

WINSTON COUNTY SELF HELP COOPERATIVE

The Voice of Rural America

WCSHC's February Business Sessions-by *Frank Taylor*

More than 32 members of Winston County Self Help Cooperative assembled on February 4, for its third business session of 2008. Leon Goss extended words of encouragement promptly at 3:50pm and the meeting accelerated into forty minutes of lively action with several poignant topics. Winston County's Health Department Nurse elaborated on the current influenza outbreak and stated individuals should consult with physicians to combat this illness. This strain of flu caused the demise of three juveniles in recent weeks; therefore, each community should take necessary steps to inhibit this outbreak of influenza. Thomas Coleman co-op member gave an engaging and entraining session on vegetable production with several personal caveats of success. Coleman stated, "Soil test would en-

hance producers' profit margin by integrating results to reduce production cost". Founding member Omerio Dotson donated a beautiful hand-made quilt as part of her personal project to help stimulate WCSHC's strategy plan. The meeting concluded with a group picture and members exchanging ideas for WCSHC's February 18, business session.

Winston County Self Help Cooperative stimulated minds in two informative sessions on February 18. The first session focused on vegetable production with Larry Russell, Tony Anderson and Rockiel Woods from Alcorn State University's Experiment Farm in Mound Bayou, Ms. ASU's trio presented current research and development on creating a successful vegetable operation. WCSHC and ASU will form

a partnership with farmers' in eastern Mississippi to market their produce. WCSHC will develop a follow up session to discuss schematics and plan strategies for planting. The homebuyers' workshop started at 4:55pm-Essie Jackson gave an arousing welcome for more than 35 participants. Co-op member/NAACP President Charles Hampton organized an informative session with four lenders providing a fountain of tips on securing homeownership. Participants posed numerous questions centered on the sub-prime market debacle, loan packages and classes to promote critical decision making in purchasing a home. The session ended with door prizes and a sumptuous reception.



HPI's-South Central Groups Collaborating

Heifer International's South Central Groups adheres to cornerstone of caring and sharing by collaborating to improve cattle genetics. Carl James Jr. member of Community Cattle Enterprise Group (CCEG) base in Zachary, Louisiana purchased infamous bull-113 from Winston County Self Help Cooperative to enhance his personal herd genetics. James stated, "bull-113 presents a superior structure to produce lean calves. This robust black angus bull weighs more than 2200 pounds with a manageable demeanor to make an easy transition into his new home in south Louisiana." Hubert Nicholson co-op member stated, "bull-113 produced more than 250 health calves with excellent financial returns over the pass four years". CCEG and WCSHC are working in conjunction to create sustainability in rural communities.

Rockiel Woods' Experience

My February 18, experience with the Winston County Self Help Coop is always a memorable experience because the members are present in large numbers and everyone asks questions as if they were on a fact-finding mission to improve their quality of life. I enjoyed the participation, and comments that was share during the brief meeting. I am sure that this 2008 season will bring about many challenges as well as opportunities. The challenge will be to make sure that they/ we live up to the promise of helping save rural America.



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“Saving Rural America”

MSU’s Veterinary Medicine Palpates Animals-*by Frank Taylor*

Mississippi State University’s School of Veterinary Medicine palpated 21 potential pass on heifers-Thursday February 28. Dr. Brett and four veterinary medicine students displayed fortitude on a cold frost morning to assist Winston County Self Help Cooperative’s fulfill it mantra of “helping save rural America”. MSU’s School of Veterinary Medicine Staff performed several individual exams, which included palpating heifers to determine gestation. Sixteen heifers confirmed and ready for pass on to co-op members. WCSHC Members extends thanks to MSU’s School of Veterinary Medicine Staff for assisting with the Heifer Project’s Animals.

Can We Save Rural America?-*by Frank Taylor*

I recently spent time reviewing my pass experiences in rural American and thinking about the next generations of landowners. My emotions escalated from sheer joy to ultimate despair within seconds. I am working fervently to help save rural America.

My pass and present connects directly in the heart of rural America; therefore, my values, morals and ethics are base on lessons learned from parents, grandparents and others, who influenced the baby-boomers generation to forage beyond the color line. Those individuals

worked under adverse conditions, lived in substandard homes, received un-equal education, and suffered injustices from justice. Yes, I have a right to vote, speak, demonstrate, live and create opportunities to empower our future generations of landowners. **What small farmers need today?**



Pass a farm bill with equity for small farmers

Outcomes:

1. Small farmers are committed to staying in the communities without threat uprooting overnight on a political whim.
2. A secured food chain with locally grown produce.
3. Local farmers are family members, friends and civic leaders, who are investing money and time to stimulate economic growth and help sustain rural communities.
4. Enhance stewardship practices and improve the quality of life.
5. Increase property taxes to help fund public education and stimulate technology projects.