

BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

ISU Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State University research and resources. We are working with the people of Guthrie County for what we all want: a strong Iowa.

Guthrie 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:

- Economic Development
- Health and Well-being
- K12 Youth Outreach

“Summer Food & Summer Fun” Summer Lunch Program

Guthrie County ISU Extension & Outreach partnered with New Opportunities & Guthrie Center Elementary to provide a summer activity & lunch for area children. This program took place in June, every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Guthrie County Extension & Outreach partnered with different educational organizations to provide the educational “summer fun” component to the program, with a free lunch following. The children enjoyed learning about a wide variety of topics, from nature, to agriculture to local heroes. Approximately 200 children of all ages participated.



The Guthrie County Extension Council guides local educational programming by partnering with ISU Extension and Outreach staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the elected council represents the issues and people of the county.

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.

Barbara Gigar

Extension Council Chair

Terry Torneten

Regional Director

“Developing Dynamic Leadership”

Guthrie County ISU Extension & Outreach partnered with Greene County ISU Extension & Outreach & Midwest Partnership to host a two-day leadership academy for up-and-coming professionals in Guthrie, Greene, Audubon & Adair counties. Businesses & individuals within the region were encouraged to nominate people who stood out as future leaders & could benefit from additional leadership training. 34 community leaders were selected to attend this professional development opportunity. Participants heard from influential speakers, took the COLORS personality test, & networked with other up-and-coming professionals from various industries across the region.

Guthrie County ISU Extension & Outreach

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VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)

VITA was offered at the Guthrie County Extension and Outreach office for the sixth year. This free service was offered to individuals with an income of \$57,000 or less. This service is provided by IRS trained and certified volunteers.

In 2016, VITA volunteers prepared 157 income tax returns. The total federal EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) claimed was \$91,131. These credits were reflected in a total federal refund amount of \$249,803. State refunds totaled \$36,394, including \$13,670 of Iowa EITC.

In some cases, state refunds included refunds from 2 states for a taxpayer. These refunds assist families in meeting basic needs & saving for future goals boosting their financial stability. Through this public value program, the refunds local taxpayers receive are often spent locally & enhance the economic vitality of our communities.

Youth Leadership Development

One of the workshops offered this year was "Ricochet: an Extreme Leadership Adventure" for individuals in middle school. There was a focus on communication, decision-making, time management & more. As a part of this group, they were challenged to do something together. The participants chose to do a 5k fun run to raise money for the local county fairgrounds. In October, over 50 people participated in this glow in the dark fun run. The individuals planned & carried out the run entirely by themselves, & were able to raise \$500 for their cause. There was also a regional leadership retreat offered in September. High school & middle school youth were put in challenges to build their leadership skills in a fun environment.



County Extension Staff

Mary Ebert
County Program Coordinator

Mollie Clark
County Youth Coordinator

Vicki Frohling
County Office Coordinator

STEM Activities

This year, STEM was the focus of all of the local & regional youth programs from robotics to food science. The food science workshop was offered during holiday break, & individuals learned the different properties of common ingredients. Participants dug deeper into the roles of salt & enjoyed throwing meat against the wall to observe how salt binds food together.

Multiple robotics workshops were offered during the spring in cooperation with local libraries. Engineering was the focus as youth had to create robots out of items from your average junk drawer. This hands-on workshop taught participants how to properly use hand & power tools in a safe, controlled environment.

Youth learned the basics of welding, woodworking, & horticulture from various workshops that were open to all youth in 4th grade & above. All workshops were hands-on & taught youth new skills while partnering with local professionals. Participants were given the tools of the trade & were actively engaged while they worked to complete their projects.

Palmer Amaranth Meeting

Palmer amaranth is an invasive weed that made its way into Iowa within this past year, & specifically into Guthrie County early this fall. A palmer amaranth infestation causes a negative economic impact by creating crop yield losses, & also requires an elevated level of weed management. Palmer amaranth needs to be identified early to be eradicated., with the difficulty lying in how closely it resembles waterhemp. Guthrie County Extension & Outreach hosted an informational meeting in early September with ISU Field Agronomist, Mike Witt, presenting. Mike covered palmer amaranth identification, its plant biology, current levels of infestations, & management possibilities in CRP plantings & row crops. 17 people attended this meeting, with a few people coming from out of the county. With the discovery of more & more cases of palmer amaranth, additional follow-up field calls to verify the weed's presence have been conducted as needed & requested by our clients.

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