

News From Your County Agent by Marcel Valdez, CEA-ANR Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Zavala County

I am saddened to report the passing of Fordyce Clay "Jack" Kingsbery this past week. Jack was a long time supporter of the Zavala County 4-H program and a long time member of the Zavala Agricultural Exposition (ZAE) where he served in several capacities. I remember Jack coming in my office in December of 1999 to provide me with a signed copy of his first book "Cowboy Wrecks & Rattlesnakes" tales of a Texas Brush Country Rancher. It made for some interesting reading I might add. Jack was a devoted rancher and loved to go out to his ranch and talk about how he planted KR bluestem grass which has questionable grazing quality for some around these parts, but Jack swore that his cattle were kept alive in hard times by this grass. Jack will truly be missed and I join the rest of the 4-H families in Zavala County in extending our most sincere condolences to his wife Evelyn and the entire family of Mr. Jack Kingsbery, May He Rest In Peace.

4-H Horse Validation Process To Be Completed by May 1

As a reminder, horse validation via 4-H Connect is required for horses shown at the District and State 4-H Horse Shows. Horses must be owned and validated by the 4-H member, their parents, grandparents, legal guardian, or sibling by May 1st of each year. A horse that has been validated before must be re-validated (and paid) each year, if it is to be shown. The validation of multiple horses is encouraged, so the 4-H member has options, in case of an unforeseen accident, injury, or death of one of the horses. If we have anyone that might be interested in participating in the District 12 4-H Horse show and you need assistance in completing the 4-H horse validation process contact the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883.

GPS Course Coming to San Antonio This Month

The Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources (IRNR) will conduct an Introduction to ArcGIS 10 training course March 30-31 in San Antonio. The course will be 8 a.m.-5 p.m. both days at IRNR's San Antonio office, 1919 Oakwell Farms Parkway, Suite 100. The course teaches the range of functionality of the software and the essential tools for visualizing, creating, managing and analyzing geographic data, according to Amy Snelgrove, an IRNR program manager and instructor for the course.

Snelgrove has both Certified GIS Professional and Comptia Certified Technical Training certifications. The course will use a hands-on approach to emphasize practice with ArcMap and ArcCatalog to perform common GIS tasks and workflows. Participants will learn the tools for creating and managing geographic data, displaying data on maps in different ways, and combining and analyzing data to discover patterns and relationships. By the end of the course, they will be prepared to work with the software on their own.

The registration form is available at irnr.tamu.edu/arcgis. Classes are limited to 12 participants. On-site training can also be scheduled by contacting Snelgrove at amy-snelgrove@tamu.edu. For more information, visit the [website](#) or email Snelgrove or contact the Zavala County office of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 830-374-2883.

Tip of the Week: Join The World for World Water Day

World Water Day will be recognized on March 22 all around the globe. The United Nations (UN) General Assembly first designated March 22 as World Water Day in 1993, creating an international observance and an opportunity to learn more about water-related issues and take action. Even though this is a worldwide event there are several activities we can all do at the local level as well.

This year's World Water Day theme is water and jobs, to "show how enough quantity and quality of water can change workers' lives and livelihoods — and even transform societies and economies," according to the UN's [World Water Day website](#).

The Texas Water Resources Institute(TWRI)(A Part of the Texas A&M System) has some suggestions on how to learn about and conserve water in celebration of World Water Day.

1. Set up a simple rainwater harvesting or graywater system at your home. It may be easier than you think! [Rainwaterharvesting.tamu.edu](#) provides a host of resources for a variety of rainwater harvesting systems, from basic to advanced. TWRI's graywater reuse page covers how to recycle graywater and use it for irrigation.
2. As spring approaches and it's time to start making garden and landscape plans for the season, use Earth-Kind Landscaping principles to make your home lawn and garden more water-efficient. I have featured article about Earth-Kind in the past including xeriscaping, using water conserving plants in the landscapes and similar topics.
3. Follow TWRI on social media, where we share water conservation tips and science-based water news every day! You can find them on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#).
4. In the spirit of World Water Day's 2016 theme, if you're looking for an internship or job in water or natural resources, two helpful resources are [greatjobs.tamu.edu](#) and [wfscjobs.tamu.edu](#).

Water is very important to us. Without it our bodies don't work, our crops don't grow, our gardens don't bloom, our fish don't swim and our pets don't thrive. Our industries and communities can't grow and expand. In fact, just about everything we do in our daily lives — directly or indirectly— depends upon water.

The earth is largely covered by water. But the truth is, only about 2% of that water is drinkable. And, with a constantly growing population, that small amount of water is being shared by more and more people, as well as having to supply all of the water needed for agriculture, manufacturing, power generation, our cities and neighborhoods, too.

We have taken our precious water supplies for granted...for too long. Now, water — quantity and quality — is a global issue. That's why we have to learn to be better stewards of this finite resource...and learn to make informed decisions about how we use it. So on World Water day when we turn on the faucet...we need to ask ourselves, "Is it worth the water?", have a great week conserving water. M.V.

February 29-March 4, 2016.