



BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

2019 IN DICKINSON 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 Dickinson County for a #STRONGIOWA.

Dickinson 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:

- K-12 Youth Outreach
- Economic Development
- Food and the Environment
- Health and Well-Being



K-12 Youth Outreach

Egg-citing Chick Hatching Program Teaches Local Kindergarteners Science Standards and Life Lessons

This Spring, one hundred eighty-two Kindergarten students from Spirit Lake Elementary, Harris-Lake Park Elementary and Okoboji Elementary studied chick development from egg through hatching and into the first few days of life. Led by County Youth Coordinator Hannah Dibble, the program was a fun, hands-on way for youth to learn about the life cycle of an animal, the needs of living things and where food comes from.

Classrooms hosted an incubator filled with fertilized eggs and Dibble visited weekly to help them study development inside the egg and to prepare for the needs of chicks. Each four-week program concluded with cute fluffy chicks, excited students, and a wealth of knowledge about growth, nutrition and agriculture. The program paired with Kindergarten science benchmarks and included additional activities related to math, literacy and nutrition. The Classroom Hatching program was a partnership between ISU Extension and Outreach and the school districts, with Dibble leading the classroom enrichment in cooperation with each classroom teacher.

School enrichment activities like this impacted 773 youth from the county in 2019. Additionally, Dickinson County is home to 133 4-H members, 51 Clover Kids and 242 camp participants.

Extension Council Members

We want communities and farmers to thrive, and families and children to be healthy. And eventually we want to turn the world over to the next generation better than we found it.

Keith Brockmeyer
Extension Council Chair

Cindy Mart
Council Member

Cheryl Heronemus
Regional Director

Josh Paskert
Council Member

George Bower
Council Member

Brandon Rohrig
Council Member

Mary Beth DeWall
Council Member

Kiley Roth
Council Member

Casey Jones
Council Member

Ann Warburton
Council Member



Annie's Project for Women in Agriculture to be offered in Milford January-February 2020

Annie's Project is a six-week course created for women by women, with the purpose of empowering farm, ranch and agribusiness women who want to be more knowledgeable about their ag enterprises.

The key focus of the course is education and effective strategies to help make decisions in the following five key management areas:

- Finances
- Human Resources
- Legal
- Marketing
- Production

The course includes guest speakers, practical hands-on activities, resources and networking with other local women in agriculture. A key foundation of Annie's Project is that women learn best with and from other women, so the sessions will be led by women who are experts in their field.

The Milford Annie's Project will be held from 6:00 p.m. to approximately 9:00 p.m. six Thursdays in a row beginning Jan. 23, 2020.

For more information or to register, visit <http://www.aep.iastate.edu/womeninag/> or contact us at xdickinson@iastate.edu or 712-336-3488. Questions can be directed to Gary Wright, Farm Business Management Specialist at 712-223-1574.

Economic Development

Farm and Agribusiness Succession Workshop Encourages Planning Ahead for Smooth Transition of Farms and Businesses

There is a growing need for farm and agribusiness transition in Northwest Iowa. To address that need locally, ISU Extension and Outreach Dickinson County staff worked with Farm Business Management Specialist Gary Wright to host a Farm and Agribusiness Succession Workshop in Spirit Lake at the end of August.

In addition to Farm Business Management Specialist Gary Wright, the four-hour workshop also featured three additional agriculture succession experts:

- Steve Ferguson from the Iowa Finance Authority
- Kitt Tovar from the Center for Ag Law and Taxation
- David Baker from the ISU Extension and Outreach Beginning Farmer Center

Twenty-three participants attended the workshop and discovered more about successful farm and business succession, beginning farmer loan and tax credit programs and the legalities of succession or transition.

Twenty of the participants travelled from a seven-county area with Dickinson, Osceola, Emmet, O'Brien, Clay, Woodbury and Sioux Counties represented, and three participants travelled from out of state.

Siblings who participated in the program shared that they were "excited to take this information back to our parents and other siblings... we didn't even realize that some of the highlighted beginning farmer loans and tax credits existed and we are actually eligible for them."

Following the presentation, contact information for the four speakers was made available, and many follow-up calls and appointments were reported as a result of this initial program.



Featured Ag Succession Experts Steve Ferguson, Kitt Tovar and David Baker.

Food and Environment

Local Master Gardeners Give Back to the Community Through Fresh Produce, Education and Beautification

After applying for and receiving a Growing Together Mini-Grant from SNAP-Ed, local Master Gardeners moved forward with developing a Lakes-Area Donation Garden.

Because the cool, wet Spring prevented the garden from being planted until June 4, Master Gardeners were harvesting well into October. In total, they donated 882.5 pounds of fresh produce to Upper Des Moines Opportunity in Spirit Lake and the Lakes Area Senior Citizen Center. Calculated out, the fresh produce impacted 400 people, which is an outstanding step towards fighting food insecurity in the area.

The group plans to plant a cover crop in the garden this Fall to add nutrients and encourage soil conservation over the winter. The group also plans to apply for further grant money to increase sustainability in the future with perennial plants, permanent structures and irrigation.



Top: The Dickinson County Donation Garden in its prime. Bottom: Youth at Camp Foster YMCA spend time learning about composting and harvesting zucchini. Photos courtesy of Camp Foster YMCA.

Master Gardener Training Offered in Dickinson County Fall 2020



Master Gardeners are passionate about serving their communities and sharing gardening best practices.

Master Gardeners complete 40 hours of plant education training and then share their time and expertise as volunteers in community gardens, city beautification projects, farmers markets, youth camps and more.

Interested in becoming a Master Gardener?

Visit <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/> or contact us at xdickinson@iastate.edu or 712-336-3488.

Local Master Gardeners also partnered with Camp Foster YMCA to revive the camp's garden; thereby, providing gardening education and experience to youth campers during May through August. Master Gardeners helped the youth care for and harvest vegetables, as well as learn about composting and sustainability.

Through this endeavor, Master Gardeners learned that many youth had never gardened before, and if so, had only gardened with a grandparent. They also discovered that many youth from more urban areas had chosen to eat a vegetarian diet.

The produce harvested from the Camp Foster garden supplied the camp's salad bar and any extras were donated to local food pantries and to the newly-placed "Randy's Pantry."

"Randy's Pantry" is a cedar-built vegetable stand that was anonymously donated and placed outside of the Lakes Area Senior Center. Here, community members can drop off excess garden produce and those in-need can pick up fresh garden foods.

"Randy's Pantry" is named in tribute of the donor's brother who suffered from homelessness and mental illness, and recently passed away. With the success of "Randy's Pantry," the Spirit Lake Noon Kiwanis Club has since donated funds for three additional vegetable stands to be built by the Okoboji High School Industrial Technology class. Once completed, these stands will be placed in Lake Park, Milford and Arnold's Park.

Through these efforts, Master Gardeners and other local volunteers continue to fight food insecurity and help to provide additional food for those in-need in the Lakes Area.

Health and Well-Being

A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease Leads to Lakes-Area Support Group

A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease is designed to help participants recognize the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease, learn what causes it, explore effective treatment options and try out therapeutic activities that can be done in the home. The three-part program was hosted in collaboration with the Bedell Family YMCA in March 2019.

With a total of 32 participants, the program hosted individuals with Parkinson's Disease, family members of those affected and individuals who wanted to learn about the disease. Human Sciences Program Coordinator Sue Boettcher noticed that after each of the three sessions, participants were staying and visiting amongst themselves about their own struggles and successes.



Seats were filled at the Bedell Family YMCA for the first session of *A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease* in March.



Jenna Hardy Pedersen, JJ School of Music, shared information and exercises on how music can improve speech projection, gait and walking at the support group.

This realization led to the development of a free open-to-the-public Parkinson's Disease Support Group.

The Lakes-Area Parkinson's Disease Support Group now meets monthly, the first Tuesday of every month from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Similar to *A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease*, the Support Group is also a collaboration between the Bedell Family YMCA's Delay the Disease exercise class and ISU Extension and Outreach Dickinson County.

Boettcher shared that the support group has become a hub for conversations. Many struggle with the day-to-day challenges and think no one can relate, but at the support group, they have found others - whether directly or indirectly affected by Parkinson's - who face similar challenges.

Each month at their gathering, the support group hosts a speaker, as well as leaves time for discussion and sharing. Past speakers include a music therapist, yoga instructor, physical therapist, dietician and individuals who have lived with and studied Parkinson's Disease and treatment options for a number of years.

While hosting the support group, Boettcher discovered that the March *A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease* program needed to be offered again for those who may have spent the winter elsewhere. That program was held in August and hosted another 12 participants wanting to learn more about Parkinson's Disease, treatment and therapies to help.

County Extension Staff



Hannah Dibble
County Youth Coordinator



Sue Boettcher
Human Sciences Program Coordinator



Barb Utech
Part-Time Office Assistant



Kiley Biedenfeld
Marketing Coordinator

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Dickinson County

1600 15th Street
Spirit Lake, IA 51360
712-336-3488
www.extension.iastate.edu/dickinson



Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran, or other protected classes. Direct inquiries to the Diversity Advisor, 515-294-1482, extdiversity@iastate.edu.