

editor's page

Welcome, Joan!

Our new editor is Dr. Joan Thomson, coordinator of Staff Development and assistant professor of Rural Sociology, The Pennsylvania State University. Joan's educational background in journalism and mass communications (University of Wisconsin), her professional teaching and Extension experiences (mostly in rural development, communication, and administration), her extensive list of publications, and the many honors she has earned provide a firm foundation for her editorial role in the next two years.

Welcome, Joan. I'm confident that your term will be as rich, as rewarding, and as enjoyable as mine has been.



Dr. Gibbs:

Julia, when I married you, do you know what one of my terrors was in getting married?

Mrs. Gibbs:

Pshaw! Go on with you!

Dr. Gibbs:

I was afraid we weren't going to have material for conversation more'n 'I'd last us a few weeks. I was afraid we'd run out and eat our meals in silence, that's a fact. You and I've been conversing for 20 years now without any noticeable barren spells.

Mrs. Gibbs:

Well, good weather, bad weather, 'tain't very choice, but I always manage to find something to say.

I was reminded of this exchange from Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* as I began to prepare for this, my last Editor's Page. Two years ago, I wondered how I'd find something to write about on this page every other month. Now, here's my list of topics I wanted to discuss, but didn't get "a round tuit."

- The futures field and Extension long-range planning.
- The need for a national center for Extension study.

- The impact of the recent report by an ECOP task force on accountability/ evaluation.
- Implications of the recent West Virginia study on program evaluation in Extension.
- Educational technology: its impact on Extension methodology.
- Citizen involvement in Extension program development.
- Lifelong learning as central to global educational systems. Does Extension employ an "empty vessel" approach; that is, is our mission to "fill" educational needs? Or should our approach be to teach both adults and children to be self-directed learners?
- The balance between technical and human aspects of Extension programming.
- Nostalgia. (We "veterans" have earned a right to some.)

But now space has run out. So, from now on, I'll have to compete with all those other writers when I submit manuscripts.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized, with a horizontal line under the "y".