

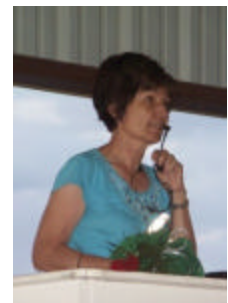
Program Accomplishments

University of Illinois Extension
Madison-St. Clair Unit
July - August 2009

4-H Youth Development

Leadership Skills You Never Outgrow

- Twenty-five Junior and Senior mentors at **Highland High School** participated in a leadership training conducted by Steve Wagoner, youth development educator. The sponsoring teacher reported that there was a lot of success with the opening of school. Many of the mentor leaders utilized skills learned during the training as they've helped the freshmen and new students. What did the students learn? They reported learning leadership techniques; brainstorming techniques to think "out-of-the-box"; learning to listen is more important than talking; how to communicate better; ways to remember names; ways to make mentees feel comfortable with their mentor; the importance of body language, the value of mentoring, etc.
- Five 4-H volunteers were named IL finalists for the **Lifetime Volunteer award** including Irene Biver of St. Clair County. The award honors 4-H volunteers with more than 10 years of service and allows Extension to recognize important individuals who have succeeded in helping youth develop life skills through positive youth development experiences in 4-H. These five individuals were honored at the 2009 IL State Fair as part of the 4-H Clover celebration.



Irene Biver has been the organizational leader of the Turkey Hill Busy Bees 4-H Club in St. Clair County for 18 years. Her positive impact on 4-H youth is easily evidenced by the steady growth in the number of club members and the retention of older youth possessing a long term commitment to 4-H through their school years.

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After being concerned with a trend toward members leaving 4-H during their early teen years, Irene initiated the concept of junior leaders within her club. This group meets several times a year to help develop new ideas for the club activities and are available to help less experienced members with their projects. The junior leaders now feel more ownership of their club by being an integral part of both planning and decision-making. They also witness the effects of their decisions, an important part of their development as contributing adults in our community. And the younger members understand that this opportunity awaits them in the future. Additionally, Irene has served on the Extension Council. Irene is passionate about the youth she served and the positive impact that 4-H can make in their lives.

- The **4-H Japanese Exchange** program offers a wonderful opportunity for families to learn about another culture as well as make new friends. Three current and five potential 4-H families welcomed Japanese exchange students into their homes this summer. Youth delegates arrived July 25 and departed August 20 and were members of one of three Japanese organizations devoted to the study of foreign cultures and languages, and the benefits of international exchange. Youth delegates were placed in homes with a host sibling of the same gender and similar age. Host families appreciated the chance to develop friendships which reach around the world. They found that the delegate taught them not only to understand other ways of life, but to understand and appreciate their own way of life as well. In fact, one host family is making plans now to send their son to Japan next summer, as part of the 4-H Japanese Exchange Outbound program. He will enjoy a four week stay with the youth delegate his family hosted this summer.



Learning Lifelong Skills through 4-H

- 4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. Through participation in 4-H, youth learn valuable life skills such as planning and organizing, working with others, decision making, and communication. Through involvement in community service activities, they also learn to exercise concern for others while becoming positive, contributing members of society. Career direction is yet another benefit of 4-H involvement. As members choose from a myriad of career-related projects, and the list keeps growing each year, they have an opportunity to develop new interests and skills as they begin to formulate career goals.

4-H can be a family affair. Youth enroll as members, and other family members can serve as club leaders, meeting helpers, project leaders, or activity coordinators. Through their involvement in 4-H, families have an opportunity to learn more about each other and increase communication, cooperation, problem solving, as well as experience a sense of togetherness.

4-H project shows include one-to-one judging by an expert in the field with the 4-H member. The member explains to the expert how he or she prepared the project. The judge then provides a critique comparing this project to the

standard for the area. **This summer, there were 1312 exhibits in Madison County and 959 exhibits in the various project areas in St. Clair County.**

Members with outstanding projects were selected for exhibit and judging at the State Fair with a total of 70 members representing the Madison-St. Clair County Unit. Twenty-one of these 4-H members received a Superior rating, which is the highest rating awarded.



The 2009 edition of the Master Showmanship Contest was held on August 12 at the Illinois State Fairgrounds. Forty-one exhibitors, winners of their respective county contests, competed for the title of "**Illinois Master Showman**".

Exhibitors were judged on their handling of each of three species of animals, beef, sheep and swine, and then quizzed by the judges on their knowledge of animal husbandry and livestock production. One winner was named for each species and scores for all three species were tallied to determine the overall winner.

David Ammann of Highland received 4th place in the Swine Division. David is a member of the Good Producers 4-H club in Highland.

Speak Out for Military Youth (SOMK)

- Military families with a child ages 8 to 12 were invited to check out the **Technology and Teambuilding (TNT) Camp** held August 10 - 14 at Camp Wartburg in Waterloo. Thirty-eight youth participated in this overnight camping adventure where community living fostered cooperation and teamwork among youth from diverse backgrounds. Campers used GPS units to explore new terrain and search for hidden cache, and used the mobile technology lab to create an electronic photo album. They also learned new technology skills as they built and programmed robots. Swimming, canoeing, caving, team games and a Low Ropes Challenge Course rounded out the week-long TNT Camp.
- Members of the SOMK youth group were invited to give a presentation to campers attending **Operation Purple Camp**, a camp for youth who were experiencing the deployment of a parent. SOMK youth showcased some of the projects they have worked on to support military youth and families, one of which was the Holiday Walk event which allowed families to experience the holidays they missed while apart from one another. Campers expressed an interest in seeing more events such as the Holiday Walk, as well as an opportunity to communicate with other military youth in an online format. SOMK youth have taken these requests into consideration as they plan their calendar of events for the next school year.

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. In July and August, 2,252 individuals participated in the two county area with an additional 18,000 receiving educational information via printed handouts.

The major focus of FNP in July and August includes youth cooking schools called **Kids in the Kitchen** with approximately 227 youth participating. In sixteen different cooking schools were held for one week. Youth participate in 2-3 hour sessions learning the importance of eating healthy. They learn how to read a recipe; prepare and cook delicious and healthy dishes with emphasis on nutrition, food science, safety and sanitation. The cooking camp provides a beginning level in food preparation skills and nutritional knowledge.

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 between the ages of 8 and 12 participate. Many of the participating youth had never cooked on a stove or used a knife or peeler. Of course, they were pleased to sample the outcome of what they had made. Some of the children couldn't wait to go home and make it for their mother. Schools were held in Collinsville, Venice, Fairmont City, Cahokia and East St. Louis.

- Guest speaker for the Turkey Hill Grange, Belleville, Carol Schlitt, nutrition and wellness educator, presented an informative talk on ***Altering Recipes for Good Health***. She demonstrated how to reduce sugar, salt, or fat in a recipe.



Food Safety

- For over ten years the Madison County Health Department and Extension have teamed to teach food safety for individuals representing organizations serving food on a one-time basis for fairs, festivals, and church fundraisers. Again, this year 56 volunteers working with food at the **Italian Fest, Collinsville** participated in this food safety training in August. Carol Schlitt, Extension educator serves up a healthy portion of humor mixed with concrete "must do's" when serving food in quantity.
- 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. Nine participants in Madison County rated the course as exceptional noting changes they will be making in their commercial kitchens.
- Americans appear to be embracing **hand hygiene** more than in past years. But not all of us are cleaning our hands as often as we should—especially with the threat of the H1N1 flu virus. In the fifth annual Clean Hands Report Card issued by The Soap and Detergent Association, America's grade for hand hygiene has risen from a "C-minus" in 2008 to a "B-minus."

Assisting in this effort is the local Clean Hands, Healthy Bodies program sponsored by Madison and St. Clair County Health Departments and University of Illinois Extension. Volunteers teach an effective “hands-on” participatory class to third and fourth graders in the local schools. During the month of August 152 youth participated.

Handwashing is the easiest path to staying healthy.



Agriculture and Natural Resources

Home Horticulture Education

- The teachable moment happens every day as master gardeners respond to local homeowners via the ***Horticulture Helpline and Ask the Master Gardener at the Land of Goshen Community Market in Edwardsville and Market und Mehr in Highland.*** For the months of July and August there were more than 174 responses to questions.
- **Radio station, WBGZ**, Alton hosted Master Gardener Ron Smith and Benna Denué for one hour gardening programs that included the opportunity for listeners to call in their questions. This opportunity occurs every second Tuesday. The co-hosts discussed future classes, the horticulture helpline, some of their experiences as a master gardener, Japanese beetles, etc.
- **Plant a Row for the Hungry’s mission** is to spread the word to the 70 million U.S. gardeners, so that they can make a difference. Many already plant vegetables and harvest more than they can consume. They’re more than willing to share with the less fortunate. Sharing, in fact, is a long-standing heritage in gardening. Gardeners know that fresh produce is healthy and nutritious. The beauty of the PAR program is its simplicity. Plant a Row is a grassroots program that is set up locally. And the need is strong.



Master Gardeners grow cucumbers, corn, green beans, zucchini, potatoes, tomatoes and more in our demonstration gardens to donate to local food pantries. Totals for this year are not in, but in past years, it’s been about 17,000 pounds that is distributed through 8-10 food pantries.

- **Landscaping on the Wild Side** brought participants from our communities to learn how to attract wildlife to the backyard without creating a garden-gone-wild landscape.
- **Master Gardeners** share their enthusiasm and gardening expertise with our local communities.
 - ✓ The Garden Club of Lebanon invited Master Gardener Sam Lutton to share an overview of the University of Illinois Extension’s demonstration and experimental garden at the Henry White Farm in Millstadt.
 - ✓ Sam Lutton’s popularity spread to O’Fallon where the Sunshine Rotary with 35 in attendance also learned about the research and results of the Henry White Farm.

- ✓ **Family Garden Day** at the Henry White Experimental Farm showcased the vegetable plots, flower gardens, butterfly garden, children's garden and garden—all planted and maintained by the master gardeners.
- ✓ Thirty-five members of the local community attended the **Open House at the Open Gate Tour Garden in Drost Park, Maryville**. Master Gardeners who have designed, planted and maintained the gardens were stationed around the various plots discussing vegetable gardening, plants of the year, perennials, daylilies, butterfly gardening, and maintenance techniques.



Natural Resources

- The National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC), located at the confluence of three great North American rivers---the Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois---is uniquely positioned to study the ecology of big rivers, the workings of the watershed that feed them, and the ties to the river communities that use them. The center aspires to be a leader in scholarly research, education, and outreach related to the interconnectedness of large rivers, their floodplains, watersheds, and their associated communities. It is a partnership between University of Illinois, the Illinois Natural History Survey and Lewis and Clark Community College.

The conference, **Visions of a Sustainable Mississippi River**, planned by the partners including University of Illinois Extension brought together a diverse group of Mississippi River stakeholders, researchers, and natural resource professionals. Through conference presentations, panel discussions, and workshops, attendees formulated policy recommendations on four topics critical to the sustainable management of the Mississippi River the human communities that depend on it. The topics included ecosystem services and the economic value of the Mississippi river; floodplain connectivity, flood control, and the hydrologic regime; ethanol production in the Mississippi river basin; and clean water, and the Mississippi river.

The conference concluded with a Policy Forum hosted by U.S. congressman Jerry F. Costello where policy recommendations were presented to elected officials and agency decision makers. Four facilitators including Janet Burnett, County Extension Director, convened these sessions and presented to the decision makers.

- Miscanthus is an ornamental grass being grown and researched at the University of Illinois and around the world as an alternative energy source. This web-linked program highlighted a practical demonstration of biomass heat and power being developed as an alternative fuel.

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.