EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE
Changing Lives

IN PIKE COUNTY

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

NEP Assistant Valerie Robinette is ready to greet families with nutritious snack samples at a community wellness event.

Pike County: Making a Difference in the Lives of all Residents

With the rising cost of providing food, many families have become food insecure. Home gardening and food preservation has seen an increase in recent years but many people are afraid to attempt food preservation on their own. The Family and Consumer Sciences program offered food preservation workshops to teach home food preservationists proper techniques and the latest USDA approved canning recommendations for safe, quality and delicious home preserved goods.

Nineteen families participated in the workshops and 100% of those reported preserving fruits/vegetables at home after the workshops - over 200 quarts of a variety of produce in two months. Seventy-two percent are no longer afraid to use their pressure canner - a source of anxiety for most beginners. Participants reported understanding the science of canning. In canning at home they applied knowledge by sterilizing jars, proper tool use and following recipes and USDA directions. One new canner said, "I plan to raise a garden next year just so I can preserve it and save even more money next year."

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of **347** people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- **62** youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- **15** local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- **22** producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- **8,561** youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension -related leadership programs
- **10,355** citizens (youth and adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of **725** individuals reported making lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, managing stressors, healthy home practices, etc.) for the purpose of improving their health
- A total of **315** youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills
- **19** individuals incorporated new or additional conservation practices.

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The Pike County Extension Council recognizes in the current economy, financial stability is important. That stability rests with families securing and managing their basic human needs of food, clothing, and shelter. Increasing buying power with wise consumer decision-making, avoiding pitfalls of overextended credit, developing saving habits, and managing financial risks. Sandy Valley Habitat for Humanity reported a lack of approved families for housing because of low/bad credit scoring and inability to pass credit screening process for housing applications. For families in need of permanent housing, having a poor credit history impacts family stability, security and basic needs. The Family and Consumer Sciences program provided MITT (Managing in Tough Times) education to eight families on the basics of credit, revolving debt, emotional spending, monthly budgeting, etc. Those families are currently in housing and now make family budgets, watch their credit scores, pay bills on time and no longer charge basic expenses.

Willie Abshire makes different shapes of dinner rolls in the Beginner's Bread Making class.

Lack of cooking skills and fear of the kitchen has led to families not cooking meals at home contributing to diabetes and obesity. USDA studies show that families who cook and eat at home enjoy better overall health and wellness. Five "Beginner's Baking" 4-part series were held for youth and adults by the Family and Consumer Sciences program where over 50 families made a variety of homemade breads and evaluated their work. One hundred percent of participants reported using recipe and measuring standardization, as well as cooking techniques learned to family meals now prepared at home. Participants now plan, shop and prepare at home instead of purchasing pre-made meals or restaurant meals as a result of the baking series.

The Pike County's federally-funded Nutrition Education Program (NEP) assistants work with families and individuals on assistance to educate them on basic food budgeting, making good dietary choices and food safety. These all needed to be addressed in order to affect the basic health and chronic obesity rate in the county. Pike County's NEP two assistants have far exceeded the goals set forth in the program. Working with 35 different youth groups and eight community agencies last year meant hundreds of youth and families learned about fruits and vegetables and food preparation. We are currently experiencing double the required graduation rate for NEP families meaning the program resources are being used very wisely and the maximum number of people possible can experience our learning resources. This year 62% of families reported a positive change in resource management and 63% reported a positive change in overall diet quality and nutrition after completing the NEP curriculum.

#4-H Grows Here

It has been an exciting year in Pike County 4-H. We are learning life skills, leadership and citizenship through the Pike County 4-H program! We are learning through 4-H clubs, workshops, camps and conferences. We are 3,470 members strong that has a network of leaders and sponsors to help our youth "make the best better." There are 174 4-H clubs that involve projects that build our workforce and giving projects that help teach our youth the importance of service learning.

#4-H Grows Here: Youth are learning skills and gaining in self-confidence through 4-H projects and activities.

Excellence in 4-H club work is shown through the state championships at the Kentucky State Fair. We captured class championships in Woodworking, Electricity 1, Electricity 2 and Home Environment. This great organization has three grand championships, two in the avian bowl and one in the special collections categories. Another Pike youth was the champion in the leadership division of the U.K. Kentucky Youth Seminar. This future entrepreneur traveled to Virginia Tech for the National Conference in business. Life skills are evidenced by the number of 4-H exhibits and exhibitions at the local fairs. There were over 1,400 4-H projects and presentations during these 4-H fun events.

We are training leaders for the future. Youth are receiving this training through the 4-H Teen Conference at the University of Kentucky. Younger leaders participated in the 4-H Teen Summit at the Kentucky Leadership Center. 4-H camps teach us self- reliance and how to function as a team member. The Pike County 4-H Adult Council and the Pike County 4-H Council serves as leadership base for county programming. "#4-H Grows Here" in the city and in the county.

Artists Collaborative Theatre

Artists Collaborative Theatre (ACT) held eight productions this year, with 16 performances per show. Season pass subscriptions for arts programming held steady at 150+. School outreach programs in Fine Arts served over 3,500 students in theatre production field trips and educational programming from 14 schools all across Pike County and into counties in Virginia. The audience member count at ACT has reached record numbers. This year, the children's acting troupe performed *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* and *The Little Mermaid* for two weeks each at the theatre before taking the shows on tour to schools all across the county.

Pike County Fine Arts helped secure scholarships and aid for four graduating seniors involved with productions at ACT. Graduating seniors were awarded $500 scholarships from ACT. Two seniors now attend the University of Kentucky and are already becoming involved with the theatre program. One has moved to New York to attend AMDA College Conservatory of the Performing Arts and one is attending a local community college.

East Ridge High School Drama Club

ACT's production of Smoke on the Mountain

The teenagers involved with the Fine Arts program are all eager and impressive actors at Artists Collaborative Theatre (ACT). In addition to this accomplishment, they are also technical crew members on each production, with advanced knowledge of light and sound board operation, set construction, costume building, and other responsibilities.

This year, the teenagers took their extensive knowledge of the theatre arts to a new level. Many of them attend East Ridge High School. There, they spoke to their principal and other staff to get approval to start a drama club and stage a production all on their own. After getting approval, they began work on the production *Clue*.

The students worked tirelessly to stage the production. They gathered and made their own costumes, operated the lights, programmed the sound cues, and built the set. They recruited other classmates as well, many of whom had no theatre experience. They served as teachers and mentors to their peers, training them in acting, construction, and technical crew roles. Once this work had been done, the students marketed their production, composing press releases and taking to social media to get the word out.

Clue was free to attend, allowing everyone in the community the opportunity to attend an arts event, regardless of income level. It was a complete success and well attended over the three nights it was performed. The seats in the auditorium at East Ridge High School were filled with students, community leaders, and local citizens.

Hatfield & McCoy Arts Council, Inc.

The Pike County Cooperative Extension for Fine Arts Program, Artists Collaborative Theatre, and the Hatfield and McCoy Arts Council collaborated to bring an original depiction of the Hatfield and McCoy feud to life. In addition to hiring a playwright and networking with local historians, the agencies worked with local officials to build an amphitheatre and other facilities to house the play.

Each summer, productions *of Blood Song: The Story of the Hatfields and the McCoys* are performed to crowds on the banks of the Tug River at McCarr, KY, where the actual events of the feud took place. The show and newly renovated Hatfield and McCoy Park won a NaCo award for showcasing and promoting local history. This year marked the production's third summer of productions.

News about the production has been featured in articles as far away as the New York Times and Washington Examiner. Approximately 2,700 people have attended the live, outdoor drama each year, providing an influx of tourism to the small communities.

Appalachian Symphony

This year, Pike County Extension for Fine Arts began Applachian Symphony. This program meets two nights a week on Tuesdays and Saturdays and teaches anyone wanting to attend how to play musical instruments. The meetings are completely free as are the use of the instruments! We have instructors for everything from the ukulele to piano to a huge upright bass! Although a relatively new program, the class size has grown each month and we're looking forward to a bright and wonderful future with Appalachian Symphony!

Agricultural Diversification

Local leadership has determined that the diversification of agriculture is a priority for Pike County. Therefore, Extension has taken the role of encouraging, promoting, and implementing improvements to our Farmers Market and the skills needed by farmers to improve and expand their market and home gardens. This includes providing workshops/classes such as Beekeeping, Shiitake Mushrooms, Extending the Season, Heirloom Seed, Herb Production, Small Fruit, Pruning & Grafting, Blueberry and Apple Diseases, GAP & Sampling Certification, High Tunnels, Organic Production, Wildlife Control, Strawberries, and multiple trainings on Farmers Markets, such as Community Farm Alliances Market Boot Camp series.

Pikeville Farmers Market

The Pikeville Farmers Market has been open from May to November. An accomplishment that will make it easier for obtaining grants. Local leadership and the city have been active in applying for a grant to build a new farmers market. Multiple county groups have been involved with activities at the farmers market—culinary demonstrations by EFNEP, extension personnel, Pikeville High School's award winning Kentucky Proud Jr. Chefs, Pikeville High School's Gifted & Talented, Pike County Health Department, American Cancer Society, local hospitals, crafters, fly fishermen, diabetes educators, crafters, etc. Due to the farmers market efforts many are learning to eat what is in season, thereby eating healthier.

Eleven farmers from Pike County attended the recent KCARD grant training workshop along with two of our vendors from Floyd County. The Pikeville Farmers Market has regional influence in that we have farmers from Pike, Floyd, Johnson, Morgan, Letcher and Knott Counties. Two of our farmers presented at the Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference and one has been invited to present at the prestigious Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group's 2016 conference in Lexington. Several farmers have received high tunnels through various matching grant programs and more are applying.

One day the market had 24 vendors made up of veterans, displaced coal miners and 10 female farmers. The market has had over 5,000 visitors/clients this year and all of the participating farmers plan to expand their gardens and varieties for next year. During peak season dozens of early bird shoppers were literally hanging on the fence to get in.

Every effort is being put into extending the season, bio-intensive farming, soil care, new recommended varieties, heirloom varieties, succession planting, etc.

Setting the farmers market up for sale day

Multiple vendors are responsible for posting pictures and information about the market on the markets public Facebook page. Since January 2013, followers have increased from 349 to 3730 to date. Our customer interactions and post engagements regularly eclipse performance of Kentucky's metropolitan markets. Market vendors appeared eight times on local television and radio features. Press releases are composed by board members and are distributed to pertinent media outlets on a regular basis.

The Farmers Market is one example of the growth of agriculture in Pike County. Locally grown food is a national obsession right now and Pike County is better than other markets because of the heirloom crops that are presented at the market.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

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Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives

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