

**NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative**  
**Fayette County Planning Team Meeting Minutes**  
**January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008**  
**4:00, ISU Extension Office, Fayette**

Attendees: Deb Kahler, Barb Schoenjahn, Barb Ashby, Sheryl Struthers, Donna Story, Maureen Johnson, Vicki Rowland, Richard Jensen, Dave Runyon, Kathy Guyer, Joe Organist, Karla Organist, Dan Burkhart, Scot Michelson, Trudy Campbell, Rod Marlatt, Richard Witt, Jennifer Ranheim, Alice Moeller, Roxanne Lenz, Ruth Schemmel

1. Committee Members Shared discussions, projects or grants related to the Food & Fitness Initiative:

**Rod** is working on a fish habitat grant to assist with some stream erosion (good for fishermen!), has been working on a TEA-21 application for the trail between Clermont & Elgin, is also researching for a park south of Elgin.

**Maureen** met with RC&D regarding the trail between Clermont & Elgin.

**Deb** shared NIFF information with an Elgin city council member and an Elgin community group.

**Sheryl** is looking into an REC grant.

**Barb A** is adding a physical activity element to every children's program at the WU Library, is also featuring locally grown Peake apples in her Johnny Appleseed program.

**Scot** was interviewed (along with Sue) by the Farm Bureau for an article in The Spokesman about the NIFF Initiative. He is also involved in the state employees "Lighten Up Iowa" team.

**Dick** received a grant from Pioneer in the amount of \$2500 for TAKO's Corn Maze. He also spoke at the Valley School Board's meeting to praise them for their Environmental Education program. He will be addressing the North Fayette district this month to promote such a program for them.

**Jennifer** has organized UIU's Lighten Up Iowa team and is personally involved in a family/friend team as well.

**Kathy** is promoting Lighten Up Iowa in West Union and has been meeting with NF gym teachers about starting a youth Lighten Up Iowa program.

**Alice** shared what great attendance they had (about 200 staff members) for a Wellness Blood Draw in Oelwein. She also mentioned that she and a group of other friends in Oelwein have begun discussions about opening some type of local/organic grocery store and asked the group for any resources or connections they might have regarding this type of venture. Two possible resources (among the many given!) were: MooRoo's in Waterloo, and the Oneota Co-op in Decorah.

**Trudy** shared the NF wellness policy and its status currently, she has 22 staff taking part in the Lighten Up Iowa, she is also on a mentoring committee which is currently working with TAKO to develop a mentoring program for NF students. Also – NF had good turn out at their Wellness Blood Draw.

**Donna** spoke with the manager at Kaleidoscope Kids regarding healthy meals and shared the NIFF initiative story with her. She also mentioned a "good for the soul" happening: the committee to restore the Clermont Organ received a grant for \$100,000 to help with the organ's repair and restoration.

**Vicki** keeps Ron O'Kones updated on the NIFF initiative and is also participating in Fayette County's Lighten Up Iowa wellness group. On a personal note, she recently purchased a new refrigerator with the freezer on the bottom – whenever she opens the fridge – there are the fresh produce drawers staring her in the face – she says it really encourages healthy eating!

**Joe** has set up a meeting with individuals from the political parties in Fayette County to work together on a shared vision of the infrastructure and policy initiatives both parties can agree on and work towards. He hopes to form a 6 member committee of committed individuals.

**Dave** related that his organization, Helping Services of NE Iowa, is advocating a state level law which, if passed, would allow local control over smoking policies. He has also shared the NIFF initiative with the new owners of Rawson's Berries and hopes they will become involved in local food issues and plans. He is also currently giving draft horse team driving lessons to youth (what a picture on the website – [www.iowafoodandfitness.org](http://www.iowafoodandfitness.org)!)

**Barb S** reported on the nearly 100% participation the Starmont schools had in their staff wellness blood testing. They are also doing a diabetes study, which is still in progress. She is also working on a grant for a recess running activity and is hosting an elementary Health Fair on February 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Rich** mentioned that the Amish are building a produce store on Amish Blvd.

**Karla** shared information on the NIFF Coalition producer grants currently available to local producers and that she has coordinated a Lighten Up Iowa team in West Union.

**Roxanne** and her husband raise organic pork! Also, her children participate in the fruit & veggie snack program at their school. She is on the Lighten Up Iowa team at the hospital.

**Ruth** reported that over 200 people are taking part in A Healthier You. She also told us about two of our local students that will be featured in a billboard ad about childhood diabetes. She is also working on a community health needs assessment.

**WOW! THIS WAS IMPRESSIVE!**

NE Iowa F&F Initiative Goal

To create community environments that support healthy children, youth, and families by making available and promoting the procurement and consumption of local healthy food and the creation of space and structures for physical activity and play.

2. Regional F & F Leadership Team Report:
  - Our County needs to have a "Recorder" or "Historian" of sorts to compile the articles and success stories we see or hear about locally. Barb Ashby volunteered to do this for us. She will clip articles from the 3 local papers – others are encouraged to document success stories and bring to Barb as well as clip articles from other press they may see.
  - Filled the group in on the Hierarchy of Choices and the Core Values that were developed during the Visioning seminar in late November.
  - Gave updates on where we are with the Built Environment projects, and the workplace and school wellness projects.
3. Break to enjoy a locally grown (well – almost) meal featuring apples from Dan, Pork from Chad Ingels, potato salad from Joe, and buns from Ruth. (forgive me if I missed anything!)
4. Webcasts & Discussion:
  - "Building a Local Food System, Part 1 – How Did We Get Here?"
  - The group was divided into groups to discuss the three given discussion points.
  - Question 1: What is a local food system? It is a full circle in an area where food is grown, processed, marketed, delivered, and consumed.
  - Question 2: What is important to you about a local system and why do you care? Local control, food safety, economic control, community vitality and connections, cost, freshness, taste, quality, environmentally sound. We care because we live here.
  - Question 3: What is the message that other people should hear about the local food system?
    - a) healthier, environmentally friendly, forming relationships
    - b) can make it work and make it economically feasible for others to do
    - c) have resources to make system viable
    - d) value added that stays in our community
    - e) locally grown improves economics of communities
    - f) improves the infrastructure/political climate
    - g) improves the whole system of life in northeast Iowa"Locally Grown Food Grows Local dollars"
5. Other items:
  - Invite individuals who are interested in being, or are, producers to get involved in NIFF
  - WAVA (Women Adding Value to Agriculture) Conference coming up on Feb. 8 & 9 in Decorah
  - Check out the Hen House online.
  - NIFF Coalition meeting for lenders will be held on Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> in Fayette
  - INCA (Iowa Network for Community Agriculture) is having a Local Foods Conference in Cedar Rapids, Feb. 1-2.
  - Midwest Organic Farming Conference, Feb. 21-23 in LaCrosse.
6. Next Meeting: February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008. 4:00 – 6:00, ISU Extension Office.

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