

# EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Changing Lives*

## IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Extension provides practical education you can trust by helping individuals, families, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.



*Molly Morgan presenting her work with the Burkesville Revitalization Project at The Center for Rural Development .*

In 2014, Molly Morgan, a 4-H member and Rogers Scholar recipient was tasked with completing a project that would have a positive impact on her community. During a visit to Bowling Green, Kentucky, Molly noticed their streetscape improvements that marked the entrance to Western Kentucky University's campus. The improvements she noticed included new signage and enhanced landscape funded and maintained with support from local businesses. Molly wanted to create a similar program in Cumberland County.

After returning home to Burkesville, Molly formed a Partners with Pride committee that included local elected officials, business leaders, transportation officials, and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce. Once the committee was formed, Molly shared her vision with the group. Molly secured over \$5,000 in donations and support from the local FFA chapter, 4-H and Certified Master Gardeners, all of which agreed to maintain landscaping in the future.

The Partners with Pride program was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission Flex-E-Grant. The funding was used to improve welcome signs and landscaping located around the city limits of Burkesville. Molly's leadership and community engagement was the catalyst needed to spur renewed positive interest in the vitalization of Burkesville.

## Priority Program Efforts

- A total of 59 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- 140 youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- 154 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- 1,625 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of 475 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills



*Landscaping and signage improvement supported by local donations and ARC grant.*

## **4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

### **Speeches and Demonstrations**

Positive youth development research suggest that youth who are confident and who have strong communication skills are more likely to make substantial contributions to their family, their community, and society ( Lerner et al., 2005). One way that youth can develop confidence and their communication skills is by completing a 4-H Communication and Expressive Art Program. In the 2014/2015 program year, 233 youth from Cumberland County participated in a 4-H performing art program or public speaking contest. In addition to local contest and performances, the winner of local speech and demonstration contest get to advance and participate in area and state contest. In collaboration with other 4-H programs in District 5, an evaluation of the 4-H Speech and Demonstration was conducted. The results of the evaluation indicated that 90% of the youth improved their public speaking skills and 91% of the youth reported that they gained confidence in their ability to speak in front of others.



*Cumberland County 4-H Hot Shots Club.*

### **Cumberland County 4-H Hot Shots**

One of the most popular youth programs in Kentucky and in Cumberland County is the 4-H Shooting Sports program. In addition to teaching youth, it shows them how to handle and shoot a firearm safely, participants also gain valuable life skills while increasing their individual leadership capacity . For the fourth year in a row, The Cumberland County 4-H Hot Shots have hosted the Lake Cumberland Area Loud Gun Shoot. The event is held at Marrowbone Community Park each year in March. Over 100 youth participate annually. The Hot Shots have experienced great success during the 2014-2015 club year. In addition, to participating in the state 4-H shoot, they were also invited to represent Kentucky in a national shooting sport competition held in Arkansas. All of the funding for the Cumberland County 4-H Shooting Sports program is generated from local businesses and organizations.

### **The Kentucky 4-H Culinary Challenge**

To tap into the popularity of food shows like “Chopped”, the Kentucky 4-H Culinary Challenge was created to help educate youth about nutrition and food safety. As part of the new program, a local contest was scheduled in Cumberland County. Seven-teen youth participated in the local contest and a team of 5 advanced to the District 5 contest in Taylor County. Youth in the contest spent 2 hours per day for 5 days preparing and learning about a host of topics related to culinary arts. The local program was a collaborative effort among 4-H, the Family Consumer Science teacher at Cumberland County High School and the Cumberland County Family and Consumer Science Extension Agent. After the contest, the youth were asked a series of questions to help evaluate the program. All of the youth involved indicated that they liked the “learning by doing” method of instruction and 15 said they would eat more fruits and vegetables as a result of the program.



*Cumberland County 4-H Culinary Club winners of the cook off.*

## **FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES**

### **The Homemaker Club**

Cumberland County has a dedicated pool of Extension Leaders and Volunteers. Homemaker Clubs are very active and involved at both the county and area level. There are 6 Homemaker Clubs and 1 Specialty Club (Quilt Guild). Homemakers Clubs meet monthly to attend to club business and complete a research based lesson from the University of Kentucky. This year's lessons included: Communication Essentials/Meditation, Breathing, Stretching for Stress Relief/What Women Should Know About Finances/Extension Homemakers Support Military Families/Ghana Lesson/Focus on Home Preparedness/Nourish Your Bones and Joints. Club Leaders attend learning sessions and present the Leader Lessons to individual clubs. Furthermore, County and Club Officers and County Chairmen participated in Leadership Training sessions to further develop skills.

Two Homemaker Clubs participate in Adopt-A-Highway projects to help beautify the community. Individual club members volunteer at the Bloodmobile, Hospital and Food Pantry. Kettle Club works monthly on making bears and blankets which they then donate to the local Hospital/Police Department/Fire Department/Domestic Violence Safe House/Children's Advocacy Center. Each child who receives services from one of these agencies is given a handmade bear made by a Kettle Club volunteer. The need for this has increased for bears and agencies regularly call Kettle Club members and ask for more. Also, Kettle Club received 3rd Place in Community Volunteerism in the State through Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association.

Cumberland County Extension Homemakers hosted the Area Cultural Arts Competition and the Area Homemaker Meeting which were both well attended by all counties. The Area Cultural Arts competition was planned and organized by a local homemaker who serves as the Area Cultural Arts Chairman. All of these events were planned and organized under the direction of a new Homemaker President. Furthermore, one of our past County Presidents is stepping into the role of Area President for the upcoming Homemaker Year. In these roles, Leadership Skills are essential and are developed at the county level in a variety of methods.



*Homemaker members from Quilt Guild and Kettle Club.*

## **SNAP-ED**

### **Recycling Promotes Food Assistance Programs**

Cumberland County Extension partnered with the Cumberland County Judges' Office and Feed MY Sheep Food Pantry to assist in distribution and promotion of the USDA Food Commodities program to eligible SNAP/ WIC/ and Veteran recipients at the county recycling facility and the local food pantry.

One of their greatest needs was for shopping bags for people to carry their food in, so we arranged for them to have the SNAP shopping bags and local produce shopping bags. If the clients brought the bags back to the next round of food distribution, Extension would give them another SNAP incentive item. In each bag we placed flyers on ways to access foods and other assistance for those who were eligible.



*Client participating in recycling program.*

UK Nutrition Education Programs are available at the Cooperative Extension and locally in the county. The initial outcome was that the clients then had a bag to take the food in. At first, not many returned with the bags but now that the program has been running for nine months over 40% are returning with their bags. This program has had great success by the programs clients talking to others.

The clients have read the flyers in the bags and have joined Nutrition Education and cooking programs with the extension office and are also becoming involved in the homemaker clubs with extension.

The Extension has now expanded the shopping bag recycle program to the County Farmers Market and promotion of the buy local, buy fresh program. With the Farmers Market Director the extension approached the local producers to give them bags for their clients and told them to bring these to Cooperative Extension booth at the market for extra incentive items each time they visited the market.

# AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

## Master Gardeners

Cumberland County Master Gardeners are an active group of individuals at our Extension Office. They are required to be involved in volunteer activities related to the Extension education and outreach programs. They meet on the second Tuesday of the month to discuss education, fundraisers and projects on Adopt a Highway, Adopt a Sign, County Fair and other events at the Extension Office.

Education is highly encouraged in this group. Classes on blackberries, native grasses and soil tests were held this year. Many attended workshops by the Cumberland County Conservation District on garden and soil, recycle, fruit tree, tree identification, pollinators, backyard conservation, cover crops/water quality, safety and energy.

Their major fundraiser in 2015 was at the Bluegrass Festival to support the local community. All funds they raise stay in the county. It's a great way for them and the Extension Office to give back to our community. They donate to Imagination Library, give a scholarship for a high school senior and give an award at the County Fair.

In addition to volunteering at events and the County Fair, at the Extension Office they go on educational trips. This year they went to Up the Creek Winery, Smiths Grove, High Tunnels and Fall Vegetable Gardening in Russell Springs. It was a great educational year for all involved in Master Gardeners.



Master Gardeners with Adopt a Highway Crew.



Local Farmer uses CAIP grant money to put electricity to his barn.

## CAIP Grant

The County Agricultural Investment Program (CAIP) is used to help the agriculture community diversify their agricultural operations and increase net farm income. CAIP was developed to provide cost-share assistance to individual producers through a local program administrator. Part of the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund, stems from tobacco settlement funding. To be eligible to apply, farmers must attend one of two mandatory educational sessions scheduled at the Extension Office.

The CAIP grant is a successful program in our community. It allows for farmers to continue to grow their businesses. CAIP had around \$200,000 of money and awarded around 75 people with grant money for this years program. Each person awarded the money has a certain amount they have to spend on farm improvement projects. 25% of their money has to be spent and they will get 75% reimbursed to them from CAIP. This program varies by county and year.

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