Karen DeZarn has been a member of NEAFCS for seventeen years, since 1993. She worked in Indiana for sixteen years at both the county and state levels and is now the county extension agent for Lampasas County Texas.

A. Program Accomplishments -

While new to both the state and county, she has been instrumental in starting the Health and Wellness Coalition of Lampasas County in collaboration with the State Department of Health in order to administer countywide health assessment surveys. The forums are scheduled and the first assessment will take place in February 2011. These results will determine what health issues will be addressed in the coming years.

Recently, on December 8, 2010, Karen hosted a Child Safety Seat Checkup event. This event showed a great partnership between Texas AgriLife Extension Service Passenger Safety, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Lampasas County, the First Baptist Church of Lampasas, and the Texas Department of Transportation. What began with many of the children arriving somewhere between inappropriately in their seat belt to totally unrestrained saw all of the parents leave the event better educated about their children’s safety and truly appreciative of the education they received.

Child Seat Safety Event Statistics:
0 children arrived correctly restrained
15 children arrived unrestrained or inappropriately in a seat belt
39 new child safety seats were distributed
44 child safety seat inspections were conducted
The economic benefits are estimated at $1,988.00 per child aged 0 to 4 and $2,347.00 per child aged 4 to 8 for new seats distributed, and $558.00 per child for seat misuse with an assumed 75% continued use. Based on this formula, the total economic impact for the forty-four inspections conducted on 12/8/10 is $64,776.00.

Karen’s 2010 Texas AgriLife Extension outcome summary was for the Better Living for Texans program, for which she supervises an assistant. When they began the BLT program, a majority of the clients were not practicing handwashing or general kitchen cleanliness. Although participants did not intend to practice these two behaviors very often immediately after the program ended, there were noticeable improvements identified thirty days later. 52% of the twenty-five respondents reported that BLT was their first exposure to Texas AgriLife Extension.

Average monthly out-of-pocket food expenses reported by participants:

- Before BLT: $134.79
- After BLT: $99.58
- Estimated monthly savings: $35.21

The percentage of participants who rated their ability to prepare nutritious meals as either “good” or “very good” was 76% before BLT (pre-survey). Thirty days after the program ended it was 92%. For these participants, 96.0% of them rated the BLT program as “excellent.” Karen’s assistant went from part-time to full-time beginning October 2010.

The second outcome summary for 2010 was for the program Do Well Bell with Diabetes. The DWBW program was conducted in April, 2010 in Lampasas County with twenty-one registered adults. Agents conducted a series of five 2½ hour educational classes comprising nine topics. The topic lessons were: What is Diabetes, Nutrition, One Diabetes Diet, Managing Your Blood Glucose, Nutritional Labels, Exercise, Eating Out, Medicines, and Preventing and Managing Complications. Along with educational sessions, a sample dish and its recipe were shared with the class at four of the sessions. These classes
were taught by a dietician, a nutritionist, a public health improvement specialist, a pharmacist, an Extension agent, and a podiatrist. The results showed:

- 87.9% increased their knowledge of the risk factors for diabetes
- 63.6% increased their understanding of the disease
- 54.5% reported that they have a better understanding of how often blood glucose should be checked
- 69.7% reported that they changed their diets and increased their physical activity
- 100% were mostly or completely satisfied with the presenters’ knowledge.

B. Professional Improvement -

Karen successfully completed a non-credit Extension Evaluation graduate course at Purdue University in 2004 under Susan Barkman. She participated in the Rural Development Study Tour of Ireland in 2002 with fifteen other extension educators, and upon returning she presented numerous programs about how small and large businesses succeeded in Ireland in both rural and city settings. From 2005-2009 Karen coordinated six Indiana Family Impact Seminars and helped write and distribute the legislative briefing reports. The topics were: Assuring Positive Futures for Indiana Youth, Gambling, Financing Healthcare, Youth in the Workforce, Reducing Dropouts and Increasing Educational Attainment, P-12 Education, and the Unbanked. Numerous times over the years she has been a guest speaker at county annual extension board meetings where she has highlighted the Family and Consumer Sciences accomplishments. Karen was a member of the Purdue Extension Leadership Team and attended North Central NELD in 2002-2003 and LEAD 21 in 2005. She was honored to have been chosen to participate in these life changing programs. She is a certified instructor for MBTI Step I and II and for COLORS. She rewrote, taught, and scheduled instructors for a nine part leadership training called i-LEaD, Indiana Leadership Education and Development. This was a featured program for the Indiana Extension Homemakers and was also taught at county leadership programs and at leadership retreats. Karen was ServSafe certified in Indiana and is currently a certified Food Protection Management presenter in
Texas, having recently taught the program locally. She is a CASA board member for the Highland Lakes CASA program helping to raise funds for this worthy cause. Over the years she has been a CASA volunteer, and also as a county Extension Educator worked contractually with the courts in Indiana to begin a CASA program.

C. Honors and awards received -
For helping the county Extension Homemakers begin a cooperative food distribution program, Karen received the Indiana Extension Education Association Innovator Award in 2001. She received an award for her fifteen year service with Purdue University, and was honored upon her retirement at Purdue by the Indiana Extension Homemakers and their chorus the Melody Makers of Indiana, when they organized a statewide gathering and performed solely for her.

D. Professional association membership and participation -
Karen attended professional association meetings at the state level for seventeen years in a row. Since residing in Texas she has attended meetings at the district level, and as the Assistant Program Leader with Purdue Extension she often coordinated the association meetings held during the fall annual conferences. Karen attended four national meetings: in Rapid City, South Dakota 1995, at Galaxy I in Cincinnati, Ohio 1998, in Nashville, Tennessee 2002, and Galaxy III in Indianapolis, Indiana 2008. She participated in the North Central Program Leader meetings at two national meetings, and attended North Central Program Leader meetings at three locations. She has held offices at the area level of chair, vice chair, and secretary. In 2005 she was on a national committee for awards and recognitions. She helped choose exhibitors for the national meeting. Karen helped coordinate the 2008 Priester conference in Indianapolis by receiving the applications for presentations and coordinating their slots for the schedule. Karen is honored to be considered for the NEAFCS Distinguished Service Award.