

# Calhoun County Annual Report | 2016

## Putting Knowledge to Work!

West Virginia University Extension works to provide “solutions in your community” through key program areas including agriculture, environment and natural resources, 4-H youth development, food and nutrition, health and wellness, financial planning and home gardening. These research-based programs and services are available to all residents of Calhoun County thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners – the Board of Education and County Commission.

## Highlights

Calhoun County Extension had a strong year in 2015! From program development to extended outreach efforts to overall growth, the Extension program has much to celebrate.

Here are a couple brief highlights from the year:

- The Youth Livestock program flourished with the guidance of Daisy Fryman, ANR agent. 27 youths completed livestock projects. Those projects grossed \$42,985.95 – that is up 70% from 2014.
- Under the direction of Nancy Bremar, NOI, 149 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade youths competed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Nutrition Month Art Contest. Youth are presented with a specific nutrition/health theme; they are asked to take what they have learned in the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) and transfer that knowledge into an art poster. A \$500 donation was secured from Minnie Hamilton Health Systems to cover the cost of prizes for the winners.
- The Calhoun County 4-H Camp expanded their programming in 2015 by covering all three 4-H Mission Mandate areas (Citizenship, Healthy Living and Science) during the “This is 4-H: 100 Years of Camping” themed camp directed by Jamie Mullins, CEWD agent, in July. Camp attendance was up by 10 youths this summer to 82 campers.

## 4-H and Youth Development

The 4-H/Youth Development Programs in Calhoun County have the pleasure of working with an important audience within the community – the children. In 2015, the various programs touched the lives of more than 300 youths in Calhoun County. These programs include 4-H camp, 4-H clubs, Energy Express, 4-H basketball, Venison 101, etc.

### 4-H Programs

Youth have various opportunities to participate in 4-H programming in Calhoun County. From clubs to

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camps to the local basketball program, the Calhoun County 4-H program aims to provide a safe, fun, educational environment for the community's youth. As a result of participation in 4-H, youth gain socialization skills, teamwork/building opportunities and develop various focused skills that will serve them well into young adulthood.

In 2015, the West Virginia 4-H Program celebrated 100 years of camping!

- 82 youths attended the Calhoun County 4-H Camp. Youth were treated to activities that met all three of the 4-H Mission Mandate areas (Healthy Living, STEM and Citizenship). 21 of those campers were first-year campers.
- No youth chose to go home. This is, in part, due to the safe inclusive environment the camp staff provided. 98% of the camp attendees felt the trained and vetted staff was "Good" or "Very Good."
- Four 4-H youths had the opportunity to participate in state level 4-H programming by attending State 4-H Camps in the summer of 2015. In addition, 2 youths represented Calhoun County as exchange campers at Gilmer County's camp.
- 4-H participation in general is up! Achievement banquet attendance saw an increase of 55.6%. Three more projects were completed in 2015, and 4 new leaders joined the program.
- The 4-H basketball program has returned. As of December 31, 115 youths were enrolled to participate in the program. Youth gain valuable fundamental and teamwork skills through their participation in the program.

### Energy Express

Children living in low-income homes with limited resources have been found to have lower vocabulary levels when they enter school; often, these youth continue to struggle and trail other students throughout their school years. Many are also affected by the "summer slide," or the loss of information learned during the school year. Youth who participate in the Energy Express program and practice reading skills during the summer are more prepared for the start of a new school year. In the long term, youth with consistent reading skills who are more prepared to learn are more likely to graduate from high school and pursue college.

- Program was made possible through collaboration with *Save the Children*. The collaboration provided funding to allow for youth to participate in a full-day program and also receive lessons in math and science.
- 39 elementary-aged youths enrolled in the 2015 Energy Express Program at Arnoldsburg Elementary. 29 of those youth maintained 50% attendance.
- 1,756 meals were served to Energy Express youth and youth volunteers.
- Eight young adults were employed full-time by the program resulting in a small economic impact.

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- On average, youth participating in the Energy Express program across the state gained 2.8 months in broad reading achievement. According to *Save the Children's STAR Reading Assessment*, children at the Calhoun site added seven months to their Grade Equivalency!

### **Venison 101**

Hunting is a favorite pastime throughout West Virginia. Participation in this program equips participants with the ability to safely get Venison from the field-to-table using recommended “Best Practices.” Youth are able to recognize various diseases and know how to respond to each. They are familiar with hunting regulations and proper herd management techniques. They are also aware of various processing procedures and are introduced to various non-traditional recipes. In 2015, 215 youths participated in the program.

- 29 youths participated in the program at Calhoun Middle/High School. 33 youths participated at the Calhoun-Gilmer Career Center, and 153 youths participated at other locations.
- Jamie Mullins, CEWD agent, co-presented a poster at the 2015 National Association of Extension 4-H Agents (NAE4-HA), entitled “Venison 101: Implementing Adult Programming into the Classroom.” This brought national attention to this program.

## **Agriculture and Natural Resources**

The Agriculture and Natural Resources program continues to make an impact in Calhoun County. 130 citizens engaged in agriculture and natural resource programs in 2015!

### **Youth Livestock Programs**

Youth livestock programs in Calhoun County enable youth to gain life skills such as decision making, responsibility, record keeping and money management to create successful young adults.

- 59 youths received hands-on training in Youth Livestock Quality Assurance at the Livestock Overnight Camp.
- 37 youths started livestock projects, with 27 completing those projects.
- 6 livestock workshops were offered to help youth learn how to care for their project. Topics included administering vaccinations SUBQ and IM, properly reading medicine labels, etc.
- Youth livestock projects grossed \$42,985.95. Animals sold include 5 market lambs, 6 market goats, 2 market hogs and 4 pens of rabbits.

### **Livestock Handling**

Presentations on Livestock Handling help farmers understand the importance of moving cattle in a way which reduces stress levels and ensures a quality product of consumers. In addition, livestock working facilities help farmers work cattle in a low stress environment and ensures that cattle are

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easily managed while receiving vaccinations and parasite control medication, which ensures a quality product for consumers.

- 16 farmers gained assistance on how to properly handle cattle when working them for annual vaccinations and weaning calves from herd.
- 16 farmers learned specifications of livestock handling facilities.
- 1 farmer built livestock handling facilities using the information obtained from the class.

### **Women in Agriculture**

Women in Agriculture programs, such as Annie's Project and the Women in Agriculture Conference, enabled female producers to learn how to diversify their operations and network with colleagues regionally and statewide. This results in farmer-to-farmer learning and expanded profits through networking.

- 11 female farmers gained agriculture risk mitigation training in Annie's Project.
- 200 women farmers attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Women in Agriculture Conference and networked with fellow farm operators and over 25 support agencies.

## **Community, Economic and Workforce Development**

Efforts toward Community, Economic and Workforce Development were apparent in 2015. From collaborating with University of Tennessee to enhance tourism at the Calhoun County Park to applying for an ARC grant that may provide funding for new capacity building projects, the WVU Extension Office has been an active participant in CEWD projects. In addition, Jamie Mullins, CEWD agent, has taken an interest in developing an expertise in post-secondary/workforce development. 2015 was about developing lessons and topics; 2016 will be all about delivering that knowledge within the community.

### **Dark Skies Park Development**

Through collaboration with the University of Tennessee, a group of local community members have taken an interest in developing a Dark Skies Park at the current Calhoun County Park. The park is still in the design and planning phases; however, the park is expected to have a substantial economic impact on the community in the future.

- Three community meetings were held to discuss potential plans for the park. One meeting involved the development of a Dark Skies Park Working Group on the local level. This team will be tasked with steering the project forward and demonstrating local capacity.
- Three new partners joined the team this year; those new partners are the Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council, the Little Kanawha Area Development Corporation and the Civil Air Patrol.

### **Post-Secondary/Workforce Development**

Low-resource youth are often unaware of their future opportunities. Their knowledge of careers

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and post-secondary education is limited. Youth who participate in post-secondary/workforce development programming are more aware of the skills needed to work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace. They are also more aware of the various career opportunities for their future.

- 3 classes were able to reach 14 youths in Calhoun County on the topics of resume development and proper professional dress.
- 5 other programs were taught at the regional or state level. Those programs reached 108 youths in the Mid-Ohio Valley and throughout West Virginia.
- Jamie Mullins, CEWD agent, published two articles with a focus on post-secondary/workforce development. “Mind the Gap – Generational Differences in the Workplace,” was published in December 2015 as part of the *Inspire Learning Series*. “Take the Stage – Practicing Workplace Etiquette,” was published as part of the *Global Education Skill-A-Thon* series.

## Families and Health

The Families and Health Program is majorly impacted by the efforts of the Family Nutrition Program in Calhoun County. In 2015, the FNP program reached 100% of all 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade youth in Calhoun County! As a result of her efforts, Nancy Bremar, Nutrition Outreach Instructor (NOI), received the *Community Outreach Award* for the Family Nutrition Program for 2015.

In addition to the efforts of the FNP program, the CEOS club at Rush Run remains active.

### Family Nutrition Program

Nutrition education programs encourage youth to try a variety of healthy foods. As a result of those programs, youth reported viewing healthy options more favorably.

- 266 youths were reached in 2015. Calhoun County served as a pilot site for a new K-2<sup>nd</sup> program; that number includes 43 second graders.
- Following participation, 86% reported liking vegetables; almost 90% enjoyed fruits and whole grains.
- 79% of youth participants tried at least one new healthy food during the program.

Family Nutrition Programs (FNP) are also available for adults. These courses cover topics like Federal Dietary Recommendations, food safety and physical activity.

- 12 adults participated in the series of FNP classes.
- 100% of participants improved their ability to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Recommendations, and they improved their use of safe food handling practices.
- 10 adults improved their physical activity practices.

### Community Education Outreach Service

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The Calhoun County CEOS program boasts a strong and active club at Rush Run. This club provides donations to the food bank monthly and provides generous donations to individuals and programs throughout the year. In addition to their outreach efforts, they also enjoy various educational lessons. One of those they highlighted from 2015 include Laughing Yoga.

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