

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

University Extension



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Get inside Extension and discover how we support healthy people, healthy environments, and healthy economies. Read about some of the ways ISU Extension meets local needs, improves quality of life, and helps make Plymouth County a better place to live. You'll be amazed at what we do.

Brad Harvey
Extension Council Chair

Carol Schneider
County Extension Education Director

Lighten Up Improves Health

Over three hundred Le Mars area residents joined fellow lowans in January for the 100 Day Challenge in Lighten Up Le Mars. Educational classes, daily journaling on-line, demonstrations, and exercise classes helped participants identify and establish new healthy habits.



Being engaged in the state wide program encouraged lowans to take a vested interest in their own personal health and then to do something about it by establishing new habits. By joining a team, such as "The Soon to Be Fab-less 8" or the "Water Warriors" participants found support which lead to success and a new healthy lifestyle for many.

Participants learned to focus on the possibilities and opportunities rather than focusing on failures.

Citizens Lead Water Project

Westfield Creek, along with others streams in western Plymouth County that feed the Big Sioux River, has been classified as impaired by the Iowa DNR for unacceptable bacterial levels. A community meeting to discuss issues was held, and a committee comprised of about 10 local residents have been meeting regularly with NRCS staff, Akron-Westfield students and teachers, and ISU Extension staff to plan activities to improve the water quality of their watershed.





Back row: Michael Beitelspacher, Gail Schoenrock, Debra Ahlers, Sandy Schnepf, Mark Held. Absent: Brad Schindel

Front row: Dr. John Conley, Brett McNaughton, Brad Harvey.

Plymouth County Extension Council

Every Iowa County has an elected Extension Council that guides local educational programming by partnering with staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents the issues and people of the county.

We have identified these local issues as priority topics for current and future programming:

- Support programs that foster economic growth in communities.
- 4-H Community Club programming.
- Natural Resources & Environmental Stewardship.
- Enhance the quality of life for Plymouth County residents.



We connect you to Iowa State University.

We are your local link to make connections

for campus enrollment, continuing education, campus visits, campus exhibits, conferences, camps, and sporting events.

Citizens Lead Water Project continued

The main goal of this Westfield Creek Watershed Project is to reduce the amount of *E. coli* in Westfield Creek, thus reducing the pathogen levels in the Big Sioux River. This group has determined that the best way to combat the amount of pathogens is to arrest sediment before it is delivered to the stream. Plans are underway to inform and educate area producers and landowners on the effect manure, sediment, and excess nutrients have on water quality. Grant funds from the Iowa Pork Producers have been received to work with the swine producers in the watershed this year – assessing manure value, testing stalks for left-over N remaining, calibrating manure applicators, and encouraging more crop residue left on the surface after application of manure. Additional grant funds are being requested to work with others in the watershed in the future.

Annie's Project

Empowering farm women to be better business people is the goal of *Annie's Project*, a nationally recognized curriculum designed for farm women. The outcomes of the six session series are as numerous as the women who attend. For some, learning about marketing, farm records, business plans, leases and estate planning opens the door to their partner's world. Annie was a woman who grew up in a small town in Illinois and always wanted to marry a farmer. She spent her lifetime learning how to be involved as a partner with her husband.



Crystal Jauer said, "I truly believe that women need a place and/or

network to come together and become educated and feel 110% confident about their decisions. I believe that education and knowledge are priceless and what a better place to come together with others that are in the same situation as you are."

Other participants add, "When the opportunity arises, I'll be able to talk about certain aspects of farming with confidence that I know what I'm talking about." "I appreciated the fact that Plymouth County Extension thought this program was worthy enough to bring to our county and make it available to farm women." "I believe it is extremely important to be as involved as possible in your own farming operation because you never know what tomorrow will bring!"

4-H Citizenship Trip Impacts Youth's Lives

4-H members from Northwest Iowa converged on the Nation's Capitol during their break from school to learn firsthand about their present and future citizenship responsibility. According to twins, Jill and Rebecca Ahlers, "The Citizenship Washington Focus trip gave many different opportunities for 4-H'ers to meet new people from across the country, to become a better leader and, to be a more active citizen. The trip also



allowed us to visit many important places from the Washington Monument, U.S. Capitol Building, to museums like the Smithsonian's. We always had something to do and learned so many new things that we can use in our life. It is a trip of a lifetime and a highlight of our high school years, all because of 4-H."