



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE

Changing Lives

IN KENTON COUNTY

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



Master Clothing Volunteer Maryloretto helps Terrin with his sewing project.

Communities Improved by Sewing Volunteers

A great variety of sewing programs were offered by certified sewing volunteers from Kenton County due to high demand from the public for sewing instruction for youth and adults. These volunteers are supervised by a Kenton County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development. The master sewing volunteers taught workshops for youth and adults in beginning, intermediate and advanced clothing construction techniques, quilting, clothing repair, crafting, machine embroidery and creating fashion accessories. Sewing is a skill that can lead to enjoyment or employment for youth and adults. This year, seven master clothing volunteers reported volunteering 1264.25 hours in teaching and community service. Based on the value of \$23.56 per hour for 2015 (according to Independent Sector, U.S. average), the collective volunteer time had a value of \$29,785.73. Most schools no longer teach sewing. The cost of taking sewing instruction from retail centers is cost prohibitive for many citizens as sewing instructors in the local area charge \$25 per hour. At this rate the master clothing volunteers saved residents over \$31,600.

Priority Program Efforts

- A total of **108** people are now involved in addressing significant community issues
- **246** youth made an impact in their community through service projects
- **40** local residents implemented practices that promote sustainable agriculture
- **117** Producers reported an economic impact (i.e., increase in agricultural productivity, increase in higher returns, decrease in expenses) in their agricultural operations
- **2148** youth indicated an increase in leadership skills, knowledge or confidence through participation in Extension-related leadership programs
- **810** citizens (youth & adults) acknowledged utilizing the skills learned through Extension programming
- A total of **920** youth and adults demonstrated informed and effective decision-making skills

So the value of the volunteers' contributions to the community exceeds \$60,000 this year. The volunteers had 1,767 contacts with the public in the name of the Cooperative Extension Service. Evaluation was formal or informal. Skill achievement sheets were kept for youth learning to sew, and completed projects were an indicator of success for both youth and adults. Many volunteers led sewing projects in other venues like churches and schools. Some created quilts for foster youth or cancer hats for adults. Not only did the individuals learning to sew benefit from increased self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment, but the greater community was culturally enriched as well.

Youth Making a Difference in Their Community

According to Northern Kentucky Emergency Shelter, they served over 400 people that were homeless in Kenton County in 2015. The shelter provided beds for 79 people; however, they never turn guests away and they make room for them in some way. The Kenton County 4-H Be Friendship Focused club made up of 4th and 5th grade girls decided they wanted to help the homeless stay a little warmer as the weather started to turn cold. These young ladies came together in the month of December and made close to 350 fleece scarfs which they donated to the Northern Kentucky Emergency Shelter. The director of the shelter came personally to thank the girls and share how the shelter works. The scarfs were already in the hands of some of the guests of the shelter and they were very thankful. This small act of kindness not only impacted our homeless population, but touched our 4-H youth and inspired them to do more community service projects helping the shelter.

4-H Volunteers Educating Youth

Kenton County 4-H certified livestock volunteers plan and execute the educational meetings required for livestock participants in Kenton County. The 4-H livestock project involves raising and caring for live animals while learning about animal health, nutrition, breeding, selection and marketing. Animal projects offer outstanding opportunities for individuals to gain experience in decision making, record keeping, responsibility, and leadership. Two Kenton County 4-H livestock volunteers have been nominated for, and received, the Kentucky 4-H Certified Livestock volunteer award because of their dedication to the 4-H Livestock program, educational efforts benefit-

ing youth, and passion for helping youth and families participate in livestock projects. The five current 4-H livestock volunteers were surveyed in the fall of 2014, they believe the most significant contribution they make are the educational efforts and programs.



Eowyn & Wren exhibiting dairy goats in 4-H Goat Show.

Youth can learn about livestock and make the best decisions for each animal, after participating in educational programs. Consulting with local experts — veterinarians, feed producers, investment advisers, allows families to make informed decisions about feed, housing and veterinary care. The 4-H livestock volunteers plan and execute the yearly class schedule and events. The 4-H livestock volunteers work with all youth and parents regardless of their livestock experience to educate them about the livestock program. They also work within the framework provided by the Kentucky 4-H program including rules and guidelines. Since 2008 the 4-H certified livestock volunteers have facilitated 134 hours of instructional time reaching 347 youth for a minimum of six hours. The personal commitments of the volunteers far exceed the hourly number if one considers re-certification time, travel, preparation, set-up and clean-up time.

Cooking Up Diabetes Self-Management

The incidence of diabetes diagnoses has nearly doubled since the year 2000. According to the Department for Public Health, the incidence of Diabetes in both the state of Kentucky and Kenton County is over 10% — estimated to affect over 16,000 individuals in our county alone. In an attempt to decrease future diabetes incidence, and assist those currently diagnosed with better control,

the Kenton County Cooperative Extension Service teamed up with the Northern Kentucky Health Department to present a three-part series called “Cooking up Diabetes Self-Management.” The certified diabetes educator from the Health Department led the diabetes management instruction and discussion, while the Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent led discussion on food choices and preparation tips for cooking healthier recipes.

Through follow-up evaluations, 84% of the 19 participants reported reaching or maintaining their health goal. Two individuals reported losing over 10 pounds—a known benefit for diabetes management, with one reporting a definite improvement in measured blood sugar. In addition, over 66% reported increased awareness of the importance of their overall diet, preparing recipes shared in class, reading food labels more often, and eating smaller, regular meals. Fifty-eight percent (58%) reported discussing diabetes management concerns with their doctor, while 26% reported increased foot checks and visits to an ophthalmologist. One participant shared the following, “Becoming more aware of diabetic symptoms has changed my life. I’m feeling so much better now. I am so grateful.”

What Women Should Know about Finances: Planning for Life’s Events

Statistics from the Institute for Women’s Policy, 2015, indicated female full-time workers made only 79 cents for every dollar earned by men, a gender wage gap of 21 percent.

The website wiserwomen.org indicates on average women spend less time in the workforce, get paid less, have jobs that don’t offer employee sponsored retirement, and are more likely to be widowed than their male counterparts. This can create specific financial obstacles for women who need resources and information to address these financial and estate planning issues. A Homemaker leader lesson on “Financial Considerations for Women: Planning for Life’s Events” was presented to Homemakers and the general public to address this topic. The class covered topics such as marriage, divorce, second marriages, widowhood and their effects on financial decisions and resources. The Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Agent facilitated a discussion among the participants and added additional topics on pension plans, insurance coverage, how to select a financial planner, and the realization that income often decreases with divorce or death, but expenses do not. A written evaluation given

after the class stated that over 85% of the participants will create specific saving goals and use a financial management strategy to manage finances. Other comments included: “I need to update my will;” “This class encouraged me to step up my financial planning;” “I need to create a plan with my husband;” and “We will review insurance policies.” Other responses included: “We do not check our credit report every year;” and “I haven’t checked my credit report for years, and I need to do that now!” Verbal feedback was very positive with requests for additional resources. A fall 2016 series is being planned and will address trusts, estate planning, and working with an estate planning attorney.

From our Northern KY Area Nutrition Education Program Agent...

The Kenton County Nutrition Education Program assistants taught nutrition lessons reaching 885 SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) participants in FY 2016. According to national reporting system data, 95% of adult program participants in Kenton County showed a positive behavior change in food group choices.

Relative Raising Children

For over ten years the Kenton County Cooperative Extension Service has nurtured grandparent and relatives raising children from the Northern Kentucky area through monthly support group meetings. The number of families being served has continued to fluctuate over the years, but most recently has increased due to the substance abuse crisis facing Northern Kentucky. Families are in search of educational, financial, and emotional support. A collaborative effort of the Kenton County Extension Service, Northern Kentucky Area Development District, Family Nurturing Center, Trinity Episcopal Church, Children’s Incorporated, and Family Resource and Youth Service Centers of Kenton County, strategized to coordinate the Grandparents As Parents Conference in Covington. The 96 attendees at the first GAP conference held in Northern Kentucky were presented with rotating seminars taught by various professionals that included topics on the following: Internet Safety; Legal Rights; Engaging Birth Parents; Childhood

Experiences; Heroin Epidemic; Healthy Boundaries; and Alcohol Abuse. As a result of the overwhelming positive feedback in the evaluations, the agencies have planned to organize a conference annually.



Master Gardeners learning how to prune raspberries and blackberries.

Master Gardeners are Growing

Kenton County hosted the Northern Kentucky Master Gardener training this past winter. Eighteen (18) New Master Gardener students took 50 hours of UK-approved training, graduated, and began volunteering in local gardens and other non-profit horticultural organizations. The Outdoor Education Center's demonstration gardens, cared for by our Master Gardeners, grew over 1,200 pounds of produce which was donated to local food banks, and used for Extension classes and activities. At Farm Harvest Tour, visitors sampled more than 15 varieties of our tomatoes. Master Gardeners helped Kenton County Extension provide more than 100 residents of a local long-term care and rehabilitation facility with monthly horticultural therapy activities. In total, Kenton County's Master Gardeners

Students Apply Math & Science at Local Dairy Farm

John G. Carlisle Elementary School is located in downtown Covington, Kentucky. The school has a high percentage of minority youth 58.5% and youth receiving free or reduced school meals 96% (Covington Independent Public Schools, 2015). Field trips provide an opportunity for these students to synthesize classroom math and science know-

ledge and experience new cultures (The International Journal of Environmental and Science Education). The Kenton County Cooperative Extension Service (agents Allen & Kelley) collaborated with the 4th grade teachers to design a field trip to Ed-Mar Dairy Farm to apply classroom knowledge in math, science, and life skills. The proprietor of the dairy farm is an innovative producer who is recognized nationally and internationally for his advancements in dairy herd health, production and care.

Learning stations were developed for: Weights and Measures, Digestive Systems and Feed Portions, and Milk Products and Human Nutrition. Students completed worksheets that were "engaging and rigorous to reinforce learning" and applied math to "practical living decisions," according to the teachers. Each of the teachers commented on the students' new ability to read and interpret a spreadsheet as they analyzed data from the automatic milking machine. After the field trip, students could describe the life cycle of a cow to how technology was involved in milk production in written and oral follow-up assignments. Eight-one percent (81%) or more of the students showed improvement in communication, math and science according to a teacher survey conducted following the field trip.

Based on meetings with the school district curriculum coordinator and the teachers of John G. Carlisle, Allen developed the weights and measures lesson, technology and graphs lesson, and reinforced the digestive lesson. Allen designed the workstations to follow a work sheet for each lesson which reinforced the student's ability to apply the principles being presented.



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