



MSU Extension Education & Research Improving the Quality of Life

In Lincoln County

Community Health Fair – Lincoln County 4-H club members and ambassadors sparked their community into thinking about healthy lifestyles last spring. The 4-Hers worked with local physicians to secure donations, grants, equipment and professionals in an effort to provide a health fair at the Senior Citizens Center for all community members.

Interested participants received free bone density screening, cholesterol screening, blood pressure screening, weight analysis, glucose screening and chair massage. Local doctors were on hand to meet with individuals and discuss the results of the reports. In addition, the 4-Hers also brought in experts to speak about nutrition and exercise. The health fair received great praise from health professionals as well as community members. The 4-Hers agreed to make the event a yearly community service project.

Teaching healthy eating habits – Last year, MSU Extension/Lincoln County joined forces with area schools to provide nutrition education to elementary school students. As part of the Montana FSNE program, nutrition assistant Annette Sonntag provides six-week courses to local 3rd and 5th grade students. The students learn about healthy lifestyles in an interactive format. The students reported that they really enjoyed eating the snacks. The teachers reported that the students gained new knowledge and changed behaviors with regard to eating.

Leader College – Two years ago, Lincoln County 4-H volunteers were among the first to pilot a new leader-training program focusing on positive youth development. The course consists of three levels. Participants can receive college credit for partaking in the training. Many of the leaders have completed the first two levels of the training, and are now teaching the course to other 4-H volunteers. Each of the volunteers who have completed the training has said that the course helped them strengthen their club, the 4-H members, and their personal growth. A few have used the training as qualifications for new employment. Currently, 4-H volunteers are working with the county agent to develop a leader-mentor program.

If You Please, Mr. President, - This program was initiated this year to teach club officer training to 4-H members. The youth members learned about the roles of club officers, proper parliamentary procedure, leadership, and working together as a team to be more effective and involved in the operations and management of their clubs. Leaders have reported that the members were very enthused about the program and felt more comfortable being youth leaders and running their club with very limited adult intervention.

Natural Resource Youth Education – Each year, the Extension office works collaboratively with local teachers as well as the county weed coordinator to provide education that relates to natural resource issues. A one-hour session is offered to middle school students, which focuses on native and invasive plant species. Students learn about noxious weed identification, how noxious weeds impact them, and management techniques. Each student receives an identification handbook and many become eager hunters for weeds that are on the “most wanted list” and will earn them \$50.

A second component of this program includes a month-long project that is designed for students studying biology. Students learn about forest health, wildlife habitat, and fire behavior. During this program, the students study three different areas (one impacted by wildfire, one prescribed burn, and one old-growth location). The students then use what they have learned from their data (GPS, qualitative, and quantitative studies) to create a forest plan on a research site.

Lincoln County Extension Office is located in the County Annex Building in Eureka Phone: 406-296-9019



An educational resource dedicated to improving the quality of people's lives by providing research-based knowledge to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of families, communities and agricultural enterprises.

West Nile Monitoring – Last year, West Nile Virus became a major concern for people who enjoy the outdoors and horse owners alike. Therefore, MSU Extension/Lincoln County collaborated with county and state health officials this year to present West Nile Education Seminars. The Extension office also participated in a statewide mosquito-monitoring project.

Master Gardener Training – Master Gardener classes have become one of the most popular programs offered in Lincoln County. Participants learn about landscaping, fruit trees, pruning, weed management, composting, vegetable gardens, soils and amendments, annuals, perennials, diseases, integrated pest management, and turf grass management, to name just a few topics. This course takes place each winter for 8-10 weeks.

Rodent Roundup – For local hay growers, a growing Columbia ground squirrel population continues to be a source of frustration and economic losses. This spring, the Extension office collaborated with the Montana Department of Agriculture to provide field demonstrations for rodent control. Landowners learned how to bait, set traps, and properly use a burrow builder in an effort to reduce the amount of damage to forage caused by burrowing rodents.