

Appointment: 100% Extension
Requested Action: Promotion to the Rank of Agent

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Located in the Southeast Region of Louisiana, St. Helena Parish is joined to the north by Mississippi and borders Tangipahoa, Livingston, East Baton Rouge and East Feliciana Parishes on the east, south and west.

During the Spanish occupation the St. Helena District included all of present-day Livingston Parish and part of Tangipahoa Parish. West Florida, however, continued to be held by Spain after France had transferred it to the United States in 1803. Spain continued to hold onto this area until the West Florida Rebellion of 1810 when a small group of colonists overthrew the government of Spain. The residents of West Florida, increasingly dissatisfied with Spanish rule, declared their independence from Spain and seized Baton Rouge from the Spanish officials. They declared themselves as the free and independent state of West Florida.

President James Madison had already issued a proclamation ordering Governor Claiborne of Louisiana to take possession on October 27, 1810. It was on December 10, 1810 that Governor Claiborne took possession of West Florida. It was proclaimed that all of the area eastward from the Mississippi River shall constitute one county to be known and called by the name Feliciana. The county was then divided into the parishes of Feliciana, Baton Rouge, St. Helena and St. Tammany.

When Louisiana became a state in 1812 it was called St. Helena County, which extended from the 31st parallel south to Bayou Manchac and the Amite River and from the Amite River on the west to the Ponchatoula River on the east. On February 10, 1832, St. Helena was divided in half and the Louisiana Legislature created Livingston Parish. In 1869, a line was drawn north from the Natalbany River and everything east of it was used to create Tangipahoa Parish.

St. Helena Parish consists of 408 square miles or 261,085 acres and is 32 miles long by 30 miles wide. It is located a few minutes off Interstate 55, which enters the state in the area described as the "toe" of Louisiana.

The geographical landscape of the parish consists of rolling terrain covered by loblolly pine and hardwood forests which is approximately 50 to 80 feet above sea level. The western border of the parish is the Amite River and the Tickfaw River, another small river which empties into Lake Maurepas, drains the eastern portion of the parish. Between the two lies a variety of streams, creeks, bayous and swales.

Figure 1. St. Helena Parish Land Use in acres and percentage.

St. Helena Parish Land Use	Use Area (Acres) Percentage	
	Residential, Mixed Urban or Built-up Land	2,471
Industrial, Transport., Communications & Services	371	0.1%
Agricultural Land, Cropland and Pasture	67,906	25.9%
Forest Land	185,727	70.7%
Water	170	0.06%
Wetlands	2,875	1.09%
Transitional Areas	3,027	1.1%

With nearly 75% of total acres (188,000 acres) in timber land, St Helena's economy is based around the forestry industry. Other economic interests in the parish are gravel mining, beef farming, poultry and dairy farming. Kleinpeter Farms Dairy, a regional dairy product supplier based in Baton Rouge, operates one of Louisiana's largest dairy farm on 1,500 acres in the parish.

Present-day St. Helena Parish provides the perfect balance between urban and rural life-styles. Its location near the state capital at Baton Rouge and the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area enables residents to experience easy access to services of state government and one of Americas most colorful cities. Yet the parish has rural, country-like atmosphere provides unlimited opportunities to enjoy outdoor activities and recreational pursuits.

According to the 2000 Census, the population of St. Helena Parish was 10,525 with a population density of 26/mi². Of the 10,525 residents, 52.5% of the population is black and 46.5% is white. The population of the Parish has increased 6.6% since 1990. Persons under 18 years old account for 29% of the population.

Greensburg, the only town in the parish, has a population of 775 persons. It serves as the parish seat and is the commercial center of the parish. The Village of Montpelier is the second largest incorporated community in the parish with a population of 225.

Of all the resources of St. Helena Parish the most remarkable is the proud spirit of the population. They are hard working people with an agricultural background who have learned to respect the natural resources such as the land and the water. The great transportation corridors link them to nearby urban areas giving great advantage of their location while being ever mindful of the effect of growth on their rural values.

On March 3rd the Louisiana Department of Education released the district rankings based on last year's (spring, 2007) standardized test scores. The results are that St. Helena is still ranked last in the state and considered academically unacceptable with a District Performance Score of 54.6. Two

other districts, Madison (55.0) and City of Baker (58.4), are also considered academically unacceptable because of having a district performance score below 60.0.

The good news is the St. Helena School District was ranked 13th in overall student growth which puts the District in the top 20% for academic growth across the state (Figure 2).

Figure 2. St. Helena leads Region II School Districts in academic growth during 2007-08:

District	+Gain	-Loss
St. Helena	+2.0	
Zachary	+1.9	
West Feliciana	+1.5	
Livingston	+0.7	
Pointe Coupee	+0.5	
Washington	+0.1	
West Baton Rouge	0.0	0.0
Iberville		-0.4
Tangipahoa		-0.4
East Baton Rouge		-1.6
City of Baker		-1.9
East Feliciana		-4.5

It's important to note the median income for a household in the parish was \$24,970. Males had a median income of \$30,218 versus \$16,853 for females. The per capita income for the parish was \$12,318. About 26.80% of the population was below the poverty line, including 35.50% of those under age 18 and 23.20% of those age 65 or over. Also, St. Helena has the second highest percent of students with disabilities (17.0%) which follows Tensas Parish (17.3%) while the state average of students with disabilities is 12.3%. St. Helena also has the second lowest average teachers' salaries in the state. Despite these challenges, St. Helena has improved the percent of core academic classes taught by Highly Qualified Educators from 55% during the 06-07 school year to 76% for the 07-08 school year.

1. DOCUMENTATION OF MAJOR PROGRAM AREAS AND INITIATIVES

Stefen L. Givens received his Bachelor of Science degree from Southeastern Louisiana University and his Master of Science degree from Louisiana Tech in 1997. He joined the St. Helena Parish LSU AgCenter in January 2000. Since his employment, Stefen has received his specialization in Natural Resources. He is currently on schedule to receive his doctoral degree in the Spring of 2010.

Stefen currently serves as a 4-H Agent, ANR Agent, and Parish Chairman for St. Helena Parish in addition to his multi-parish assignment of Natural Resources Specialist for St. Helena, Tangipahoa and Washington Parishes. His duties include program development, implementation, and evaluation of the 4-H and ANR programs. His 4-H work consists of horse/livestock activities, in-school and community clubs, project clubs, workshops, Shooting Sports field days/activities, and 4-H volunteer leader development. His ANR work consists of producer oriented field days and workshops along with farm visits in the areas of beef, goat, vegetable and timber production.

When Stefen started his career in Extension as a member of the St. Helena staff, he supported and guided many efforts to help increase the participation of youth in 4-H program. During his tenure as St. Helena 4-H agent he has increased 4-H enrollment from 25% to 100% of total possible public school enrollment.

During the 2005-06 school year the St. Helena Parish school district appointed a new superintendent of schools. Being unfamiliar with 4-H, the following year, she eliminated all organized school club. Because of the District's poor academic performance, LEAP support was identified as a high priority for the St. Helena youth.

The traditional face of 4-H would have to change in the Parish. In response to this new challenge, enrichment lessons were developed to fit this need. Six educational lessons in the area of science were developed and conducted by Stefen. These lessons included GLE's and Benchmarks to fit the need in better preparing St. Helena students for the high stakes LEAP and GEE tests in the areas of science. They included:

Classification – What “Class” Are You In?

Students investigated the three domains and the different divisions to classify plants and animals. They also learned the proper use of the dichotomous key.

Ecosystems – Ecosystems...The Great Recyclers

This lesson investigated the roles and cycles of living things in ecosystems. Students discovered how nutrients recycle themselves throughout the entire ecosystem. Also, students discovered how nature is the perfect recycler and only uses what is needed.

Forestry – Walking On the Wild Side

Students discovered exciting new facts about forestry. The trees came alive as the students saw first hand what types of forests exists and how they affect us right here in Louisiana. In addition, they explored forest succession cycles and the plants, animals, and insects that call the forest their home.

Natural Resources and Pollution – Be a Part of the Solution...Stop Pollution

Students explored the natural resources used around the world and right here in Louisiana. Also, they discovered some resources that were being depleted and polluted to the point that we humans are harming our environment. They discover why we call Louisiana “The Sportsman’s Paradise”.

Interactions in the Ecosystems – What’s Your Niche?

This lesson allowed students to investigate animals and their ecosystems. They explored various animals and their habitats or niches. They learned how organisms are linked together with their environment. Also, animal adaptations were detailed allowing students to see the success and failure of a particular species.

Major Ecological Systems – What Biome Are You From?

This lesson allowed students to explore the various terrestrial and aquatic ecological systems. They learned more about the six major land biomes and the three marine biomes. In addition, students investigated entire ecosystems and their physical environments including the abiotic and biotic factors therein.

In addition to the curriculum developed the following LEAP lessons were also conducted by Stefen in St. Helena. They were:

Blood and Guts

Students learned about the human body and its parts. Also, they learned to identify the parts and purposes for all their organs and systems.

A-OK Air

Students learned about the air they breathe and how it is affected by what humans do on a daily basis. Additionally, they learned about how we get oxygen and how pollutants can harm the air we breathe.

Dead or Alive

Participants gained the knowledge on what an ecosystem is and what types of ecosystems are in Louisiana.

H₂O Oh!

Students learned about the properties and need for water in our lives. Also, they learned how water is recycled through the atmosphere and used throughout our lives.

In the High School, a different approach was taken that focused on financial management and workforce preparation. The following financial management and workforce development programs were used by Stefen to teach youth:

Who Took My Money

Youth learned the principle of economic concepts and how they apply to financial decision making.

Check It Out!

Students were taught to write checks and how to keep accurate banking records.

Money In, Money Out

Students discovered how to make budgets and manage money

Who wants to be a Millionaire

Students were trained the value of properly managing money and the power of investing.

Resume Writing and Conducting Interviews

Students learned to properly write a resume, especially how to select the appropriate information to include. Also, they learned to conduct themselves and be most effective during an interview.

Welcome To the Real World

Louisiana high school seniors answered only 47.6% of questions correctly on a survey assessing basic knowledge of teen personal finance. In 2006, American teenagers spent over \$172 billion! Given the tremendous spending power available to them, it is imperative that teens learn sound fiscal habits that will let them take control of their money – before it takes control of them.

With this strong need for financial management education in St. Helena, Stefen started the “Welcome to the Real World” program. Through these efforts St. Helena students learned the basics of opening and balancing a checking account to purchasing an auto and house. It was offered to all St. Helena graduating seniors in 2006 and 2007. Then in 2008 both juniors and seniors participated.

The program was designed to teach teens financial skills through a “hands-on” approach with money. The following local companies and businesses participated: Bank of Greensburg, DEMCO, AT&T, Latter and Blum agents, and local auto dealerships.

In the spring of 2007 the St. Helena School District went to a 4 day school week, Tuesday through Friday. Mondays became optional for students to attend. This Monday program was utilized to enrich the student’s lives both academically and socially. Stefen instantly started having 4-H meetings back in the schools on this day. These changes have increased the strength of the 4-H program in the parish.

Highlights of Stefen’s 4-H program areas:

Character Critters

Knowing the character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of our society, and it’s essential that the next generation will be good stewards of our communities, nations and the world. Families and faith-based communities have an obligation to teach youth good character ethics while schools and youth-service organizations like 4-H are responsible for developing that good character.

To improve the character of St. Helena youth, Stefen started the Character Critters program in 2007. It was presented on a weekly basis to all Pre-K and Kindergarten students.

Character Critters is an education program which transcends cultural, religious and socioeconomic differences and fosters good character by teaching, enforcing, advocating and modeling core ethical principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship. Presented

as six pillars, these principles formed a multi-level filter which helped young students to process daily decisions. These children came to enjoy Tommy the trustworthy turtle, Rusty the respectful raccoon, Fran the fair frog, Roy the responsible rabbit, Carrie the caring cat, and even Cindy the citizen crab.

Livestock Program

Stefen has worked diligently to ensure that the St. Helena livestock program provided youth with opportunity to exhibit their livestock with pride and good character. Stefen created a volunteer middle management position for each of the species (beef, dairy, poultry and goats). Each middle manager was in charge of setting up educational clinics and aiding exhibitors in entering their animals into their designated show.

The St. Helena livestock program, like many in the state, has been extremely active and self-sufficient. However, with Stefen's assistance, the livestock club members were offered opportunities to learn more about their projects through clinics and workshops. Trainings in the area of dairy, beef, goats, and chickens were setup to teach youth feeding, grooming, showmanship, clipping, hoof trimming, and proper show attire. These trainings were conducted by Stefen, volunteer leaders, producers and parents.

During his tenure, Stefen has held numerous parish livestock clinics and show for youth to participate in. Also, each year he has been in charge of the St. Helena Dairy Day livestock show. Exhibitors from St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, and Livingston Parishes are invited to participate.

In addition to the St. Helena 4-H livestock program, Stefen has been very active in 4-H livestock program at the district and state level. He has judged numerous junior livestock shows at parish fairs and parish festivals along with parish spring livestock shows. Also, he organized a multi-parish livestock clinic that is held each December where youth learn the proper way to groom, fit and present their livestock show project.

Additionally, he was instrumental in establishing the first goat show held at the Southeast District Jr. Livestock Show. He has also served as superintendent of the Southeast District Goat Show and the State Goat Premier Exhibitor contest. Furthermore, he served as co-superintendent of the LSU AgCenter's State Goat show.

Equine Project

For many years the St. Helena Parish 4-H horse project had a tradition of being a strong program. Stefen has been able to continue this tradition with his leadership. He recruited and continued to use excellent volunteer leaders in the equine project. During his tenure, St. Helena Parish has trained winners in the State Premier Exhibitor contest, state winners and runner up in the horse judging contest, state winners in the team and individual horse demonstration contest along with state winners in the Horse Quiz bowl contest. In addition, Stefen and volunteer leaders introduced 4-H'ers to equine health, dentistry, and hoof care. Additional demonstrations were setup by local trainers and in club activities were conducted to increase the youth's knowledge about the horse project.

Florida Parishes 4-H Outdoor Skills Program

The 4-H Outdoor Skills Program is an active program that is attractive to both youth and adults. The program uses positive learning and interaction with youth and adult role models.

With his completion of the natural resources specialization and multi-parish assignment in the 2006, Stefen started the Florida Parishes 4-H Outdoor Skills program. He started by putting together an advisory committee of interested parents from St. Helena, Tangipahoa, and Washington Parishes. The focus of this newly formed 4-H program was to emphasize the disciplines of Shooting Sports in rifle and shotgun. With such few adults certified in the 4-H Shooting Sports from the three parishes, a training was held in Franklinton. Twenty-five adult volunteer leaders from the three parish area attended this first 12-hour training.

Since 2006, ATV Safety, 4-H Sport Fishing along with Wetlands Education has been added to the Florida Parishes 4-H Outdoor Skills program and it has grown very drastically. Literally thousands of youth have participated in the Florida Parishes 4-H Outdoor Skills program since its inception.

The Florida Parishes 4-H Outdoor Skills is a part of the Louisiana 4-H Outdoor Skills Program. In addition, it is open to any 4-H youth from St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington Parishes regardless of where they attend school.

4-H Shooting Sports

The Florida Parishes 4-H shooting sports program offers shooting sports disciplines in the areas of shotguns, rifle, archery, pistol and hunting/wildlife. It's used to compliment and enhance the impact of existing safety, shooting and hunter education programs. These disciplines are used to help young people develop self-confidence along with a positive image and personal growth.

Furthermore it is used to strengthen families through participation in life-long recreational activities. Over the past three years a total of 90 adult leaders have attended the fall Florida Parishes 4-H Shooting Sports leader training.

In 2007, the Cloverbuds (under 9 years of age) were added to the Florida Parishes 4-H Shooting Sports program. These younger children have participated in educational programs such as gun safety, responsible use of shooting equipment, wild turkey education, along with fishing activities.

The 4-H shooting sports curriculum is also designed to assist young people in establishing a personal environmental ethic. 4-H Shooting Sports is an activity for everyone – girls, boys, young, old, urban and rural. Participation in the program is not limited by skill or physical abilities and is open to any youth ages 5-20. This is a fun, action-oriented program which youth develop skills that will last a lifetime.

In support the 4-H Outdoor Skills program, Stefen has formed collaborations with local shooting clubs and wildlife conservations organizations. Securing sponsors, such as ATV Zone, Ace Hardware, American Hunter, Archery & Fishing Unlimited, Covey Rise, First South Farm Credit, Loranger Taxidermy, Louisiana Federal Land Bank, Parish National Bank, Pro Stop Hunting

Supply, Tallow Creek Shooting Grounds, Pine Hardware, and Parish Credit Corporation have allowed the program to grow at even a faster rate than first anticipated.

In addition to the multiple 4-H Shooting Sports Field Days the Florida Parishes 4-H Shooting Sports program hosted the 2008 Southern Regional and State 4-H Shoots. During the 2008 State Shoot, two 4-H'ers from the Florida Parishes program qualified to be on the Louisiana Hunting team and went on to compete at the National competition in Nebraska. This team of four Louisiana youth placed first in the Nation in the hunting contest.

ATV Safety Program

The number of four-wheel ATVs in use in the United States has increased from just over 2 million to more than 6.9 million over the past decade. From 1982 through 2004, there were nearly 6,500 deaths involving ATVs. In 2004 alone, an estimated 136,000 people were treated in hospital emergency rooms for ATV related injuries – many life-altering. In 2003, an estimated 740 people died nationwide in ATV incidents. About 30 percent of all deaths and injuries involve children younger than 16.

In 2007, Stefen saw a need for more education in ATV safety. He was selected as an ATV Safety grant recipient from the National 4-H Council. Through this grant he was able to purchase ATV safety gear. In addition, he attended the ATV Safety Institute's (ASI) training in Fort Worth, Texas where he became a certified instructor. He initiated ATV safety classes, workshops, and clinics in St. Helena, Tangipahoa, and Washington Parishes. Furthermore, in addition, he has assisted in ATV safety clinics and/or leader trainings in St. John, East Baton Rouge, Livingston, and St. Tammany Parishes.

Experienced ATV drivers (with more than one year of experience) have a much lower risk of injury than relatively new drivers. These ATV safety program has been used to help bridge that gap.

Like other activities involving high speeds and heavy machinery, riding an ATV can be risky and very dangerous. To help stay safe, the following common sense safety tips were taught in each class.

- Get proper training
- Always wear a helmet
- No children on adult sized ATVs
- Don't ride tandem
- Don't ride on pavement
- Don't ride under the influence

Formal training teaches drivers how to control ATVs in typical situations. Drivers with formal, hands-on ATV training have a lower injury risk than drivers with no formal training. During each ATV Safety class, Stefen emphasized the importance in wearing a helmet. Other important protective equipment to wear while riding an ATV included:

- Over-the-ankle boots – to protect feet and ankles from injury.
- Goggles – to protect eyes from rocks and dust thrown up by ATVs.
- Gloves – to protect fingers and hands.
- Long pants and long-sleeved shirt – to protect skin from rocks, trees, and other debris.

4-H Sportfishing Project

Sportfishing is an educational 4-H program for youth of all ages. It teaches fishing skills, conservation, ethical knowledge, aquatic ecology, tackle crafting and much more. The Florida Parishes 4-H Sportfishing program is a youth development program that provides a comprehensive curriculum designed to develop life skills while providing information and motivation to youth and adult audiences interested in sportfishing and/or aquatic resource stewardship.

Stefen's vision of this Florida Parishes 4-H Sportfishing program was to develop life skills in young people and adults while educating them to exercise leadership and support for responsible recreational fishing and stewardship of aquatic resources through an internationally recognized 4-H Sportfishing Program. This can be accomplished by involving youth and adults alike in a long-term, on-going, community-based sportfishing and aquatic resources education program.

In 2007, Stefen held a 4-H Sportfishing training at the Southeast Research Station/Franklinton. The training was used to better educate adults leaders on the fishing curriculum to be used. Fifteen adults attended the 6 hour training.

Fishing clinics were held in St. Helena, Washington, and St. Tammany. After learning about fishing and field safety, participants got to practice angling skills and learn more about tackle crafting, people and fish, and aquatic ecology. The clinics in St. Tammany and St. Helena participants concluded with a Fishing Rodeo. Along the way, the young people discovered the answers to such questions as "What type of rod and reel do I need to fish for?" or "Where's the best place in the river to catch bass? Or bluegill? Or any other kind of fish?"

Although a 4-H program, the Sportfishing program has been conducted through a cooperative effort between the LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Aquatic Resource educators and staffs along with other interested trained adults.

Youth Wetlands Education

In 2006 the LSU AgCenter received a grant from the Department of Natural Resources to better educate Louisiana's youth on the importance of wetlands.

Stefen started working with educators in the three parish area to provide them with free wetland lessons and materials for in-class activities. For the first year 7th – 12th grade teachers were provided curriculum along with supplies to complete the lessons. For the following two years 4th – 12 grade teachers have been provided wetland curriculum. These packets have also included fact sheets and videos along with pre and post test to assess the knowledge gained from utilizing these wetland lessons. These lessons included the following topics:

4th Grade Topics

Seed Detectives – Students described and worked with wetland seeds

Animal Adaptations – It explained how animals adapt to wetland habitat.

Louisiana Day Trips – Students were introduced to using maps of Louisiana.

5th Grade Topics

Detrivores – Explained the roles of crabs in the marsh and how soil is formed.

Easy Ecosystems – Students compared and contrasted the different types of wetland ecosystems.

Spanish Moss – Students used Spanish moss to create human useable and ecosystem friendly products.

Louisiana Weather Folklore – Students began to understand the relationships between folklore and scientific meteorology.

6th Grade Topics

Article Wetlands – Students wrote short news articles related to wetland topics/issues.

Math Crabbing – While learning about prime and composite numbers students learned about the crabs that live the wetlands.

The Nuisance of Nutria – Students brainstormed ideas of how to utilize nutria in order to make them less of a problem in Louisiana's wetlands.

Coastal Range – Students learned how to find the mean, median, mode, and range with wetland data and were asked to graph the results.

7th Grade Topics

Wetland Metaphors – Students used common household objects to create wetland metaphors

Wetland Habitats – Students learned about the different wetland habitats and the plants that live in these habitats.

Wetland Webs – Lessons demonstrated the relationships of wetland animals to the food web.

8th Grade Topics

Habitat Loss – Students became aware of the causes of land loss in the Louisiana wetlands.

Sediment Loss – Students learned about various human factors that have led to sediment losses along with natural phenomena.

Watershed – The students learned about watershed in Louisiana.

Create Your Own Watershed – Students had the opportunity to create a model of a watershed.

9th – 12 Grade Topics

America's Vanishing Treasure Video

The Ideal Filter – Students created mini filters that demonstrated how wetlands clean impurities from the water and soil.

Weaving Our Economic Web – Students discussed the value of wetlands to Louisiana's economy.

Wetlands Promotions – Students formed a wetland tourism business and then created brochures and pamphlets to promote their business.

During the first year of this Youth Wetlands program Stefen worked with 19 schools, 60 teachers and 3,500 students from St. Helena, Tangipahoa, and Washington Parishes. Since this time the Youth Wetlands Week program in the three parishes has grown to 30 schools, 85 teachers and 7,000 students.

In addition to the classroom activities many of the students were involved in small scale wetland restoration planting projects. Stefen provided the plants and setup the location for the planting projects.

Highlights of Stefen's ANR program areas:

Forestry

Since the number one industry in St. Helena Parish is timber much of Stefen's ANR work has been based around forestry and wildlife. Each year, Stefen has assisted with an AgCenter sponsored forestry field day. These field days have been held on private lands, timber company lands and even at a two local sawmills. Field day topics have ranged from timber management to wildlife food plot management.

Stefen has served as the secretary of the St. Helena Forestry Association. The Association is very active and strong with over 100 members. The Association along with the AgCenter sponsors an annual membership meeting. Guest speakers are invited to discuss topics that are very appropriate to the members.

One of Stefen's forestry highlights was the St. Helena Parish Small Forest Landowners Workshop. This program involved under served small forest landowners. It was partially funded by a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program that targeted landowners with 10 to 75 acres of timberland. The objective of the workshop was to reach landowners that were not currently served by a professional forester. It was aimed at educating small forest landowners about timber management, timber marketing, environmental issues, forest economics and legal issues related to timber property ownership.

Stefen was responsible for the workshop publicity and with the help of the parish assessor he compiled a mailing list of 1500 small landowners. An invite letter and workshop program was written and mailed to each. He then compiled a mailing list of 38 local churches. Each church was mailed an announcement for the pastors to read to their congregation. Along with the announcement 15 additional letters and program were included to be given out to interested landowners.

Below are some highlights when participants were evaluated at the St. Helena Parish Small Forest Landowner Workshop:

- Those completing an evaluation reported owning 3,098 acres of forestland.
- Although 38% had used a professional in the past, 88% plan to use one in the future.
- Only 14% reported having a written forest management plan. However 85% plan to obtain a forest management plan in the future.
- Participants felt that attending the workshop would help them to earn an additional \$628,000 from correctly managing their timber.

2. CRITICAL ISSUE RESPONSIVENESS

In St. Helena, Stefen had a wonderful and professional relationship with the school system, police jury, local sheriff and other elected officials. As parish chairman, Stefen has solidified these relationships by making the St. Helena AgCenter very visible and viable.

Throughout the years, Stefen has met with clubs in every school. In addition, he has always gone into the classroom to teach enrichment lessons. Over the years, Stefen has worked with school professionals to develop lessons that were pertinent to the students needs.

In 2006, the St. Helena Parish School System questioned the value of the 4-H program. All school 4-H clubs were not allowed to meet during school time. As a result the St. Helena 4-H staff revamped its entire program to help meet the needs of the youth in the parish. As Parish Chairman, Stefen changed the face of how 4-H looked in the Parish. The St. Helena Cooperative Extension Service values its relationship with the Parish School Board, and the School Board now looks at the 4-H program as a partner in education. Currently, all students in St. Helena Parish are 4-H members with the St. Helena School Board paying their dues.

During the 2008 hurricane season, Stefen and the staff of the St. Helena AgCenter rose to the occasion by serving the public and meeting the need of local clientele. Immediately following Hurricane Gustav, Stefen was visiting with parish agriculture producers and found there was a limited supply of fuel. Because of the widespread power outage in the parish dairy farmers in particular needed fuel to run their generators. Stefen met with local OEP officials and stated the required process for dairymen to get fuel.

Also, as Parish Chairman, Stefen was instrumental in working with the local Department of Social Services following Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Since St. Helena Parish was declared as one the disaster parish they qualified for the emergency food stamp program. St. Helena staff members worked at the DSS office handing out needed disaster relief information. Furthermore, he and his staff assisted local fire stations in giving out bottled water, MRE's and hurricane recovery information. St. Helena Parish residents suffered two significant storms in almost as many weeks. After address all of the Parishes critical needs and how the St. Helena AgCenter could assist they moved ahead in their recovery from these storms. These efficient strategies help provide an operational environment that served the St. Helena clientele much more efficient and reliable during the current hurricane disaster operations.

3. INNOVATIVE TEACHING METHODS, KNOWLEDGE AND APPLICATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY

In every aspect of program delivery Stefen has used the most appropriate methods and technology. He researched his target audience and bases his program delivery on their specific needs. He has utilized a wide array of teaching methods to deliver information to 4-H club members, 4-H volunteer leaders, landowners and agriculture producers. He had to adapt his delivery methods to meet the audience requirements. He has utilized power point presentations, hands on learning, talks, and visual presentations to transfer information to clientele.

Electronic Transmission

Stefen utilizes Power Point, Excel, Word to aid his clientele in understanding the program objectives. He is very familiar with using technology such as LCD projectors, internet tools, Acrobat, and instant messenger in aiding him to better communicate with both youth and adults alike.

Email is another means by which Stefen transfers information on a regular basis. He has established email distribution list for 4-H School leaders, 4-H Shooting Sports leaders, 4-H Shooting Sports instructors, 4-H youth, Wetlands educators, Beef Producers, and Forest Landowners.

In addition, the St. Helena website has drastically improved during his tenure as Parish Chairman. Stefen has evolved with technology over his eight years with the AgCenter. He realizes its power and range it provides in supplying clientele with the information they need to make the 4-H and ANR programs successful.

Hands-on Teaching Methods

Throughout his tenure, Stefen has conducted lessons in school 4-H clubs, science classes, 4-H shooting sports field days, livestock clinics, and etc. He has provided trainings for volunteer leaders, 4-H agents, 4-H members, school teachers, and agriculture producers. During these trainings, the participants had the opportunity to practice and demonstrate what they learned through the experiential model.

Workshops

Whether they are considered mini-workshops, less than 10 participants in attendance or full scale workshops with 11+ attending, workshops have become a viable and integral part of the 4-H and ANR programs. Stefen has offered to the parish producers an array of workshops pertaining to the areas of beef production, vegetable production, wildlife food plots, and forest management. Workshops that he has offered in the area of 4-H were livestock fitting and grooming, showmanship, poultry, equine, goat, beef, dairy, completing 4-H record books just to name a few. Also, he has offered workshops in all of the following outdoor skills disciplines such as shotgun, rifle, archery, pistol, and muzzleloader in addition to ATV safety, hunting and wildlife identification.

4. PROGRAM DELIVERY EFFECTIVENESS DEMONSTRATED BY EVALUATION, CHANGE, AND ADOPTION

The advent of the electronic form of communication has opened new avenues for educating the producers and informing 4-H members and leaders on recommendations, event information, meetings, field days and program updates. He has been informed by individuals that this is their preferred means of communication. Stefen has used to its fullest potential.

In 2007, Stefen initiated a project to survey St. Helena residents. Not only did he want to see what their attitudes toward the St. Helena AgCenter and its program areas but how many had computers in their homes along with internet access.

A list of all St. Helena registered voters was obtained and ¼ (2,100) were randomly selected. A 23 question survey was mailed to these 2,100 voters with a self-addressed stamped envelope included. About 20% of the questionnaires were completed and return which was an excellent number for this type of survey. The following is some of the results:

- Seventy-one percent of the respondents said they either had a computer in their home with internet or had access to one.
- Sixty-seven percent were aware of the programs offered through the St. Helena AgCenter.
- Thirty-seven stated that they learn about AgCenter events through the newspaper.
- Fifty-four percent were once members of 4-H.
- Forty-three percent had children or grandchildren presently enrolled in 4-H.
- Twenty-seven percent received part of their household income from agriculture.
- Sixty-eight percent have attended at least one of the following in St. Helena Parish: Beef Field Day, Dairy Day, Forestry Field Day, or Garden Day
- Forty-three percent grow a home vegetable garden.
- Fifty-eight percent can, freeze or preserve vegetables or fruit.
- Thirty-eight percent replied that they sew entire garments
- Forty-nine percent pay property taxes
- Race – 74% Caucasian, 25% African American, 1% other
- Gender – 65 % female, 35% male

5. DEVELOPMENT AND PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH-BASED MATERIALS – not all conclusive just highlights

Stefen has conducted presentations at all levels throughout the State 4-H program. He used a variety of presentation methods and teaching styles in his presentations.

- 2005 LSU AgCenter Goat Camp – Presentation included the proper way to fit and show market and breeding goats.
- 2004, 2005, and 2006 – Rocking R Goat Camp – Goat Showmanship 101 – presented proper way to show in 4-H shows.
- Spring 2006 – Southeast Region’s quarterly 4-H Agents training about the LEAP and GEE Science Enrichment lessons that he had written. (Bogalusa)

Classification – What “Class” Are You In?

Students investigated the three domains and the different divisions to classify plants and animals. They also learned the proper use of the dichotomous key.

Ecosystems – Ecosystems...The Great Recyclers

This lesson investigated the roles and cycles of living things in ecosystems. Students discovered how nutrients recycle themselves throughout the entire ecosystem. Also, students discovered how nature is the perfect recycler and only uses what is needed.

Forestry – Walking On the Wild Side

Students discovered exciting new facts about forestry. The trees came alive as the students saw first hand what types of forests exists and how they affect us right here in Louisiana. In addition, they explored forest succession cycles and the plants, animals, and insects that call the forest their home.

Natural Resources and Pollution – Be a Part of the Solution...Stop Pollution

Students explored the natural resources used around the world and right here in Louisiana. Also, they discovered some resources that were being depleted and polluted to the point that we humans are harming our environment. They discover why we call Louisiana “The Sportsman’s Paradise”.

Interactions in the Ecosystems – What’s Your Niche?

This lesson allowed students to investigate animals and their ecosystems. They explored various animals and their habitats or niches. They learned how organisms are linked together with their environment. Also, animal adaptations were detailed allowing students to see the success and failure of a particular species.

Major Ecological Systems – What Biome Are You From?

This lesson allowed students to explore the various terrestrial and aquatic ecological systems. They learned more about the six major land biomes and the three marine biomes. In addition, students investigated entire ecosystems and their physical environments including the abiotic and biotic factors therein.

- 2007 Goat AI Workshop – Presented information on buck collection and proper artificial insemination techniques.
- 2007-08 – Six Character Critter presentations to all St. Helena pre-k and kindergarten students.
- 2006 – 2008 - Florida Parishes 4-H Outdoor Skills Leader Training (Franklinton)
 - 2006 – Presented coordinator discipline and training
 - 2007 – Presented coordinator discipline and assisted with overnight chaperone training presentation.
 - 2008 – Presented the history of 4-H in Louisiana
- 2007 4-H ATV Safety Seminar (Troy, OH) – Presented on the status of the LA ATV safety program.
- 2007 ASI ATV Safety Workshop (Laurel, MS) – Presented demonstration on proper use of ATV riding safety gear

6. MASS MEDIA, WEBPAGE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Mass Media

Stefen has worked to make the programs of the LSU AgCenter as visible as possible to the parish, region and state. He has been successful at marketing stories of 4-H success, events, and activities in local newspapers such as: The St. Helena Echo, Tangi Talk, Amite Tangi Digest, Era Leader, and the Daily News. Stefen has used these resources to advertise for upcoming 4-H events, advertise parish programs, and disseminate results of parish, district and state 4-H competitions along with advertising upcoming ANR field days and clinics.

Webpage Development and Maintenance

Since the internet has become a very useful tool in disseminating information to clientele Stefen has worked diligent in updating the St. Helena AgCenter website with useful and pertinent information. He has even added a channel for the Florida Parish 4-H Outdoor Skills program. This allows users from another parish to access the needed information without leaving their home parish website.

Publications

Stefen co-authors the Cloverland News, a monthly newsletter distributed to all St. Helena 4-H'ers, leaders, and educators. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep youth along with adults up-to-date of local, regional, and state activities. This provides them with ways to get involved in 4-H programs outside of their own club.

He has also authored the Florida Parishes 4-H Outdoor Skills handbook. This is a guide to all the activities, contest and events scheduled for the upcoming year in the Outdoor Skills program. In addition, he has created numerous brochures and flyers dealing with 4-H Shooting Sports, ATV Safety, Wetlands education and 4-H Sportfishing.

7. COOPERATION/COLLABORATION WITH OTHER FACULTY

- *Florida Parishes 4-H Shooting Sports leader training* – In 2006, 2007, and 2008 Stefen organized a statewide leader training. Leaders from across the State and also from Mississippi attended.
- *Multi-parish Livestock Workshop and Clinic* – For 2005, 2006, and 2007 livestock exhibitors from the Southeast region were invited to attend.
- *Southeast Goat Premier Exhibitor Contest* – In 2004 and 2005 setup contest for 4-H'er from St. Helena, Tangipahoa, St. Tammany, St. Helena, and Livingston to better prepare them for the State Contest.
- *State Goat Premier Exhibitor Contest* – In 2006, 2007, 2008 worked with other agents from across the state in providing the Goat Premier Exhibitor contest for 4-H and FFA students.
- *St. Helena/ Tangipahoa Parish Dairy Day Show* – Since 2004 Stefen has coordinated with other Agents to provide this important Dairy Day Show for youth from St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Livingston, and Washington Parishes.
- *Florida Parishes 4-H Outdoor Skills Field Days* - Beginning in 2006, Stefen has coordinated with other Agents to provide eight Field Days.
- *2007 and 2008 Southeast Area 4-H Horse Camp* – This two day camp was conducted to teach 4-H'ers more about the 4-H equine program while improving their horsemanship skills.
- *2007 Southern Regional 4-H Shotgun Shoot* – This event was for only shotgun participants and was held in Lafayette, LA.
- *2007 State 4-H Shooting Sports Event* – Stefen assisted in conducting the State hunting contest.
- *2008 Southern Regional 4-H Shoot* – This regional contest was open to all 4-H'ers south of Rapides Parish and was held in Goodbee, LA. Stefen coordinated contest in the disciplines of shotgun, rifle, archery, muzzleloader, pistol, and hunting.
- *2008 State 4-H Shooting Sports Event* – Stefen coordinated and conducted the State hunting contest.
- *2008 AgMagic* – Stefen taught children about the importance of Louisiana's natural resources
- *2008 4-H ATV Safety Leader Training* – Stefen coordinated with 4-H Agents from East Baton Rouge and St. John Parish to provide statewide leader training in Baton Rouge.

8. EXTERNAL FUNDING, MATERIAL SUPPORT AND GRANTS

EXAMPLE OF THE 2007 FUNDING SUPPORT THAT STEFEN RECEIVED FOR THE FLORIDA PARISHES 4-H OUTDOOR SKILLS PROGRAM

- \$15,000 – Youth Wetlands Week Grant - LSU AgCenter
- \$5200 from Sheriffs (purchased 4-H Outdoor Skills trailer)
- \$6,000 NRA Grant
- \$6,500 - National 4-H ATV Safety Grant
- \$15,000 – Polaris Industries – Four ATV's
- 2,000 – ATV Zone (for ATV Safety Equipment)
- \$2,000 – Louisiana Wild Turkey Federation Grant
- \$500 - Whitetails Unlimited Grant

IN KIND SUPPORT

National Wild Turkey Federation

- Provided lunch for the February 4-H Youth Field Day
- Provided 20 gauge shotgun shells for February 4-H Youth Field Day
- Provided NWTF teacher boxes for Wild Turkey Mobile Educational Modules

Quality Deer Management Association

- Gave set of deer jawbones for White-tailed Mobile Educational Modules
- Provided set of DVD's and CDs for White-tailed Mobile Educational Modules

Bardwell's New Life Taxidermy

- Provided animal skulls for youth science enrichment lessons
- Mount free of charge the 1st place gray and fox squirrels for "Youth Biggest Squirrel" Contest

Florida Parishes Skeet and Gun Club

- Provided facilities for December and March 4-H Youth Shooting Sports Field Days
- Provided targets for December 4-H Youth Field Day

Franklinton Long Range Skeet Club

- Provided facilities for February 4-H Youth Shooting Sports Field Day

Pro Stop Hunting Supply

- Donated prizes for 4-H Wild Game Cookery Contest (Camo Crock Pot and Pot Holders)
- Sponsored camo knives (awards) for Annual 4-H Shooting Sports Award Banquet

Zack's Kennels

- Donated meal for 4-H Shooting Sports Volunteer Leader Training

Kentwood Co-op

- Sporting Clay Targets
- Door Prizes for Florida Parishes 4-H Volunteer Leader Training

9. PARTICIPATION IN AND LEADERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

NCAAA - Member
LCAAA – Member/Recognition and Award Committee
LAE4-HA – Member
NAE4-HA – Member
National Society of Collegiate Scholars - Member

10. CONTINUED COURSEWORK, IN-SERVICE TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Continued Coursework

Human Resource Education 4025 – Principals of Adult Education
Human Resource Education 7905 – Advanced Research Design
Human Resource Education 7001 – Principals of Workforce Development
Human Resource Education 7602 – Program Evaluation Design
Human Resource Education 7122 – Program Development (Extension)
Human Resource Education 7901 – Scientific Methods in Vocational Education
Oceanography and Coastal Science 4010 – Marine Science for Teachers
Wildlife 4010 – Wildlife Management Techniques
Forestry 4036 – Forest Management
Environmental Science 7041 – Environmental Policy

Professional Improvement and In-Service Trainings (4-H) – not all conclusive

2000-2007 – Louisiana Extension Annual Conference – Baton Rouge, LA
2000 New Agents Livestock Training – Baton Rouge, LA
2003 Statewide Service Learning Conference (Alexandria)
2003 Louisiana Association of Extension 4-H Agents Conference – Covington, LA
2005 Content Management Systems Training – Baton Rouge, LA
2007 National 4-H Shooting Sports Training (Coordinator Discipline) VA
4-H Shooting Sports Leader Training (coordinator) – West Feliciana Parish
4-H Shooting Sports Leader Training (archery) – Pollock, LA
4-H Shooting Sports Leader Training (Rife) – Pollock, LA
4-H Shooting Sports Leader Training (shotgun) – Pollock, LA
2007 GPS/GIS Training – LSU/Baton Rouge
2007 ATV Safety Institute Instructor Training – Irving, TX
2007 ATV Safety Training – Baton Rouge, LA
2007 ASI/ATV Rider Course – Bude, MS
2007 4-H ATV Safety Training – Troy, Ohio
2007 LA Character Training – Hammond, LA
2008 4-H University Training – Alexandria, LA
2008 New Agents Livestock Training – Baton Rouge
2000-2008 CPR/First Aid Training

Professional Improvement and In-Service Trainings (ANR) - not all conclusive

2002 Clover Management Seminar – Jackson, MS
2004 and 2005 Showstopper Goat Seminar – Monroe, LA
2004 Beef Workshop and Field Day – Alexandria, LA
Louisiana Association of Extension Agents Conference (2004 and 2006)
2005 Ornamental Horticulture Training – Hammond Research Station
2006 Citrus Grafting Workshop – Hammond, LA
2007 Ag Summary Training – Covington, LA
2008 Tomato Growers Workshop and Field Day – Shreveport, LA
2008 Biodiesel Workshop – LSU/ Baton Rouge
Weed Identification Training – LSU/Baton Rouge

11. PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC POLICY AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

In the midst of the 2005 and 2008 Hurricane seasons, the St. Helena staff rose to the occasion of serving the public and met the needs of local clientele. Stefen along with other staff members provided entertainment and educational opportunities to youth in shelters that were impacted from the storms. In addition, after Hurricane Gustav, Stefen assisted local fire stations in handing out water, MRE's and other needed supplies to hurricane victims. Furthermore, he and his staff offered assistance at the parish Department of Social Services office in aiding residents with recovery efforts.

12. AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- Stefen was part of the St. Helena team that was nominated for the 2003 Diversity In Programming award presented at the AgCenter's diversity initiative.
- Stefen was voted in the top five to receive the LCAAA Achievement Award.

13. MULTI-INSTITUTION, AGENCY AND STATE COLLABORATION

- *Florida Parishes 4-H Shooting Sports Leader Training* – In 2006, 2007, and 2008 Stefen organized a statewide leader training. Leaders from across the State. Mississippi State University recognized this training and sent leaders to participate.
- *Florida Parishes 4-H Shooting Sports Field Days* – Worked closely with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Ducks Unlimited and the Delta Waterfowl Association.
- *2008 Southern Regional Shoot* – Worked with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to coordinate the hunting contest.
- *St. Helena Forestry Field Days* – Stefen combined efforts with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.
- *National 4-H Council ATV Safety Training* – Stefen coordinated with Shelia Cichonis of the National 4-H Council for the ATV Training held in Troy, Ohio.
- *St. Helena Small Landowners Workshop* – Stefen collaborated with Mississippi State University faculty.
- *Department of Social Services and Office of Homeland Security* – in providing services to Hurricane disaster victims after Hurricane Gustav

14. EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Stefen L. Givens received his Bachelor of Science degree from Southeastern Louisiana University and his Master of Science degree in Animal Science with a minor in Forestry and Wildlife from Louisiana Tech in 1997. In addition to his formal degrees Stefen has completed his specialization in the area of Natural Resources. This specialization included course work in the areas of Forestry, Wildlife and environmental science. He is currently on schedule to receive his doctoral degree in the spring of 2010.

15. COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

- *Southeast District 4-H Livestock Show Committee* (2000-present) – Assisted show manager in conducting the goat show.
- *Southeast District 4-H Horse Show Committee* (2000 – present) – assisted show manager in conducting the show and speaking as the voice of St. Helena Parish in voting on rules and changes.
- *Southeast Region 4-H Quarterly Training Planning Committee* (2007 – 08) plan, organized, and implement 4-H quarterly trainings in the Southeast Region.
- *Louisiana Character Education Committee* (2008) – Assisting to restructure and update the Character Education program offered by the LSU AgCenter
- *Louisiana Meat Goat Association (Youth Sub-committee)* (2001- 2004) – Advised the youth organization on 4-H shows, procedures and regulations.

16. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Stefen has been very active with working with the JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship) program not only on a chapter and district level but also at the state level. The JAKES program is dedicated to informing, educating and involving youth in wildlife conservation and the wise stewardship of our natural resources. This program was started as a way to give kids the chance to explore their outdoor world through hundreds of fun events held across North America. During these events, JAKES members get to learn cool skills that they can take to the field to stay safe and have fun. They also learn to be responsible outdoorsmen and women through fishing, camping and hunting seminars taught by legends in the field. In addition they learn to identify plants and animals. It is a great opportunity to teach youth the value of Louisiana's natural resources and the importance of conservation. These children will grow up knowing hunting plays a key role in wildlife management and the dollars they spend to hunt go right back into the state and federal conservation efforts.

Also, Stefen is a certified Hunter Education instructor. As an instructor he teaches on average four classes per year. Anyone can participate in the basic student course free of charge, but only those persons 10 years of age or older are eligible for certification. Upon successful completion of the course, students receive a Louisiana Hunter Education Certification Card that is recognized by all other states. This course requires classroom attendance, passing a written test with a score of 75 percent or better, and completing a live-fire exercise. Major subjects taught in the course are: ethics and responsibility, wildlife management, firearms and ammunition, safety in the field, wildlife identification, and wildlife conservation.

17. EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Washington Parish Fair Association – Mile Branch Committee (1997-2008)
- Louisiana Meat Goat Association – youth sub-committee (2001-2004)
Member (2000 – present)
- Bayou Boer Goat Association – Chairman of Planning Committee (2005 – present)
Founding Member (2005 – present)
- American Boer Goat Association (2000 – present)
- International Boer Goat Association (2000 – present)
- American Dairy Goat Association (2001 – present)
- Louisiana Cattleman Association (2005-2008)
- St. Helena Cattlemen’s Association (2004 – present)
- Washington Parish Cattlemen’s Association (2005 – present)
- St. Helena Forestry Association – Secretary (2000 – 2007)
Member (2000 – present)
- Washington Parish Landowner’s Association (2005 – present)
- Louisiana Forest Association (2005 – present)
- International Hunter’s Education Association (2005 – present)
- Florida Parishes Skeet and Gun Club (2006 -- present)
- Bayou Bounty Hunters Association (2006 – present)
- National Wild Turkey Federation (2006 – present)
- Louisiana Wild Turkey Federation (2006 – present)
- Southeast Longbeards Chapter of the NWTF – Banquet Committee (2006 – present)
Member (2005 - present)
- Tangipahoa Parish Coonhunters Association – Night hunt chairman (1995 – 2001)
Member (1981 – 2004)
- Greater Amite Beagle Club -- Field Trail Chairman (1995 -- 2000)
Member (1985 – present)
- Great Southern Beagle Club (1985 – present)