Mitchell County Farm Bureau

Agricultural Science Fair a Tremendous Success!

By Sharon Rowland
Mitchell County

More than 200 students from Greenlee and Deyton Elementary Schools explored science during the annual Agricultural Science Fair presented by Mitchell County Farm Bureau Women's Committee. Each of the students had an opportunity to visit science stations for about 10 minutes each. Most of the sessions were "hands-on" and were presented by professionals and community experts. Deyton Principal, Brandon Birchfield, commented on the quality of the sessions that were presented saying "Students explored unique topics at each station and began to understand how science will apply in all future careers. Our teachers and students are excited to be a host for the Agricultural Science Fair each year."

Plant Science topics were shared at a Greenhouse station by Chad Hudgins, Mitchell High Agricultural Educator, and Christmas Trees that were taught by grower Rodney Buchanan. Mitchell County's 200 growers produced more than $860,000 in income, ranking 7th in the state. Cooperative Extension Agent Shane Biddix shared his knowledge about producing Blueberries in the Mitchell County community. Josh Miller from the NC Forest Service discussed his roles in managing trees and forests in the county. The students were very interested when Miller shared how they fight forest fires and how important it is to watch fire warnings. Teachers and FFA members from Mitchell were also on hand to help escort the students to each station.

Animal Science was very enjoyable according to the students who participated. Cooperative Extension Agent, Michelle South brought her Belgian Horse, and Harley and John Masters from Roan View Farms introduced a family of goats. Getting to pet these animals created excitement for the participants. Toecane Beekeepers Association members Mary Shelton and Tammy Hardy brought a hive of bees, and the students were cautiously intrigued to watch the bees interact.

Two of the sessions were created by Courtney Aycock and Alex English on the mining industry in Mitchell County. They shared some of the scientific procedures that help Quartz Corporation produce materials that are part of every electronic device in the world. They also shared that the white sand on the Augusta National Golf Course where the Masters' Tournament is played each year is mined in Mitchell County.

Ciji Dellinger led a station on Farm Safety. She serves as a nurse for Hospice and Palliative Care of the Blue Ridge and was able to apply her nursing experience as she talked about safety.

Five student teachers from Lees-McRae University provided excellent agriscience stations. They were under the supervision of Dr. Nancy Gryder, the Education Professor for the students.

Stations that included sampling food were also very popular. Cooperative Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Education, Katie Elkins, created a hit as she offered the participants different foods that they could sample. Some even realized that they liked the foods they had never sampled before the Science Fair. Shanias Pelka, Farm Bureau Women's Committee Member and Owner of Seven Springs Farm taught nutrition by offering samples of unique teas and food products. At Sharon Runion Rowland's station on Strawberry Production and Utilization, the students learned about how strawberries are grown and how they may be used. They sampled fresh strawberries and homemade muffins with strawberries in them. Students also realized that strawberries are in many other foods.

The Agricultural Science Fair is produced by members of the Mitchell County Farm Bureau Women's Committee in consultation with the State Agriculture in the Classroom Director, Heather Willoughby Morton. Chairing the Women's Committee is Barbara Harrell, from Harrell Hill Farms. Joining her were committee members Sheila Speight, Sherry Bartlett, Wendy Cannon, and Gloria Huskins. Mitchell County Public School Curriculum Coordinator, Jennifer Miller, was a wonderful addition to the team and helped develop the rotations and station details.

The next Agricultural Science event is being planned for September 12th at Gouge Elementary School and will provide science stations like those offered at Dayton.

If you ask 50 advisors the best way to retire you will get 50 different opinions.

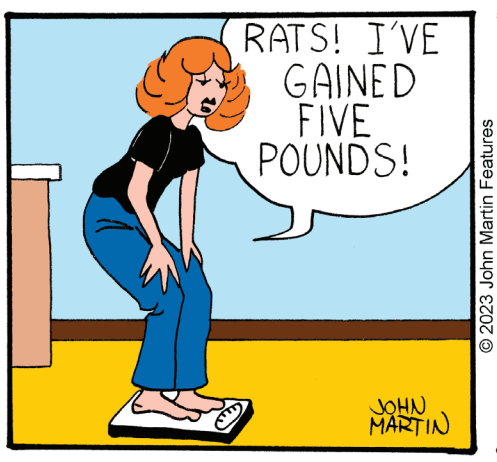
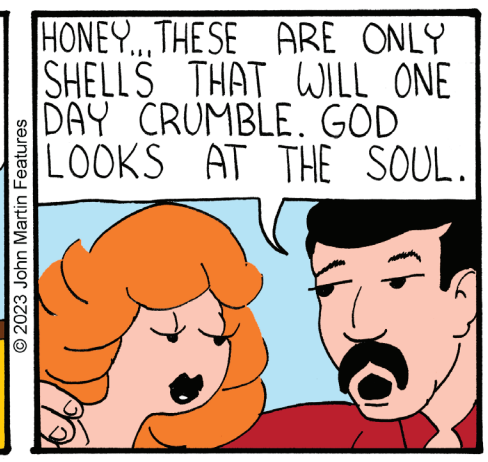
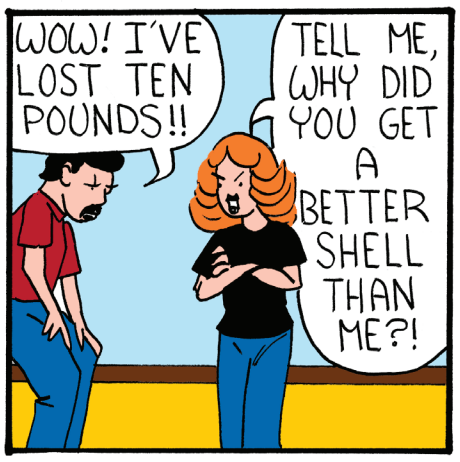
If you ask academia the best way, based on math and science they will tell you there are not 50 ways, but 1 way.

To find out the one way register for this webinar.

retirerm.com/events

68 South Main Street, Suite 200
Marion NC 28752
Steve@retirerm.com, Morgan.wylie@retirerm.com

Steven W. Gaito
CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER ™
Less Taxes / More Retirement

Social Security Analysis / Long Term Care Planning
Tax Efficient Retirement Planning

Retirement Resource Management
Education, Analysis and Consulting