

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

University Extension



County Extension Staff

Gene Mohling, *Regional Extension Director*

Dianna Colgan, *County Youth Coordinator*

Barb Schintler, *Master Gardener Coordinator*

Amy Heims, *Office Coordinator*

Kathy Beierschmitt, *Office Assistant*

Megan Ruplinger, *Office Assistant*

Greg Brenneman, *Ag Engineering*

Jim Fawcett, *Field Agronomy*

Janet Martin, *4-H & Youth*

Patrick O'Malley, *Commercial Horticulture*

Jan Temple, *Nutrition & Health*

Maggie Mishler, *After School Program*

Emily Bauer, *After School Program*

Maison Bleam, *After School Program*

Mel Hostetler, *After School Program*

Melissa Stahl, *Nutrition Educator*

Lisa Yoder, *Nutrition Educator*

Scott Hansen, *BBBS Executive Director*

Jill Kromminga, *BBBS Program Director*

Julie Phanthavong, *BBBS Enrollment*

Chanel Meredith, *BBBS Match Support*

Sara Barron, *BBBS Match Support*

Cheryl Whitney, *BBBS Match Support*

Missy Watje, *BBBS School-Based Mentoring*

Erin Morrison-Vincent, *BBBS School-Based Mentoring*

Amanda Gallogly, *BBBS AmeriCorps*

Elyse Sable, *BBBS AmeriCorps*

Staff Serving Johnson County, based in other counties

Kristi Cooper, *Family Life*

Amber Bisinger, *External Relations*

Paul Gormley, *CIRAS*

Himar Hernandez, *Community Development*

Jim Jensen, *Farm Management*

Larry McMullen, *Swine*

Ray Reynolds, *4-H & Youth*

Denise Schwab, *Beef/Forage*

Phyllis Zalenski, *Resource Management*

Johnson County Extension

4265 Oak Crest Hill Rd SE

Iowa City, IA 52246

Phone: (319) 337-2145

Fax: (319) 337-7864

www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson

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 Johnson County a better place to live. You'll be amazed at what we do.

John Schneider
Extension Council Chair

Gene Mohling
Regional Extension Education Director

Family Night Out promotes community wellness

In 2009, Johnson County Extension, collaborating with the Iowa City Community School District and Johnson County Public Health, was



awarded the Iowa Healthy Communities Initiative grant. This grant provides funding for Family Night Out events that aim to improve fitness and nutrition for families at Grant Wood Elementary in Iowa City. Over the course of the grant, six Family Night Out sessions will be completed. During each session, families are served a nutritious dinner and parents and children are encouraged to dine together. Parents and children then attend sessions on physical activity, literacy, and nutrition. In the first two sessions, parents had the

opportunity to participate in the fitness tests their children take and they learned about ways to increase fruit and vegetable consumption and decrease fat when cooking with meats. The children received a nutrition-related book at each session and also learned how to make healthy snacks. Currently two of the six sessions have been completed with over 140 individuals in attendance.

Master Gardeners offer their talents throughout the community

Each year the Johnson County Master Gardeners use their skills and expertise to beautify the various communities within our county. They volunteer for a multitude of programs and events, such as garden tours,





Extension Council members Larry Bonde, Bill Terry, Maynard Hebl, John Schneider, Donna Davis, and Larry Culver. Not pictured: Connie Brinton, Denise Maier, and Donna Ruth.

Johnson 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:

- Serving youth through 4-H, the Afterschool program, and the Big Brothers Big Sisters program
- Nutrition education through the Pick a Better Snack & Act program
- Ag marketing & financial management
- Bioeconomy development and education
- Promoting environmental stewardship and education
- Support to business and industry, local



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We are your local link to make connections for campus enrollment, continuing education, campus visits, campus exhibits, conferences, camps, and sporting events.

... and justice for all

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Master Gardeners continued

displays at the 4-H & FFA Fair, the Plant Some Shade program, the Annual Flea Market & Plant Sale, and staffing the Hortline in the Extension Office several days a week. In addition, Master Gardeners care for the gardens and landscaping around Solon High School, the Iowa Firefighters Memorial, Lake MacBride Raptor Center, Ecumenical Towers, the Extension Office and Johnson County 4-H & FFA Fairgrounds, and Plum Grove, home of Iowa's first territorial governor. This year, the Master Gardeners assisted in the installation of a major landscaping project at Iowa City's Southeast Junior High School. They also helped the Johnson County Conservation Board with the installation of a rain garden on the Johnson County 4-H & FFA Fairgrounds. Through the work of over 139 volunteers, the Master Gardener program logged 3822 hours in the past year around the county.

Precision Ag Expo demonstrates new farming technologies

In September 2009, the ISU Southeast Research Farm in Crawfordsville hosted the Advances in Precision Ag Expo. This Expo provided demonstrations on auto-steer, auto-shutoff planters, and strip tilling and planting on the contour with RTK guidance systems. Those who attended were able to participate in the interactive demonstrations and learn first-hand how these new technologies in farming can benefit their operations, not only environmentally, but also financially. By investing in precision ag technology, crop producers are able to tailor their farming practices to best meet crop needs. In addition, producers may be able to increase yields and the efficiency of



production. While precision ag technology has been available for several years, recent advances in equipment are making it a viable option for producers. The Expo hosted 16 indoor and outdoor exhibitors, held six demonstrations, and had 250 individuals in attendance. According to one of the participants, the Expo was very "interesting and informative" and he went on to say, "I have read about RTK, WASS, auto-steer and strip-till precision planting, but the field day really connected the dots on how the system works and cleared up many questions."

Johnson County Extension partners with MidAmerican Energy and the Iowa DNR to "Plant Some Shade"

Since 2005, Johnson County Extension has partnered with MidAmerican Energy and the Iowa DNR to provide the "Plant Some Shade" program to MidAmerican Energy customers. This program allows Johnson county residents to purchase trees at an affordable cost in an effort to promote reforestation in the community. Each year customers purchase between 250 and 300 trees. The combined total of new trees planted in the community over the past four years is over 1100, with even more to be sold this fall.

