County Council Receives Distinguished Service Award

This prestigious honor was given to Greene County last March. Greene County is committed to building a strong Iowa by engaging all residents through inclusive extension experiences to address local challenges. Only one county annually wins the award. Addressing the pandemic, drought, and derecho while building community collaborations is an example of the council’s outstanding commitment to extension. The council represents ISU Extension and Outreach at community events and makes staff a priority, ensuring a happy and efficient office. Finances and programming are at an all-time high.

Serving the People of Greene County

As Iowans 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 Greene County. During 2021 we focused on Reviving the Iowa Economy as our priority area with the following projects: Story Walk, Day Camps, Photo in a Box, Grant Writing 201, and Career Readiness Program.

The Greene County Extension Council has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming by partnering with extension staff. From needs assessment 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.

Shari Minnehan  
Extension Council Chair  

Bruce Bahnsen  
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Jessi Riley  
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Council Member

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Jill Rasmussen  
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Kyle Niles  
Council Member

Dustin Fouch  
Council Member

Brent Badger  
Council Member
**Story Walk**

This new program was implemented in Greene County first during the month of April for ISU Extension and Outreach Week, and then again in October for National 4-H Week. Both events were sponsored by local clubs and businesses.

The Story Walk activity addressed needs in several priority areas: literacy for any age, learning about the importance of horticulture and our environment, safe physical activity, and economic vitality. Held around the Jefferson Bell Tower Square, the event supported the retail shops that displayed story posters in their windows. Some businesses also offered prizes and activities to participants.

Our first book was “Bea’s Bees” by Katherine Pryor, which walks the reader through a little girl’s journey to inspire her school and community to save bees. The book used in the fall was “The Apple Pie Tree” by Zoe Hall. Readers learned how an apple tree changes each season, and how to grow and make an apple pie.

**Greene County Youth Day Camps**

Eight day camps were held in the month of June at no cost thanks to the generosity of Greene County Community School COVID Recovery Relief funding. Day camps lasted all day and were held at the new Greene County High School. Lunch was provided by a local restaurant, promoting more economic vitality to the community. More than $8,000 was spent locally with this program.

The camps for grades 1-3 filled up quickly. We offered a variety of STEM activities for these youngsters. *Fizz, Bubble, and Goo* explored the wonders of science by completing chemistry experiments and learning about the three states of matter. Making slime and observing the chemical changes was a highlight. *Fun with Bots* created a hands-on robotic coding opportunity. This taught problem solving and creative skills to the youth while they played games. A program that was open for youth in grades 1-12 was *Switch and Shout*. Participants learned what makes their heart beat, why their parents want them to eat vegetables, how to make healthy food choices and try new foods, and new games.

Camps for students in grades 4-8 offered a more advanced level of STEM activities. *Seeds, Sun, and Soil* explored how plants grow from a tiny seed into products that we use every day. The students completed experiments to see how plants use energy from the sun and nutrients from the soil. Because culinary activities are becoming more popular from cooking shows on television, *Science of BBQ* introduced grilling methods, meat cuts, cooking temperatures, and use of rubs, marinades, and seasonings. The participants also learned how to incorporate meat into a healthy diet and safe cooking techniques.

Finally, there were two camps for students in grades 4-12. *Spa Day* was a relaxing time spent learning how to make bath bombs, body salts, face masks, and lotions. Learning relaxation techniques such as yoga and proper breathing provided an ongoing skill youth can use. *Invent STEM* was our final camp. Youth were in engaged in the innovation of sketching, designing, and testing their ideas as an student engineer would. Critical thinking was used to solve real-world problems.

Each of these camps offered early career exploration for the youth involved, which could lead to a local apprenticeship. Keeping more Greene County natives living here is always a top priority for our community to grow and foster.
Showcasing 4-H at the County Fair

The Greene County Fair returned in 2021, providing the opportunity for youth to demonstrate what they had learned through their 4-H project work over the past year. Clover Café came back after the pandemic with a new manager and it was better than ever. 100% of the proceeds go back into supporting Greene County 4-H’ers for programs, scholarships, trips, and supplies.

There were 241 static exhibits, 39 beef animals, 105 sheep, 72 swine, 19 goats, 32 horses, 28 rabbits, 82 poultry, 21 dogs, 12 cattle kids, 13 poultry for clover kids, 5 rabbits for clover kids, 7 puppy pack kids, 4 goat kids, 15 little lambs, and 2 at the pet show. The community supported the youth exhibitors for their hard work on their projects by awarding more than $25,000 at the premium auction. That money goes back into the local economy.

The tug of war contest is always a 4-H favorite to end the fair.

Horticulture Programs

Several free programs were held for our local tree, plant, and pond enthusiasts. What Tree Should I Plant was held in March in collaboration with Thomas Jefferson Gardens of Greene County and Trees Forever; 12 residents attended. 200 tree seedlings were distributed to 30 families from Iowa DNR and Trees Forever in May. During ISU Extension and Outreach Week in April, Creating Your Pond Oasis by Midwest Aquatics and Landscaping was held as a lunch and learn. Tree Talk with Brad Riphagen, Trees Forever coordinator of southwest Iowa and licensed arborist, was held October 19.
Greene County Career Readiness

As our state works toward recovery, ISU Extension and Outreach in Greene County has been reviving the Iowa economy. The Career Readiness Project has become our long-term project to assist employees and employers.

Greene County employers are looking for qualified and consistent workforce, while employees are looking to improve their household income. This project is collaborating with the following entities to achieve this goal.

- Small Business Development
- Iowa Central Community College
- Greene County High School Career Academy
- ISU Extension and Outreach Community Economic Development
- Greene County Development Corporation
- Jefferson Matters Main Street

Looking ahead to 2022, ISU Extension and Outreach in Greene County will positively impact the local economy by using Iowa State University resources and local enthusiasm.

Food Safety and Security

The Healthy and Homemade Program educated participants about how to adapt recipes from the stove to a slow cooker. Spend Smart. Eat Smart. recipes were used to make freezer meals. Healthy and Homemade was taught in the fall. ServSafe is taught in the spring and winter to food service managers and workers to provide food protocols. Ann Parker and Mary Krisco, human sciences specialists, presented.

Welcome Baby Paislee

Kayla Willms, county youth program coordinator, and her husband, Skylar, welcomed their first child, Paislee Rebecca, to make a family of three on October 1, a fitting celebration for National 4-H Week.

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