

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE *Changing Lives*



IN MARSHALL COUNTY

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



Teens at DAT Don't Fit Conference.

Impact of Marshall County 4-H on Teens

Marshall County 4-H's "Senior Class" was a unique one for 2014-15. The County 4-H Teen Club members who graduated were a mix of those involved since they were 9 years old, some only in last couple of years, and others the last few months. The impact the Marshall County 4-H program had on these teens is best relayed in their own words.

Last Fall/Winter, one of these members wrote a news article for the local newspaper. In her article, she interviewed two others about their 4-H story. Following are excerpts from Madison Vaughn's The Marshall Roundup article – "4-H: Head, Heart, Hands, Health".

"I (Madison) am a rarity in that I waited until high school to join 4-H...I had no idea what to expect whenever I signed up in my tenth grade year to be a 4-H Camp Counselor. However, I loved serving as a camp counselor and was eager to join 4-H afterwards to learn more about it. Since then, I have made new friends, shared new experiences... and have grown in ways I didn't anticipate."

A member of less than a year, Suede Adams remarked, "4-H to me is a place that accepts. People in 4-H don't care about your race, ethnic background, grades, etc. They only care that you're there and having fun. 4-H is an amazing place for kids and teens alike. There are competitions, trips, and so much more."

Madison also interviewed a teen that has been a 4-Her since 4th grade. Kaylea Singleton noted "4-H is a family to me. Not only is it about stepping up and taking part in our community, but it allows us to learn skills we may never learn otherwise. It teaches responsibility, leadership..."

The impact of 4-H Youth Development programming is sometimes not seen in numbers, percentages, or other statistics. The positive changes for these youth is in their stories and observations!

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of 151 people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- 291 Number of producers adopting resource management technologies (IRM, IPM, soil testing, soil fertility management) as a result of Extension Programs
- 577 Number of individuals adopting one or more practices related to conserving, sustaining, and/or protecting soil resources (as a result of Extension programming)
- 62 youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- 219 citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of 943 individuals experienced an increase in knowledge about lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of 400 youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- 82 individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.

It's All About the Technology!



It was all about engineering and technology at the 1st Annual Marshall County 4-H Tech Day Camp held in October 2014. Twenty-eight 4-Hers participated in a fun filled day that included geospatial, engineering design, and robotics. The workshop was designed by the Marshall County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development and the Marshall County 4-H Technology Club Leaders in

consultation with the 4-H Agent for Science, Engineering & Technology.

The 4-Hers started the day off learning “Where Does Our Food Grow?” led by the SET 4-H Agent for SET and Marshall County 4-H Agent. After discussing some top grains, fruits, and vegetables, the 4-Hers were asked to research where the foods are grown. Using Google Earth, the 4-Hers explored the country, climate, GPS coordinates, and much more about that part of the world. Several had not worked with Google Earth before and were amazed at the different uses.

Utilizing the engineering design process, the 4-Hers were challenged by the two Technology Club Leaders in clip mobiles to descend off a ramp and go the furthest.

Learning how to work with a limited amount of supplies led to marshmallow catapult design. As a team, the 4-Hers made tabletop trebuchet style catapults to throw a standard marshmallow as far as possible.

The 4-Hers were also introduced by the teen and adult leaders to the LEGO EV3 systems, basic programming, and working with different parts. Having the robot find its way through a maze was their primary challenge.

Tech Day Camp participants reported learning:

- *How to build and program a robot.
- *Google Earth is pretty neat.
- *It's hard to build things with limited resources.
- *When you are building with other people, you need to communicate.
- *That 4-H Technology is really fun!

Reality Store from the Volunteer's Perspective

In the past 12 years the Marshall County 4-H Youth Development Agent has worked with the Reality Store program, the perspective of volunteers has only been captured by comments passed along here and there. For the 2015 Reality Store, the 4-H Agent conducted a formal

evaluation of the volunteers to gain their perspective on the program's success and areas to improve. The evaluation was also conducted to highlight an adult's insight into what the 8th grade students are learning when participating in Reality Store.

Following are highlights from the 33 Marshall County Reality Store Volunteer Evaluations received on what they felt students learned from Reality Store:

- They want to live beyond their means. Good that they get to choose their own career to see how much money they'll really make.
- The day-to-day struggles to make ends meet. More respect for their parents.
- Choosing the right career path is important based on the lifestyle they want to live.
- The Reality Store helps students become more aware of their individual responsibilities. Practical versus fun choices.
- Felt they learned a lot more goes into raising a family and living on your own. And they cannot always have the fancier things they want. Hopefully they've learned to work hard in school to develop skills for better jobs.



Where does your Money go?

A family's spending plan may be ineffective if periodic expenses like insurance, property taxes or holiday gifts are not included. In addition, it is important to identify the “leaks” in the budget. Discretionary purchases are often overlooked, yet are a very important part of creating an effective spending plan.

In November and December, 104 families participated in the Managing in Tough Times program, “Where does your Money go?” Improving the economic well-being of individuals and families begins with a conversation about basic money management skills and strategies.

A comment from one participant stated, “I didn't realize we had so many spending leaks in our family. We need to become more aware of spending money that is not necessary.” 80% of families' survey responses indicated they would make a better effort to track expenses and cut back on discretionary spending.

The realization that “spending leaks” impact a family's ability to meet fixed monthly obligations was also an important concept that was discussed. A participant commented they now have a better understanding of how

unnecessary spending can affect the ability to make payments on time and avoid late fees and interest.

The “Where does your Money go?” program has been well received in our community. Participants believe it is important to have an ongoing discussion about money management and the importance of having a spending plan when families are struggling in tough economic times.

Spring into Green: Kentucky Edition

Forty-seven participants attended “Spring into Green—Kentucky Edition” in March, an event organized and facilitated by Purchase Area Family and Consumer Sciences agents. Featured speaker, Michael Mangeot, Commissioner of Kentucky Department of Travel and Tourism, spoke



about the impact of tourism in Kentucky. Mangeot also shared the state’s fascinating heritage in agriculture and the increasing impact of agritourism across the state. Other sessions focused on

Kentucky Proud products and producers, Kentucky’s Great River Road, Kentucky Arts Council and Kentucky Native Plants.

Surveys completed by those in attendance indicated participants would likely buy more Kentucky Proud products, as well as approach vendors about selling items that are produced locally. Many commented they were better informed to plan day trips close to home and would use the information to promote local agritourism. Participants also stated they learned to identify Kentucky native plants and would select such plants when considering landscape choices for their homes.

“Spring into Green” is an educational and fun event for participants to learn more about a particular topic. Previous events have focused on foods, outdoor living, money management, fashion, home and gardening.

Living Well with Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease that affects many people in the Purchase Area. In the 2012 report issued by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), 10% of adults in this area had been diagnosed with diabetes. In response to community interest in Marshall County, the local Health Department and Cooperative Extension Service joined forces to present two four-hour classes that focused on managing diabetes for adults. Twelve participants were either diagnosed with diabetes or had a family member with diabetes.

In May 2014, the Family and Consumer Sciences agent assisted dietetic interns from the University of Kentucky

Hospital and the School of Human Environmental Sciences in teaching strategies for food selection and meal preparation. Since that time, follow-up surveys revealed 100% of the participants were working toward goals set for improved diabetes management. 100% also stated the classes were beneficial in assisting them select foods and plan menus that included healthier choices.

Participants also gained knowledge in the importance of drinking more water, monitoring blood pressure and increasing physical activity; and have reported making positive changes in these areas, as well.

In 2009, the Marshall County Family & Consumer Sciences agent secured UK Cooperative Extension grant funds to partner with the local Arts Commission to begin an after-school program for children’s chorus. Since that time, the program continues to grow and has since added an after-school theatre group, visual arts classes, and four summer camps focusing on the arts.

Traditional Basket Weaving Gaining Popularity

According to the Kentucky Arts Council, “Fine traditional and contemporary crafts define our cultural landscape as vividly as horses, basketball, and our pathway to excellence in education. However, the arts in Kentucky today are as dynamic as the world itself. New designs are emerging, along with new technologies and the new economy.”



Since March 2015, over 160 members of our community in Marshall County have learned the skill of basket weaving, under the direction of volunteer Carol Underwood and Family and Consumer Sciences agent, Vicki Wynn.

Many weave to have a fresh focus and to take their minds off everyday stresses, while others have woven several baskets to sell, or to be given as gifts that are destined to become keepsakes and family heirlooms. As one participant commented, “The basket classes are much cheaper than therapy, and much more effective, as well. I look forward to each and every one.”

The value of these baskets woven to date is in excess of \$8000.

Tater Day with Central Kindergarten



On Wednesday, April 1st, Marshall County ANR Agent Nikki Bell and 4H Program Assistant Carol Thompson spent the morning with 120 Central Elementary Kindergarteners. With Tater Day in mind, they taught the students about the history of Tater Day, about agriculture, how potatoes are grown, and gardening. The children worked with Carol

Thompson on what she called a “walking plant experiment.” Each student constructed a necklace with a seed in it. They watered the seeds and will get to watch how seeds germinate. The group also started a sweet potato in a jar, which they will watch for the rest of the school year. We plan to collect the newly grown sweet potatoes at the end of the school year and transplant them into the MCEO’s demonstration garden.

Gardening 101

It was clear to Nikki Bell, Marshall County ANR agent, that Marshall county residents have a desire to learn about growing healthy food for their families. With the help of the Marshall County Master Gardeners, Nikki started an introduction to vegetable gardening class and a demonstration vegetable garden at the MCEO.

The 25ft by 30ft plot offered the class the hands on instruction they desired. The class spent half the class inside learning about topics of their choice and then went outside and tended to the



demonstration garden the second half. The participants took care of the garden and reaped the benefits of their work by taking home the fresh produce. The leftovers were donated to a local charity, which made the program that much more beneficial to the community.

At the end of the class the participants were surveyed. Almost every participant indicated that they were utilizing skills learned in the class at home, increased the amount of healthy foods they preserved and supplementing their diet with the fresh produce, increased conservation practices recommend by extension, increased knowledge of sustaining soil resources, and most importantly every gardener indicated that they had fun while learning skills of value to them.

West KY Ag Conference

This annual conference was a collaboration of seven western Kentucky Agriculture Agents and Young Farmer Educators. Farmer Keith Lowry hosts the event at his farm in Wingo. The event pulls farmers from all seven counties and last January it had a record breaking 130 participants. Speakers were pulled from many different areas and specialties, all relating to irrigation. Talks included: High Yield Soybean Management, Introduction to Subsurface Drip Irrigation, Nitrogen Application in Wheat/Agronomy in a Tighter Market, and Corn Irrigation Management/Variable Rate Irrigation. After the meeting participants were surveyed. 93% indicated having a better understanding of irrigation after the meeting, and 65 % plan to change or consider a change in their operation.

Hypertufa

On October 22nd the Marshall County Master Gardeners and Ag Agent Nikki Bell, volunteered to teach the afternoon arts program at the Children Arts Center. They taught the



kids how to make stepping stones out of hypertufa (like a light concrete type mixture) for the rain garden. While the children learned a fun new skill,

the Master Gardeners gained experience volunteering with youth. This addition to the rain garden will lead to more exposure of the Rain garden and the good storm water practices it represents.

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