difficult to do, but if you can leave your kids and spouse at home, you will probably find grocery shopping easier and less expensive. Each additional person on the shopping trip increases the temptation to buy on impulse.

2. Love those Loss Leaders.

Loss leaders are those very good deals that grocery stores offer in order to get you in the door. They are usually found on the front and back pages of the sales circulars. Some of the biggest grocery savings can be found by shopping for only the loss leaders at three or four different stores in your neighborhood. Buy the best sale items from each store and then buy the rest of what you need from whichever store seems to have the best prices in general.

3. Plan Your Menu Around What's on Sale.

Speaking of loss leaders, another saving strategy is to plan your menus around what's on sale. For example, if your local grocery has chicken parts at 29 cents a pound, stock up. Plan to use the chicken for a variety of meals such as chicken spaghetti, chicken on the grill, fried chicken, chicken soup, etc. If the same store also has potatoes at a good price, you can use them to go along with your

chicken by making mashed potatoes, baked potatoes, potatoes cooked on the grill, and by adding them to your soup.

4. Be a Savvy Coupon User.

It's fun to get things for pennies on the dollar by using coupons, but you have to be very careful to use coupons wisely. Most coupons are for convenience foods that can be made cheaper from scratch. Only use a coupon when the item is something you really need and when using the coupon makes the national brand cheaper than the generic equivalent. Also remember that there are costs involved in couponing: the price of the Sunday paper, the time it takes to clip and organize. Make sure that these costs don't exceed what you really save by using coupons.

5. What's in a (Brand) Name?

If by some chance you haven't gotten into generics yet, what are you waiting for? Rumor has it that most generics are actually made at the same factories as name brand products. In the rare case that you aren't satisfied with the generic equivalent after one serving/ use, you can most likely take it back to the store and ask to exchange it. Many store brands actually have their satisfaction guarantee printed right on the package.



RECIPE TO ENJOY!

Beef Enchiladas

- 8 ounces ground beef
- 1 10-ounce can enchilada sauce
- 8 oz. shredded Monterey Jack cheese
(2 cups)
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 8 6-inch corn tortillas
- 1 tomato, chopped
- Lettuce

Directions:

In a medium skillet, brown the ground beef. Drain fat. Stir in 1/4 cup of the enchilada sauce and heat through. Stir in 1 cup of the cheese. Keep warm. In another medium skillet or in a large heavy skillet, heat the 2 tablespoons of oil over low heat. Quickly dip tortillas, one at a time, in hot oil for 10 seconds or until just limp, adding more oil if needed. Drain on paper towels. To assemble, brush one side of each tortilla with some enchilada sauce. Spoon about 2 tablespoons of the meat mixture atop sauce near the edge of the tortilla; roll up. Place the enchiladas in a greased 12x7x2-inch baking dish (a 2-quart rectangular baking dish). Pour remaining enchilada sauce over the top. Cover the baking dish with foil. Bake in a 350 degree oven about 25 minutes or until mixture is heated through. Remove foil. Sprinkle remaining cheese over enchiladas. Bake enchiladas for 2 minutes more or till cheese melts. Serve enchiladas with chopped tomato and lettuce.

Makes 4 servings.

