

# Taylor 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 Taylor County thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners – the Board of Education and County Commission.

## Highlights

The Taylor County 4-H Leaders Association finished funding a \$25,000 WVU Foundation Endowment which will provide financial support for the county 4-H program annually.

381 youth were served through short term, hands-on STEM activities led by 2 Summer Associate VISTAs. The VISTAs programming efforts were a result of collaboration with many community organizations and businesses like the Taylor County Public Library, Project ISAAC, Little Feet Daycare, Grafton Farmers Market, Church of the Good Shepherd UMC, and North Central WV Community Action.

125 people participated in a Summer Walking Challenge, resulting in 25,925.5 overall miles being reported during the 100 day period, making Taylor County the statewide winner of the Summer Steps program.

## 4-H and Youth Development

Increased success in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) and other academic subjects, leads to positive outcomes for youths as well as a reduction in risky behaviors. Because of their involvement in 4-H activities in Taylor County, youth are more likely to obtain well-paying jobs, create their own businesses and contribute to the health and wellbeing of their communities.

- 77 youth attended Taylor County 4-H Camp. Ten Cloverbuds participated in a six-hour program on Wednesday of camp and 31 adults volunteered during camp in some capacity (class instructor, overnight counselor, etc.).
- 93 members and 14 Cloverbuds were enrolled in a community 4-H club during the 2014-2015 club year.
- 56 members completed 86 4-H projects for the Taylor County Fair. Thirty of these projects received blue ribbons and will be eligible for exhibition at the 2016 WV State Fair.

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- \$2,500 in Community Participant Grant funding from Senator David Sypolt was secured to purchase additional equipment for the county 4-H program's Lego Robotics educational activities that are offered as school enrichment and a specialty 4-H club.
- The Taylor County 4-H Leaders Association finished funding a \$25,000 WVU Foundation Endowment which will provide financial support for the county 4-H program annually.

Low-resource children have been found to have lower vocabulary levels when they enter school and continue to be behind other children throughout their school years. Children who participated in Energy Express in our county, and who read and practice reading skills in the summer, will enter the new school year better prepared. The better prepared students are to learn, the more likely they will graduate from high school and pursue college training.

- 24 youth attended the Energy Express program at Flemington Elementary at least 50% of the program.
- 37 youth and adults volunteered 1,258.25 hours of service to the program.
- \$7,193 was raised in 2015 to meet the local match for Energy Express.

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

The beef cattle industry faces challenges that include, but are not limited to, increasing competition from other meats, product variability, and rising costs associated with production. WVU Extension efforts in Taylor County to promote marketing pools and analyze cattle through the Livestock Administrator database increases production and sale of cattle in this county and in the state, thus improving the county's economy from agriculture.

- Seven producers participated in the Taylor County Marketing Pool. These producers marketed 156 calves for a total of \$153,359.45.
- Educational programs which increased the knowledge of livestock producers on cattle genetics and grazing management were attended by 42 individuals.

The Youth Agriculture program teaches kids the basics of the livestock industry and responsibility while caring for livestock projects.

- 23 4-H and FFA members participated in the Taylor County Jr. Livestock Program, exhibiting and selling 37 project animals for a total of \$52,900. An additional \$2,690 was raised to

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support 4-H, FFA and a local scholarship fund through resells of these project animals.

- Each member of the Taylor County Jr. Livestock program received 4 hours of training on quality assurance and management topics.

## Community, Economic and Workforce Development

As leaders in our county identify and build on our community's assets, we build solid foundations in community organizations.

- Extension Service partnered with the PATCH (Planned Approach to Community Health) Coalition to acquire a \$1,000 Try This Grant to support a kids' coupon and physical activity initiatives through the Grafton Farmers' Market. Between August and October 2015, \$130 in vouchers were distributed to 26 families reaching 50 youth ages 17 and under.
- Over \$6,000 in grant money was secured to develop a community garden on Main Street in Grafton. Twelve of 17 beds were rented during this inaugural growing season.
- The Extension Service supports the Taylor County Fair Association by being responsible for the Exhibit Hall, Indoor Vendors, Livestock Shows, Pet Show, Exhibitor Book, website and social media. \$1,640 was generated for the Fair Association through indoor vendor fees.

## Families and Health

According to a report by the WV Governor's office in 2013, if West Virginia is to successfully reverse high health care costs and poor outcomes, it is going to require specific changes in the lifestyles of West Virginia citizens that address the high-cost health conditions and improves the overall health and wellbeing of West Virginia families. Extension programs like Dining with Diabetes and the Love Your Heart Campaign play an important part in improving overall health by teaching individuals how to make healthy food and activity choices which will lead to better health outcomes over time for them and their families.

- 16 individuals attended a Love Your Heart Luncheon to increase their knowledge about heart health.
- Eight people attended Dining with Diabetes to improve their nutritional management of the disease.
- 53 afterschool youth learned about MyPlate, making healthy nutrition choices, and the need for physical exercise through a 12 week *Just Be It! Healthy & Fit* Program.
- 125 people participated in a Summer Walking Challenge, resulting in 25,925.5 overall miles being reported during the 100-day period, making Taylor County the statewide winner of the Summer Steps program.

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- A \$2,500 Change the Future Mini-grant was secured to support the “*Get Moving Grafton*” initiative in order to identify, mark, and promote walking routes through Grafton that people can easily use for free physical activity.

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