

# Program Accomplishments

University of Illinois Extension  
Madison-St. Clair Unit  
September - October 2008

## University of Illinois Extension Madison-St. Clair Unit

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## Community Development

### Developing Community Leadership

- Mayor Brian Funk is very proud of the volunteer group **Fayetteville: Gateway to the Kaskaskia** who recently won a Governor's Hometown Award. In a time of reduced public resources, volunteers have organized in many communities to contribute to their town's economic progress and quality of life. By taking the initiative on a project, volunteers are completing projects which otherwise would not be accomplished. The Governor's Home Town Awards program recognizes the outstanding successes that volunteers have made in their communities in addressing local needs.



In late 2005, the Village of Fayetteville decided to make a change for the better. University of Illinois Extension and the Village committed to improving the appearance of the community. The beautification work that has been completed to date is a result of the projects and goals outlined by the U of I students with residents through the Community Matters project. The new flowers, trees and updated buildings show the dedication of many hardworking residents of Fayetteville. The award signage in town serves to tell passers-by that this community is involved in their future.

Community Development educator Jim Becker along with County Director Janet Burnett are now working to implement these ideas.

### Local Government Education Programs

- Illinois communities are dealing with many changes and local government officials are challenged with obtaining necessary information to make informed decisions regarding policy and delivery of services. To help elected officials deal with these issues, University of Illinois Extension offers a variety of educational programs to local government officials in Illinois.

This local government education series addresses issues impacting counties and communities in Illinois. A legislative update, on October 9, provided all local government officials with a review of current **State and Federal legislative issues**. Three county board members attended.

## Consumer and Family Sciences

### Lowering Fat, Sugar and Salt in Diet

- The **Family Nutrition Program** serves lower income families in the area teaching food budgeting, food safety, and healthy meals. 1,950 individuals participated in the two county area during the months of September and October. Participants learn safe food handling, apply nutritional knowledge and increase their confidence in the ability to prepare nutritious foods for themselves and their families. Youth, seniors, and adults learn the importance of fruits and vegetables as well as the need for exercise and that's not exercising the remote control button!

While at Holy Rosary School, Maritza from our staff was stopped by the parents of three children from the summer cooking classes held at Holy Rosary. They wanted her to know how the children want to help in the kitchen with the cooking now and also help with the clean up. When going to the grocery store, the children remind them to buy healthy food. They shared; *We are very happy that you came and taught our children how to eat healthy. We hope you'll be able to come again.*

### • Helping others teach children

Healthy eating was the topic at the St. Clair County Elementary Teacher's institute. Classroom activities to assist them in teaching children the importance of healthy eating were demonstrated.

### Food Safety

- According to the Soap and Detergent Association 2007 Clean Hands Report Card, 87% students know that cleaning hands regularly is the number one way to prevent colds and flu. However, only 22% seldom or never wash their hands when they use the bathroom, 31 % before eating lunch and 41% after coughing and sneezing. That rates a D rating for our youth.



The **Clean Hands, Healthy Bodies** program teaches this simple concept. In September and October, volunteers taught 1,688 third and fourth graders how to properly wash their hands through the **Clean Hands, Healthy Bodies** program in partnership with the Madison and St. Clair County Health Departments. Three new volunteers were added to the roster after receiving training in September.

- If their Food Safety Manager Certificate expires this year, they needed to attend the **Refresher Course for Food Handlers**. This course focuses on sanitation, health, personal hygiene, and safe food handling practices. Presented by U of I Extension educators, this course meets the re-certification standards required by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Thirteen participants in Madison County rated the course as exceptional.

### Improving the Management of Family Resources

- Have you ever wanted to buy something online, but just weren't sure if you should? University of Illinois Extension offered a unique workshop to help consumers find the answers. **E-shopping: Tips, Tricks and Transactions** helped the participants become aware of the advantages and disadvantages of shopping online as well as through catalogs. They learned how to safeguard personal information and understand electronic payment options. Lois E. Smith, Consumer and Family Economics Educator with University of Illinois Extension presented the program providing several shopping tips and answering questions about purchasing items in non-traditional ways.

- **Planning for What if?** reached 129 participants with tools they can use to aid in the event of disability, incapacity or death. Whether assets total \$60 or \$60,000,000 consumer need to have a plan for who will pay the bills and handle finances, who will make decisions about medical care, how property will be distributed and how dependents will be cared for. Insurance, wills, trusts, Social Security, powers of attorney, and Medicaid were explained as tools for preparing for these events.

## 4-H Youth Development

### Expansion of 4-H

- **New 4-H leaders** are crucial in the expansion of 4-H. Amy Roe, 4-H Volunteer Leader, has just formed a new Cloverbud group in Madison County called the Prairie Youth Cloverbuds. This group joins the Prairie Youth 4-H club in meeting at the Fire Hall in Prairietown.
- **4-H Awards Celebrations** are held each fall to recognize outstanding accomplishments by 4-H youth during the previous program year. Individual county awards are given in the following categories: animal science; plants and soils; community development and global awareness; environment and natural resources; food, nutrition and health; home and family; mechanics and technology, and personal development. Outstanding leadership, both youth and adult, are recognized as well. **The Madison County 4-H Awards Festival** was attended by seventy-five people. Members Katie and Krista Raymond, Alhambra were recognized for their outstanding achievements in The Illinois Award Program and their trip to National Congress in November
- **The St. Clair County Achievement Night** was attended by 150 people. State Fair Superior, Award of Excellence, and Best of Show winners were acknowledged. Awards in the areas of individual and club participation, outstanding 1<sup>st</sup> year member, secretary, and treasurer, as well as numerous other categories, were provided.

### Building Leadership in Youth and Adults

- University of Illinois Extension educators Judy Taylor and Dana Homann are working with staff at Parkside Primary Center, Bethalto and Lewis and Clark Elementary in Wood River to prepare the **Illinois State Schools of Character Award**. Four Extension professionals, including the above, were trained and have signed a memorandum of understanding with Character Education Partnership and National Schools of Character to carry out the state program. Stanford McDonnell of McDonnell-Douglas (Boeing) was a founding member of Character Education Partnership as well as endowing a professorship at University of Missouri in Character Education.
- To better prepare for the adult world, youth from the Madison-St. Clair Unit attended the second annual **Southern Illinois Leadership Convention**. “Polishing the Diamond of Leadership” was the theme for the high school leadership convention sponsored by University of Illinois Extension. Youth attended the event to better prepare for modern leadership in today’s world. They participated in workshops on communication, mentoring, facets of personality, making meetings fun, and sacrifices and rewards of leadership. Participants also experienced team building activities, two community service projects, and great speakers such as Dana Eikenberg, a past 4-H member and now Head Coach of the Southern Illinois University-Carbondale Women’s Basketball Team. Youth participants also prepared action plans for inclusion in a county youth leadership role they’d like to assume.

### After School Programming

- The **ExCEL Afterschool program** just began its 5<sup>th</sup> year of a 5 year grant. The new additions to our program, specifically martial arts, have been a huge hit with the students, parents, and staff. Everyone has been commenting on the improved discipline and respect

from the students. Cahokia ISAT results for 2008 show gains at both sites and they are continuing to meet average yearly progress. The Madison ISAT results displayed improvement over the previous year. We are extremely excited about the release of the new request for proposal. We will be submitting a proposal for the program as it exists at elementary sites. Additionally, we will be submitting a proposal for the Cahokia and Madison Middle Schools. Grantees will be announced in May 2009 and we hope to be on the list for both 4-H Afterschool grant programs.

- The 4-H Afterschool Program at Coolidge Middle School in Granite City has been underway since August 18. A JCPenney 4-H Afterschool grant continues to strengthen a partnership with the Coolidge Middle School Teen Reach program. **The 4-H Teens Reaching for Success** program consists of twenty students participating in a variety of activities designed to develop leadership skills through a science and technology and theatre arts focus. Youth began the year by participating in a variety of teambuilding activities designed to strengthen their teamwork, communication, and leadership skills.

In the Spring of 2008, this 4-H program began a community service project for the park district by identifying trees using GPS technology. This fall, youth embarked on phase 2 of this project. Since new youth have joined in this effort, more experienced youth taught newer members how to use the GPS units through hands-on geocaching activities. These newer students have been using their learning in identifying the trees. The more experienced 4-Hers have also taken on many leadership roles during the training process. Furthermore, much cooperation and contribution to the group effort is witnessed as eleven students worked towards their goal of identifying 85 trees in phase 2.

Within this same afterschool program, another group of students have been learning to assess critical issues affecting youth and develop and conduct performances to address these issues. In preparation for a play performance, ten students brainstormed problems they face at school. They identified bullying, relationships, secrets, rumors, stereotyping, and trouble makers. After brainstorming, the students were excited about writing a script, which included resolutions to these problems. Following this performance for an audience of over fifty adults and children, many new students expressed an interest in joining. The theater group quickly jumped into a new project and began writing commercials for the Lights on Afterschool Dinner. One student in particular was very proud of the commercial she wrote for the group. She especially enjoyed having more of a leadership role during the play performances as she provided the other students with direction and tried to help them understand their parts. This public speaking leadership role gives her more confidence as she struggles with a speech impediment.

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

### Watershed Nature Center

- **Field trips** at the watershed are one educational method for students to learn about their environment. Seventeen home school students, 137 4<sup>th</sup> grade students from Mascoutah, and four classes of Bethalto Parkside 3<sup>rd</sup> graders came to hike, dipnet for macroinvertebrates, and examine aquatic organisms under microscopes.
- Thirty Girl Scouts from Granite City, O'Fallon, Edwardsville and Belleville participated in Girl Scout Badge Day to complete activities about bats and earn the **Going Batty Badge**.
- Sometimes learning takes place while you're working for others. The fall volunteer workday brought together more than 50 individuals including a Daisy Scout troop, students from Metro East Lutheran High School, Edwardsville and SIUE, and other members of the community to work on trail maintenance and invasive species control.

## Inspiring an Appreciation for Nature

- The **Master Naturalist** program is volunteers dedicated to providing opportunities to understand the natural beauty and rich history of nature in Illinois. Ten natural resource enthusiasts from Madison and St. Clair counties join eight others from the surrounding counties of Monroe, Randolph, and Clinton to make up the first Master Naturalist program in our area. In addition to an introduction to the program including skill-building activities, the participants had lessons on Botany, Herpetology, and Ornithology, including a field trip to the Watershed Nature Center and sessions at SWIC in Belleville. Lessons in October included Ecological Concepts, Entomology, Mammalogy, and field trips to Fults Hill Prairie in Monroe County, Swain Woods in Randolph County and Carlyle Lake in Clinton County for sessions on grasslands, forests, and wetlands.
- What does the word “prairie” bring to mind? For some, the word may bring up images of settlers in covered wagons. For others, old movies or television programs may come to mind. And, some may even have fond memories of actually being on a prairie.



Prairie landscapes supported a mosaic of habitats including wetlands, forests, savannas, sand dunes cliffs, ravines, and even swamps. Once covering 22 million acres, today only 2,200 acres of high-quality prairie is left in Illinois.

Local participants joined Ken Robertson, prairie expert and author of the *Tallgrass Prairie in Illinois* website, and Don Gardener, prairie restorationist, as they presented a synopsis of the ecology, history and diversity of prairies along with information on restoring prairies to the landscape at the **Introduction to Prairies Seminar**.

- **Nature Day**, an annual event presented in a field trip format for the fifth grade students of seven local schools at the Firemen’s Park in Alhambra. Students are divided into small groups and assigned to stations, with a different topic at each station. Programs and information presented parallel with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade science curriculum.

Seven schools participated: Highland (197), Grantfork, (42), St. Jacob (36), St. Paul’s, Troy (11), Trinity-St. Paul, Hamel (9), Woodland in Edwardsville (175), and Westminster Academy (3) for a total student attendance of 473 with 88 chaperones.

Educational sessions were provided by 57 professionals from around the State, as well as local agencies and high school classes.

Teachers and presenters evaluations were very satisfactory. But, the real measure of success for this event is the youth evaluations. The following are just a few examples of how profound an impact this event can have on youth.

When asked for one new thing they learned at Nature Day, students replied, *I learned more at Nature Day than at school. Nature Day was great! We got to learn about nature and how to respect it! My favorite was the animal session, because some of those animals I’ve never seen or heard about and I got to touch a deer mouse. Some students were motivated to take ideas into action—It was an awesome/sweet field trip. It gave me a lot of neat ideas you should do yourself.*

Some events adults take for granted. One event that always has a great impact is fishing. *The best session was when we went fishing, because I got my*



*first fish.* That experience was taken a step further when this student was motivated to keep water clean. *I learned more things about fishing like new kinds of fish, and silica sand is made from glass and how to preserve lakes for fish.*

One of the goals of Nature Day is for the youth to learn information and then be excited enough about it to share it with others. These students plan to do just that! *I will tell my family how to recycle by the symbols on the things. I will tell people that trees are very important because they're home for a lot of animals. I would tell my family; did you know that millions of things are made of oil?*

*Students say it was fun, exciting, cool, and educational. That is success.*

**Nature Day** is sponsored by University of Illinois Extension and Madison County CAREE. Special appreciation goes to the Highland Optimists and the Highland Rotary for financial sponsorship.

## Home Horticulture Education

Master Gardeners volunteer for Extension in the community in a wide variety of ways including sharing their knowledge through **community presentations**. Presentations in September and October include

- Master Gardeners Joe Knoll and Mary Mallott led the Summit School, Collinsville 4<sup>th</sup> graders on an educational Nature Walk and Garden Tour at Willoughby Farm, Collinsville. **Willoughby Farm** is a project of the Collinsville Area Recreation District in which we partner.
- Olin Retirees requested to learn about **Getting Garden Ready for Fall**. 64 participants appreciated the information shared by Master Gardener Bill Klopfenstein of Edwardsville.
- Shell Credit Union Retirees brushed up on **Fall Vegetable Gardening** with Bill Klopfenstein.
- Pride in Alton hosted Master Gardener Ron Smith as he shared his knowledge on **Pruning Woodies and Perennials in Late Summer**.
- **Minor Spring Bulbs** brought 15 to the Troy Library hosting Master Gardener Ellen Eden.
- Master Gardener Don Kniepkamp discussed **Prairie Plants** with thirteen members of the Lebanon Garden Club.
- The Living Well Conference, formerly Seniorama, in Belleville requested Master Gardener Jan Villhard to talk with attendees about **Body Smart Gardening**.
- A two-year old partnership with WBGZ, Alton includes a one hour monthly talk show on horticulture. Master Gardener Benna Denué coordinates this effort along with being host. Invited guests join Benna for the topic of the month. In September Julie Tyberendt, 4-H Community worker joined Benna talking about 4-H horticulture and what it has to offer. Master Gardener and coordinator of the Village of Godfrey Garden Ron Smith discussed **What is Going on in the Village Garden** in October along with promoting the upcoming Master Gardener classes.
- 125 **Maryville School** 2<sup>nd</sup> graders and 40 adults came to Willoughby Farm for an educational tour of the gardens and natural resources.
- The Four Seasons Garden program continued this fall with three sessions reaching 37. Kari Houle, U of I Extension horticulture educator, focused her audience on properly **identifying trees** and caring for them to help ensure a long life. Chris Hilgert, U of I Extension horticulture educator, presented the program **Going Green with Evergreens** with participants learning about hardy, low-maintenance evergreens that can beautify your home. Duane Friend, U of I Extension natural resources educator, assisted participants in learning how to start and maintain a **compost** pile resulting in nature's *black gold* next spring.



## Urbanization: Moving Away from Agricultural Roots

- **Madison County C.A.R.E.E. (Conservation, Agricultural Resources, and Environmental Education)** has evolved into a program that fits hand-in-hand with the 4<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum throughout Madison County. **History of Illinois**, the first unit of CAREE reached approximately 57 fourth grade classrooms with another 40 classes utilizing agri-science kits with the most popular being apples and pumpkins. In October, **corn and soybeans** was the topic traveling from school to school reaching 79 classes with another 27 classes uses the agri-science kits. CAREE is a co-sponsored program with Madison County Farm Bureau, Madison County Soil and Water Conservation Service, and University of Illinois Extension.

**Orange areas are one of four program areas of focus for University of Illinois Extension.**

**Blue is the identified issue for Madison-St. Clair unit within the program area.**

**Black describes the programmatic activity conducted within the two-month period.**