



## 2021 IN POWESHIEK COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State research and resources. We listen, learn, and work with the people of Poweshiek County for a #STRONGIOWA:



**Sustainable  
ENVIRONMENTS**



**Thriving  
COMMUNITIES**



**Resilient  
PEOPLE**



**Future  
LEADERS**



### Serving the People of Poweshiek County

As Iowan's adjusted to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, ISU Extension and Outreach continued to prioritize health and safety as we delivered research-based education to the people of Poweshiek County. During 2021 we focused on the following efforts.

ISU Extension and Outreach Poweshiek County began and ended 2020 focused on these local issues:

- **Economic Development**
- **Food and the Environment**
- **Health and Well-Being**
- **K12 Youth Outreach**

The Poweshiek County Extension Council has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming by partnering with extension staff. From needs assignment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents you and your issues. We are always serving Iowans and we are here for you. Now. Always.

**Thank you for your support.**

**Jason Meyer**

*Extension Council Chair*

**Gina McKeag-Hall**

*Council Secretary*

**Cheri Semprini**

*Council Co-Treasurer*

**Melissa Doty**

*Council Member*

**Jordan Harms**

*Council Member*

**Corey Latcham**

*Council Vice Chair*

**Mike Geiger**

*Council Treasurer*

**Kim Bushong**

*Council Member*

**Dan Doty**

*Council Member*





## Program Spotlight: National Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP)

Four 4-H youth and their two coaches joined the WHEP 4-H program to compete in the State Competition that was held at the Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge. The Poweshiek WHEP group met weekly from February through May to study ecosystems, wildlife species and concepts related to land and wildlife management. On May 22nd the youth attended the first ever Iowa 4-H WHEP Competition. They as a team wrote a 3-page plan that described how they would manage a specific tract of land to meet the need of three target species (northern harrier, red fox, and grasshopper sparrows). Judges complemented the team on their ability to write clearly and balance the trade-offs between the different habitats the species required. They were also graded on an individual test where they identified animal sounds, pelts and answered questions about 16 native prairie wildlife species. Medals were given for the top three individual scores and top three teams. Poweshiek Prowlers placed 1st as a team and one member placed 3rd overall individually! They did an amazing job and the time and effort they put in paid off!



## Economic Development

The 2020-2021 **Poweshiek Leadership Class** was able to meet most of the year face-to-face. The class of 2021 had 15 participants that were sponsored by many businesses and organization in Poweshiek County. Some of the highlights for this year was doing the “Amazing Race” during our first session, working with the Grinnell Dance Team for a Youth-Adult partnership session, participating in a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom via Zoom, doing a work out at Georgia Plumbs workout facility in Grinnell, and hosting our annual golf tournament which was postponed last year. This was made possible with the support of our communities.

“I learned more about what Poweshiek County has to offer in the last year than I have in the previous 28 year I have lived here. This program is a unique opportunity to network, learn about your community as well as about yourself.”

- *Samantha Boyd, Class of 2021*

**Poweshiek VITA – Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program** was able to assist 140 people within the community of Poweshiek as well as the surrounding communities. There were 12 volunteers who provided their time and efforts to prepare taxes for Seniors, Veterans, and Low-Income families. Poweshiek VITA was able to meet with clients in the Drake Community Library with scheduled appointments. A new addition this year was having our preparers do some client returns remotely. This program has been offered for five years in Poweshiek County.



## K12 Youth Outreach

### Read Across Iowa – Brooklyn, Montezuma, and Grinnell

In partnership with Poweshiek Farm Bureau, Poweshiek 4-H Staff was able to go into the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms at BGM, Montezuma, and Grinnell. In the classroom a Poweshiek 4-H member read the book “My Family Soybean Farm”. Then Poweshiek Extension Staff reviewed and discussed the book. Youth were able to create a model of the soybean life cycle. Each class was then able to complete the Mighty Soybean Activity where they mixed plaster and buried soybeans, so they could see if the soybeans were strong enough to break through. A copy of the book was given to each school library and each community library.

### New Partnership with The Brooklyn Public Library

From April to June the Mars program was presented on a monthly basis at the Brooklyn Library. Participants were able to build a Mars Rover and navigate it on a Mars simulation mat. The challenge being that they could not touch their rover after placing it on the Mars mat. The Extension Staff are looking forward to collaborating on future programs.

### Friend of 4-H – Montezuma School District

This award recognized an organization who makes a significant contribution to the Poweshiek County 4-H program. The Montezuma School District has been very supportive of the programs that Poweshiek County 4-H and Outreach has offered. They have been very generous with providing us with the opportunity to serve youth not only in the Montezuma area but with youth attending workshops. Not only have they provided facilities for programming, but they have also provided transportation for field trips and for other opportunities.



### Clover Kids

Clover Kids is a fun 4-H program specifically designed for children in kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The overall purpose of the Iowa 4-H Clover Kids program is to foster the development of life skills that are essential for the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical maturation of kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> graders by providing unique, age-appropriate educational opportunities.

In 2020-2021 the Poweshiek Clover Kids afterschool program had 76 participants throughout the Grinnell, BGM and Montezuma school districts. There were an additional 30 participants enrolled in Poweshiek Clover Kid Clubs.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this past year Clover Kid sessions were mainly done virtually with a few in person programs. For the virtual programs we set up Zoom sessions and delivered activity bags to all Clover Kid participants. A few of our virtual program sessions included: Hour at the Fair, Roller Coaster, Backyard Birds, and Terrific Trees.

A Summer Event was held for Clover Kids in June at Diamond Lake in Montezuma. We had 25 Clover Kids attend. They learned about dip netting, owls, hiking, and painted kindness rocks.

During the Fair, many Clover Kids participated in an Indoor Judging Day at the Poweshiek County Fair. Clover Kids participated in their own livestock a show at the fair on Sunday. They were able to show a bottle calf, bottle lamb, bottle goat, poultry or rabbits. An additional 20 Clover Kids participated with various projects. Fair time is always a highlight for the youth as well as their families.



## Food And The Environment

Poweshiek County Extension Agriculture Programs were continued in 2020 and 2021 by offering alternative delivery options. Some trainings were offered face-to-face with limited participation. While other trainings were offered virtually. Poweshiek County agricultural programs addressed the needs for our agricultural producers working in collaboration with our specialists, local businesses and organizations by offering their facilities, and supporting these programs.



## Extension Staff



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*Regional Extension  
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**Cathy Lents**  
*Executive  
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*County Youth  
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## 4-H Hall Of Fame Sharon Ford



Sharon Ford was a 4H member growing up. This developed into her helping with her children's 4-H club as a parent volunteer for a few years before later deciding to take a role as the club leader. She was a leader of the Bear Creek Pepper Uppers from 2005-2009. During her time as a parent volunteer, she assisted with writing a grant for our local school to plant trees along the newly built elementary school playground. She has also helped with county fair open judging for many years.

Sharon enjoys helping young people and has been an active member in the community. She retired in 2021 after devoting 30 years to teaching. She got her degree from Iowa State University and taught preschoolers with special needs for the AEA. She then took seven years off to run an in-home daycare until her children began school. She has been teaching at BGM schools until her retirement.

Sharon is an active member of PEO, TTT, P.I.E. (Partners in Education) and the Music Boosters at BGM. She has volunteered for countless school activities. Sharon is active within the First Presbyterian Church by volunteering with Sunday school, Christmas Pageants, Vocation Bible School, making banners and is a former member of Session. She also is a part of the Brooklyn Community Choir. Sharon also donates blood whenever she can.