Meeting Local Needs 2014

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ISU Extension and Outreach provides educational opportunities for economic development, food and the environment, health and well-being, and K-12 youth outreach. We meet local needs, so Wright County can be an even better place for the next generation.

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We have identified these local issues as priority topics for current and future programming:

- Small Business Management
- Water Quality
- Strengthening Families

Economic Development

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Four IRS-certified VITA volunteers, with training and support from Wright County Extension, filed 2013 tax returns for 140 low-income households, and assisted fourteen other households who did not end up filing. The free tax sites were located at the Eagle Grove Memorial Library and the Extension Office. Of those served, 39% were eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, which is available to low-income workers between the ages of 25-64. Taxpayers claimed a total of $215,673 in federal and state refunds, and saved an estimated $21,000 in tax preparation fees, strengthened their financial well being and provided an economic boost to the community.

Health and Well Being

Smart Choice; Health Insurance

In the fall of 2013, over 30 people attended “Smart Choice: Health Insurance” workshop led by Barb Wol lan, Extension Family Finance Specialist. The program was designed to help clients understand their options and make the best decisions for their situation. The workshop introduced the new Health Insurance Marketplace and described the cost reductions available to many Iowans through the Marketplace. Participants were able to build information and skills for choosing a health insurance policy that fit their individual needs.
Food and Environment

Emerald Ash Borer Workshop

An Emerald Ash borer workshop was held in May, 2014. The workshop speaker was Dr. Jesse Randall, ISU Extension and Outreach Forest-er. Dr. Randall discussed the presence of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), an exotic, destructive bug that targets all ash trees and is spreading across Iowa. Session topics included: proper identification of the Emerald Ash Borer and other native borers, treatment methods, and success planning recommended as replacements for ash trees.

Farmland Leasing

In August 2014, Kelvin Leibold, ISU Extension and Outreach Farm and Ag Business Management Specialist, had over 50 people attend the annual leasing meeting and gain understanding of the current cash rental rate survey and factors driving next year’s rents, such as market trends and input costs. Attendees learned about types of leases and results of farmland value surveys. Additionally, information on the 2012 Census of Agriculture, new Farm Bill, CSR2, and the Nutrient Reduction Strategy was presented.

K-12 Youth Outreach

STEM Robotics Camp

For three days in early August, Wright County students gathered at the elementary school in Clarion to learn about Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) utilizing a new mobile robotics lab created in cooperation with Hamilton, Humboldt, Webster and Wright Counties. Eighteen 4th-8th graders worked on team building, mechanical engineering issues, and computer programming while working towards a simulated space challenge. Many of those young people can now be found meeting after school with 4-H STEM volunteer Erica Lindaman and volunteers from Hagie Manufacturing as they apply their learning towards expanded STEM goals.

Food Safety Quality Assurance

The Iowa 4-H Food Safety and Quality Assurance (FSQA) program is a curriculum designed to be teach 4-Her’s their role in food production. Wright County educated 73 youth for the 2014 fair season. Youth go through the FSQA training because Iowa 4-Hers produce over 17 million pounds of meat each year, which all goes into the American food supply. With over 15,000 Iowa 4-Hers enrolled in livestock projects, food safety is one of an animal producers’ biggest responsibilities. The goal of this program is to help youth and their parents understand how they can produce the safest meat products possible.

Citizens Washington Focus (CWF)

CWF is a national 4-H leadership program for high school students, grades 9-12. Every summer nearly 1,500 young people stay at the National 4-H Conference Center, near Washington, D.C., to participate in this week-long program. Forty 4-H youth and five chaperones from Region 7 counties had the opportunity to attend this leadership program in June, 2014. Wright County had six youth and an adult chaperone participate. Participants learned the importance of civic and social responsibilities as they relate to their development as better citizens and leaders.

...and justice for all

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