



Wilbur Wildcat making a healthy smoothie on the MCCE's blender bike at the 2016 Connect2STEM event in downtown Phoenix.



# Maricopa County Cooperative Extension

## March 2016

IMPROVING THE LIVES, COMMUNITIES, AND ECONOMY IN MARICOPA COUNTY

IN THIS ISSUE

## Connect2STEM Event

By Ed Martin

On January 9<sup>th</sup>, Maricopa County Cooperative Extension (MCCE) joined forces with our friends at the Phoenix Biomedical Campus to present Connect2STEM, a daylong event celebrating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Our office set up 5 stations at the downtown Phoenix location to showcase some of our STEM programs.

The 4-H Youth group helped kids learn about the science of plants and seeds. Each youth participant was given a string necklace with a small zip lock bag, a seed, and some moistened raw cotton inside. This activity allowed the kids to watch the roots start to sprout and grow a few days



after the event. Our own Rebecca Senior, along with the help of some very dedicated Master Gardeners, showed the wonders of the Sonoran landscape and even passed out some agave “pups” for people to plant back home. Our health and nutrition group brought the blender bike. This bike has a blender attached that makes a smoothie as you pedal in place. Over 1,700 smoothies were handed out to almost 5,000 attendees. People also learned about water through our Arizona Project WET’s Incredible Journey, a game for kids that helps them learn about water in the environment. Kids made a cool beaded bracelet that represented their journey through the water cycle. Attendees also learned about agriculture through our Agricultural Literacy program. At that display, people had to classify the food we eat as either a vegetable or fruit (a tomato is a fruit – who knew).

It was an incredible day and event. All three state Universities participated, as well as corporations like Google, APS, Intel, and Blue Cross Blue Shield. The Connect2STEM served as the kickoff event for the Arizona SciTech Festival and was generously supported by Cox Communications, The City of Phoenix Public Works, APS, Sundt/DPR, The Boyer Company, and Fry’s Food and Drug.



## Promoting Water Education



## Annual Citrus Clinic



## Program Spotlight: The Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center

## Promoting Water Education in Maricopa County

By Sean Sederstrom

With the ever increasing pressure of extreme drought in the southwestern United States and climate change, educating the public and K-12 students on water issues has never been more important. Arizona Project WET (APW),



a program of the Water Resources Research Center, seeks to do just that through a variety of initiatives including the Arizona Water Festival (AWF) program. APW has been promoting water stewardship and STEM literacy using the AWF program since the year 2000, reaching an average of 5,000 students and 160 teachers each year. Today, the program has deepened the understanding of water in the earth system and Arizona’s water resources for over 90,000 students and 3,900 teachers in 26 communities across the state.

This spring, the Arizona Water Festivals program is set to serve over 5,000 students in Maricopa County alone. In communities such as Litchfield, Goodyear, Peoria, Chandler, and Gilbert, fourth grade students will gather to participate in a series of hands on activities that will help strengthen their knowledge of the water cycle, watershed management, groundwater, and water conservation. These activities give students the fundamental



knowledge necessary to becoming a “water champion.” However, what makes the water festival events special, is their ability to bring together entire communities. The water festival is a collaboration of local municipalities, school districts, and industries, facilitated by local volunteers and water professionals. Bringing together all aspects of the community allows the AWF program to have a lasting impact and promote water sustainability.

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## Annual Master Gardener Citrus Clinic

By Jo Cook

Attendees, Master Gardener volunteers and University of Arizona citrus experts were all smiles at the Maricopa County Master Gardener Citrus Clinic held on January 23, 2016. Master Gardeners invited the public into the world of growing citrus, deciduous fruits, nuts, and dates in the Sonoran Desert. Hosted by Greenfield Citrus Nursery, attendees had a front row seat for a unique

education on what is required for these unique crops to thrive in Valley backyards.

Taking center stage and sharing their expertise with the public were citrus industry experts, including four specialists from the University of Arizona. These experts were setup throughout the orchard at eight stations. Each station provided important, science-based information about the selection, planting and care of citrus, deciduous fruits, nuts, and dates. The stations repeated their presentation five times from 9am - noon.

Thank you to the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Greenfield Citrus Nursery and Maricopa County Master Gardeners for this standout event. Two-hundred people attended the event and reported a great experience with many lessons learned.

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Family Resource Center



**Brain Development**

90% of a child’s brain develops by age 5.



**Funding and Support**

Partners who fund and support the Family Resource Center include First Things First, Roosevelt School District, and Head Start.

FAST FACTS

**20 Minutes**

Reading to a child for 20 minutes a day helps young children’s brains develop connections which help them learn to read.

**Over 11,000**

The Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center has been operating for six years and served over 11,000 individuals in 2015 from the South Phoenix neighborhood.

Contact Information:

The Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center  
602-980-3692

**Program Spotlight:  
The Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center**

Ready, Set, Grow! The University of Arizona’s Maricopa County Cooperative Extension is home to a vibrant family resource center - a center for families and children to bloom and grow. The Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center is located down the street from the main Cooperative Extension Office at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Early Childhood Center in South Phoenix. The mission of the Family Resource Center is to create a community of support and encouragement for families of young children, birth to five, that enhances learning and builds a foundation of success.

The Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center offers a variety of weekly workshops for families with young children. Our Play & Learn workshops are for children and their caregivers to learn songs, finger plays, and new games to enhance their child’s healthy development. Our drop-in, weekly family StoryTime is on Wednesday evenings from 5:00-6:30. Each week, we read a new story aloud to introduce early literacy concepts and do a hands-on project to build school readiness skills. We also offer New Baby Care to help new and expectant parents build skills to care for their newborns and address new parent concerns like helping a fussy baby and safe sleeping habits for infants.

One of the newest workshops offered to families at the Roosevelt Early Childhood Resource Center is the weekly family STEAM workshops (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics). STEAM-themed classes are offered every Monday from 5:00-6:30pm, with each class focusing on at least one of these five aspects of the STEAM curriculum. The classes’ activities entail opportunities to foster independent, cooperative, and higher-order thinking skills, emphasizing the development of your child’s creative and analytical mind. So, if you have young children that are creative, enjoy a mental challenge, and like thinking outside the box, then STEAM classes are for you!



*Children build structures out of marshmallows and dried spaghetti at the FRC developing fine motor skills.*

In addition to weekly workshops, the Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center is open for free play during all hours of operation. The main room in the Center is stocked with all kinds of developmentally appropriate toys designed to interest young children, including building materials, imaginative play, and even musical instruments!

The Roosevelt Family Resource Center also features an Outdoor Classroom on the grounds, giving families a space to stimulate creativity and harmony with nature. The Outdoor Classroom has a variety of learning stations, including nature art, mud kitchen, trike paths and a messy materials area. There are also raised garden beds for families who are interested in planting flowers or vegetables with their children! There is something for every child at the Roosevelt Family Resource Center!

Families with children from birth to 5 are invited to come to the center Monday through Thursday, from 7 am to 7 pm and Friday 7 am to 4 pm. All programs and activities are offered at no charge. For questions or more information about the Family Resource Center or workshops offered, please contact the FRC.

# The Director's Cut

By Ed Martin

As we all bask in the sun and warmer temperatures of the Sonoran Southwest, it is a great time to visit our office and see our gardens of wildflowers, landscape plants, and delicious and enticing vegetables and herbs. Our Master Gardeners, along with our partner organizations, work hard to keep our grounds beautiful and educational. We are continuing our efforts to transform our grounds into a Living Classroom, a place to see, do, and learn. We are also in the midst of our campaign to expand our 4-H Youth program with our *Gro4H* fundraising program. If you would like to donate, or find out more information about the "Gro4H" Campaign, please go to <http://extension.arizona.edu/maricopa-county-gro4h-campaign>. 2016 is off to a fast paced start. In January, we teamed up with our friends at the Phoenix Biomedical Campus and helped present Connect2STEM, an event celebrating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math in Arizona. MCCE had five booths, showcasing our programs in health and nutrition, agricultural literacy, Arizona Project WET, Sonoran gardening, and our 4-H Youth programs. We even brought the blender bike (see Wilbur's photo on the cover) and we were featured on TV during Good Morning Arizona. We served over 1,700 smoothies that day. Attendance numbers are estimated at 5,000 and everyone learned a little more about the great programs we offer at MCCE. We had a series of agricultural meetings, updating growers on the latest research from University of Arizona researchers and Extension faculty. Our annual Citrus Clinic was held out at Greenfield Citrus Nursery (thanks John). Our Master Gardner intern training continues with a very large incoming class and in March, our spring Smartscape course will be taking place. I'm looking forward to a prosperous and productive 2016. Stop by, and see what's new at your Maricopa County Cooperative Extension.



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## ABOUT TOWN

### Arizona Project WET

When: Mar. 12 10:30am - 3:00pm  
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
Target Audience: Teachers of grades K-12  
More Information:  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/arizona-project-wet-1>

### The 2nd Arizona Alfalfa & Forage Crops Workshop

When: Mar 16 8:00am - 3:00pm  
Where: Maricopa Agricultural Center (MAC)  
More Information:  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/2nd-arizona-alfalfa-and-forage-crops-workshop>

### Mayor Tibshraeny's Health Connect Expo

When: March 19 9:00am - 12:00pm  
Where: Tumbleweed Recreation Center  
More Information:  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/2016-mayors-health-connect-expo>

### Liberty 5K Healthy Heart Run

When: Mar. 19 8:30am - 11:30am  
Where: Liberty Elementary School  
Target Audience: Family & Friends  
More Information:  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/liberty-5k-healthy-heart-run>

### Brain Builders for Life Training

When: April 2nd & 9th 8:00am - 5:00pm  
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
More Information:  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/brain-builders-life-maricopa-county-april-2-2016>

### 2016 Walk Across Arizona for the Health of It

When: Team walking begins: April 3 - Ends: May 28  
Where: Throughout Maricopa County  
Contact: [eschnoll@email.arizona.edu](mailto:eschnoll@email.arizona.edu)  
More Information:  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/2016-walk-across-arizona-health-it>

### L TSAE Learning the Signs/Act Early Autism Training - For Child Care Professionals

When: April 16 9:00am - 3:00pm  
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
More Information and Registration:  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/early-development-and-delays-learn-signs-autism-and-act-early-training-o>



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES

Cooperative Extension

Maricopa County

### Maricopa County Cooperative Extension Monthly Event Calendar

<http://extension.arizona.edu/calendar/month?ctid%5B%5D=16>



Check us out at:

<https://www.facebook.com/MaricopaCountyCooperativeExtension>

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