

Ag-Citing offers hands-on ag education to 3rd graders



by Bonnie Dalager

The Ag-Citing program has been a part of ISU Extension in Clay County for 18 years. Held during the Clay County Fair in partnership with schools in seven counties, the vision of the program is to promote the importance of agriculture and natural resources among young people while developing their understanding, appreciation, and application of science through a variety of hands-on activities.

Ag-Citing utilizes volunteer presenters and ambassadors to work with 3rd graders during a field trip day to the Clay County Fair. The teachers of each classroom also receive pre-curriculum and post-curriculum for use in the classroom before and after the trip. The mission of the program is to provide experiential learning opportunities to educate and excite students about agriculture and its importance to individuals, communities, and our state.

The majority of northwest Iowa young people are one or more generations removed from the farm. In 1900, 40 percent of Americans lived on farms. That figure dropped to less than 2% today. Because it is no longer feasible to arrange for every student to visit a farm, Ag-Citing provides a great way for the next generation to learn from the agribusiness industry about the importance of agriculture in Iowa.

Since its pilot in 1995, Ag-Citing has served youth from all 15 school districts within a 35-mile radius of Spencer. The program has been delivered to over 13,000 students, 1,700 adult chaperones, and 65 classroom teachers. They study about the history of our natural resources, including our soils and native prairie plants, as well as commodities in Iowa today.



The Ag-Citing Experience has been designed and led by a team of Iowa State University Extension (ISUE) professionals with backgrounds in youth development, education, agriculture & natural resources, and consumer marketing. These specialists have utilized research-based curriculum and data to create classroom lessons for use by teachers before and after their outdoor experience at the Clay County Fair. Additional experiential hands-on activities are prepared and facilitated by ISUE staff to engage students, teachers, and volunteers throughout the 261-acre outdoor classroom experience at the fair.

This year, Ag Partners LLC is sponsoring the Ag-Citing program. New materials and equipment will be added to the program, which will be housed in the newly-named 'Ag-Citing Center' on the Clay County Fairgrounds. To learn more about Ag-Citing, and how you can be a part of this cornerstone program, please contact Cheryl Hurst, In-School Program Coordinator, at hurst@iastate.edu or (712) 262-2264.

Family Caregivers: "Now more than ever"



SPENCER, Iowa Adding the role of caregiver to an already full life can be overwhelming. With about 90 million family caregivers in the United States, National Family Caregivers is recognizing the need for their service with the theme "now more than ever."

"The physical, emotional and financial stress can make it difficult to appreciate the rewards of caring for a loved one," said Mackenzie Johnson, a family life program assistant with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. "As the number of family caregivers continues to grow, "now more than ever" it is important to recognize the vital role family caregivers play and find support and resources to help them thrive, not just survive."

Two out of five adults in the U.S. are family caregivers and 39 percent of all adult Americans are caring for a sick or disabled loved one, according to the Caregiver Action Network.

"Caregiving takes many forms. A caregiver may help a friend or relative with housekeeping, grocery shopping or personal care," Johnson said. "Maybe you drive your loved one to doctor appointments or social activities at a senior center. Maybe your loved one lives with you

or you help him or her with financial, legal or insurance issues. If you do one or more of these, you are a caregiver."

Extension and Outreach Resources for Caregivers

Caregivers who thrive, rather than just survive, understand that by taking care of themselves, they are better able to provide the care that their loved ones need, Johnson said.

Family caregivers also may want to seek out a Powerful Tools for Caregivers class from ISU Extension and Outreach, Johnson said. These classes, held over a period of six weeks, are designed to provide family caregivers with skills they need to take care of themselves.

"The Powerful Tools classes help caregivers find balance in their lives. You'll learn ways to reduce stress, improve self-confidence, better communicate your feelings and increase your ability to make tough decisions," Johnson said.

For information about our upcoming classes, contact any ISU Extension and Outreach county office or check the Powerful Tools for Caregivers website, <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/ptc-tools>.

4-H Find Out Day Saturday, January 11th Everyone welcome!



Where can a family explore all the possibilities 4-H has to offer in one place, at one time? 4-H Find Out Day at the Southpark Mall in Spencer. On January 11th, 2014 from 12:30pm-2:00pm, 4-H members, club and project mentors will converge at the Southpark Mall and share everything they know and love about the 4-H program. We are inviting families with children in Kindergarten through 12th grade and adults who are interested in volunteering with our program to check out what we have to offer in 2014. 4-H clubs members and project area volunteers will have stations set up throughout the mall with information on how to join 4-H, project opportunities, interactive displays, games and live animals. The staff will be unveiling the 2014 SpIn (Special Interest) book. This book is the one-stop-shop for participating in the Clay County 4-H program. It gives you a road map for participating and lists all the opportunities 4-H members have in our county, region and state. This year we are excited

to have expanded our K-3rd grade programming and have added new opportunities in several different project areas. Don't worry, we will still be offering some of the favorites, such as Filmmaking, Gear Tech and Vet Science. Thanks to our program sponsors most of this programming is free when you are enrolled in the 2014 4-H program.



Nonprofit Management Activity Planned for 2014

Northwest Iowans seeking professional development in nonprofit management will soon benefit from a Nonprofit Management Academy series to be held in Clay County through ISU Extension and Outreach. Classes are planned to begin later in spring of 2014.

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach county offices and local United Way organizations offer Nonprofit Management Academies at locations throughout Iowa. The Nonprofit Management Academy is an opportunity for those in the nonprofit sector to develop their management skills. Participants often serve nonprofit human services groups, hospitals, government agencies, faith based organizations, private schools, art and cultural organizations, environmental groups or other nonprofit organizations. They include staff, managers, volunteers, professional association em-

ployees, educators and private sector employees who wish to make a career change to the nonprofit sector.

Monthly courses will cover topics of interest to area nonprofit staff, such as leadership, volunteer management, strategic planning, grant writing and board management.

Academy participants can expect to gain new ideas, contacts and a professional support network, as well as new information and suggestions on how to apply what they've learned.

To be added to the mailing list for this exciting new program, please contact the Clay County Extension office at 712-262-2264.



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Extension and Outreach

Dog project opportunities for K-12 youth



By Jo Engel

The Clay County 4-H Dog project area offers many different opportunities for area youth who are interested in learning more about dogs. 4-H dog obedience classes as well as handling, agility and rally classes for grades 4-12 are offered during the summer months from the beginning level to advanced levels. 3rd Grade Participation members will also be able to participate in a new summer event taught by project area youth members which includes 4 sessions and a showcase opportunity.

The 4-H Dog project area volunteers are also busy in the colder months by offering Canine Good Citizen classes for those interested in teaching their dogs to be good citizens in public places. These series of



classes offer 4-Hers the opportunity to work with their dogs during the winter as well the possibility of taking the dogs into nursing homes and into schools. The Paws to Read program is also offered in partnership with the Everly Public Library and other possible locations. Handlers bring their dogs into a library or school and area youngsters are able to read to the dog. Dogs and children alike enjoy the quality time together.



The Clay County 4-H Dog Committee consists of 8 adult members as well as 3 youth members. These volunteers instruct all classes as well as hold the Clay County Fair 4-H Dog Show in September. The committee will also sponsor a New Member Meeting on May 4, 4-6pm in the 4-H Auditorium on the Clay County Fairgrounds for those interested in the dog project area. This meeting will include valuable information and advice in regards to the project area as well as obedience, rally and agility demonstrations by older project area youth mentors.

For more information in regards to Clay County 4-H or the dog project area please call 712-262-2264.



Afterschool program gives volunteers new opportunities



by Bonnie Dalager

The Clay County Clover Kids program helps youth explore science with simple science experiments. Program leaders and volunteers encourage learning by playing games and making friends in a group setting. This program is offered through a partnership with the Spencer Schools and is offered at no charge to families with support from the Clay County 4-H Endowment.

Clover Kids has grown from 30 students to 60 since spring of 2013. The current program is offered on the 6 annual early out days in Spencer at both Johnson and Fairview schools. This gives youth a quality educational experience, and gives parents a safe place for their kids to be on days when childcare arrangements often need to be made.

The demand for this afterschool programming is growing, and the Clay County Extension office is looking for additional volunteers who would be willing to facilitate sessions. The sessions can be delivered as after-school classes or as a K-1 or 2-3 club, meeting six to twelve times per year. Interest has been received from families in Spencer, as well as from towns that are in the Clay Central Everly and Sioux Central school districts.

“We would love to grow these programs with additional volunteer leaders,” said Jean Johnson, Clay County Extension In-School Coordinator. “The program lessons have been put together to meet the needs of volunteers. All

of the information, lessons, games and equipment are all prepared, and we have periodic trainings for those who are interested in learning more about working in partnership with youth.”

Ninety-seven youth signed up for the sixty openings in the 2013-14 K-3 programs in Spencer. Volunteers are the heart of every 4-H program, working and learning in partnership with youth. To join the volunteers who inspire youth to become successful learners, or to be added to the Clover Kids mailing list, please call the Clay County Extension Office at (712) 262-2264 or email clay4h@iastate.edu.



Leader Spotlight Neil Krummen of Linn Grove Herdsman



Neil Krummen has been involved in 4-H and the sheep project area since he was a young boy in Linn Grove. When he returned to the area after college, he decided to share his passion for raising the livestock with youth who may not get the experience because of where they live, in town.

Neil has partnered with Sioux Central Community School's FFA program and Clay County 4-H to share the experience of raising, caring for and marketing a sheep. When the number of participants grew to seven 4-Hers the second year, Neil founded the Linn Grove Herdsman 4-H club.

Neil's program is innovative in the fact that participants are invited to house their animal on his farm, and he teaches them how to raise and care for sheep to be exhibited in September at the Clay County Fair. All sheep are home raised on Neil's

family farm and the youth are required to work with their lambs all summer long; breaking them to lead, setting them up and helping with chores. The reward for the hard work youth put into their sheep project is keeping the premium and sale money after the Clay County Fair.

“This is a great program which provides some young people with an opportunity to do something they wouldn't otherwise be able to do,” Mike Rainer, who has children participating in the project, said.

Austin Helbing, a student in Sioux Central's FFA program, said, “I'm very appreciative. He gives us a chance we wouldn't have any other way.”

Neil enjoys providing the kids who live within the city limits and have never been around livestock a new experience.

Katelyn Pitts, a member of Sioux Central FFA and Clay County 4-H points out that this program is great for town or country kids. She participates because her family's acreage is full with her rabbit and hog projects.

Neil is currently a Clay County 4-H Sheep Committee member and leader of the Linn Grove Herdsman to add to his other responsibilities.

Original interview written by Randy M. Cauthron, Managing Editor Spencer Daily Reporter. Originally published September 14, 2013.

Member Spotlight Bailey Dickman

I would like to introduce, Bailey Dickman. Bailey is a budding filmmaker. She is outgoing, creative and enthusiastic. She has never had interest in livestock and actually drug her feet when her mom initially suggested attending a 4-H event! Three years later, Bailey is on the Clay County Youth Council, an active member of the Meadow Busy Bees 4-H Club, participates in Communications Fair, completed several exhibits in different project areas and submitted the first ever video record book. As I mentioned above, Bailey is enthusiastic, especially when it comes to filmmaking, below you will find out (in her own words) why she enjoys 4-H.

What was your best 4-H experience? The very first movie premier. It was amazing. We were all sitting there looking at each other like “Did we seriously make this? Like is this real?” That film was amazing.

What is the most important thing you learned in Filmmaking? I learned how to work with the software I was given. It's awesome to give us the software in the first place but it's even better to teach us how to use it.

Tell us about the process of making a film? First we need a subject. We pick a place, a character, a line of dialog, and a prop that we have to use. The story is centered on these things. Then we start pre-production, or writing the script. Because of time we only do a general outline for what we want in each

scene. Then we film. This is the hard part because usually it involves being outside and we all know that being outside in Iowa in summertime means that we get really hot. Last year, I jumped over stuff and felt like I was in an actual movie! Then, when we're all done filming we all head back into the building and the scariest thing of all, editing. Editing takes ages. When I say ages, I mean it takes Eric Meeter (Spencer Municipal Utilities volunteer) ages. The students just do it for a day. That day is really cool because you learn how to use the software. Eric finishes the editing and makes the film awesome. We really love him for that.



Why should kids join 4-H? 4-H is so much fun and I'm not just saying this because Anissa told me to, I'm saying this because 4-H is fun. Every year I've gone to 4-H filmmaking has been a blast, last year I got

to push a 12 year old out a window! How many times in your life do you get to do that? (Please note I did not actually push anyone out of a window, please don't sue us.) Also, you meet tons of new people and they're all really cool.

What have you learned in 4-H? I've learned that working with people is really fun. Also I've learned that I have a passion for Filmmaking.

Encourage youth in their desire to learn by giving to the Clay County 4-H Endowment

The Clay County 4-H Endowment was created to further the 4-H Youth Development Program's quest for excellence in serving the youth of Clay County.

The Clay County 4-H program now reaches one in every three school-aged youth with quality learning experiences in partnership with caring adults.

Due to the draw from other counties to the Clay County Fair, our local educational programs reach nearly an additional 1000 youth from beyond County borders.

Programs include the Ag-Citing agriculture program, the Ricochet extreme leadership adventure for middle school students, the Clover Kids after school K-3 science pro-

gram, 4-H club experiences, Clay County Fair 4-H activities, over 40 SpIn (Special Interest) workshops, Farm Safety and more.

The ISU Extension Clay County Office and their partners and volunteers invest over 7,000 volunteer hours as well as financial support to the youth of Clay County youth programs--working to develop productive citizens, outstanding communicators, effective leaders, and successful learners.

For the last two years, partners have come along side our organization to ensure that almost every additional youth program offered through Clay County Extension is available to member families at no cost. 4-H membership is reduced to \$25 annu-

ally thanks to an ongoing partnership with Max Yield Cooperative.

The Clay County Extension hopes to continue to provide programs that positively impact the lives of youth with minimal cost to families. Will you partner with us to encourage these youth in their desire to learn?

Please contact County Program Director Bonnie Dalager at 712-262-2264 or bdalager@iastate.edu if you wish to discuss a program-directed gift to the Clay County 4-H Endowment.

Donate Now!

Every year, Clay County 4-H and its Partners work together to provide over 500 hours of education for youth in and around Clay County. Volunteers, staff, local businesses and organizations work to help youth discover their passion, find their talents and improve skills that will shape them as leaders of tomorrow.

YES! I want to help the Clay County 4-H Endowment support quality educational programs that help Clay County Youth "make the best better!"

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 County _____
 Home Phone _____
 E-mail _____
 4-H Alumni (City/State) _____
 4-H Club Name _____
 Years involved (Dates) _____

Gift Amount
 I wish to make an/a:
 ___ Outright gift of \$ _____
 ___ Pledge of \$ _____ annually for ___ years

Gift is a Tribute
 I wish to make an/a:
 ___ in memory of: _____
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If you'd like to support local 4-H programs, please send this information and your donation to:
 Clay County 4-H Endowment, 110 West 4th Street, Suite 100, Spencer, IA 51301

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Clay Co. Regional Events Center
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PROVIDE THE SPARK!

4-H Volunteers are essential to help youth make the most of a wide variety of learning experiences. Volunteering is an opportunity for you to **share your personal interests** by demonstrating expertise in subject as varied as robotics, food & nutrition, public speaking, agricultural science, community service & more.

You can decide on the level of involvement that fits your skills & schedule:

- Lead youth within school-based, after school and camp settings, or through a community club.
- Serve as a chaperone, board member, or a judge.
- Develop & support service opportunities for youth in your own community.
- Teach using curriculum developed by your state university.
- Work with other adults to create fun & exciting programs.

Today, 4-H'ers are stepping up to make positive changes in our communities, across the country, and all over the world. But behind every success story, there is a mentor—someone just like you. As a 4-H volunteer, you can share your skills and experience to help transform a new generation of confident young leaders. This is your chance to **make a change**, to be the spark that inspires a revolution. A revolution of responsibility.

Contact us today to inquire about becoming a Corporate Volunteer!
712-262-2264



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ISU Extension to Families reaches out to families across the lifespan

Extension to Families strives to promote healthy people, healthy economies, and healthy environments. We provide research-based information and education to help families make decisions that improve and transform their lives.

Our specialists work with the College of Human Sciences at Iowa State University and we work in partnership with other or-

ganizations and agencies to meet the needs of Iowa families.

Extension to Families offers programming for adult caregiving, child care and education for families, personal finance classes, food and health, and has a hotline called "Answer Line" with information and resources for consumers with home and family questions.

Hotline Numbers

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Questions relating to home and family
Hours: M-F 9 a.m. - noon; 1-4 p.m.
TTY 800.735.2942
Email: answer@iastate.edu
www.extension.iastate.edu/answerline

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800.BETS.OFF

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www.extension.iastate.edu/bfc

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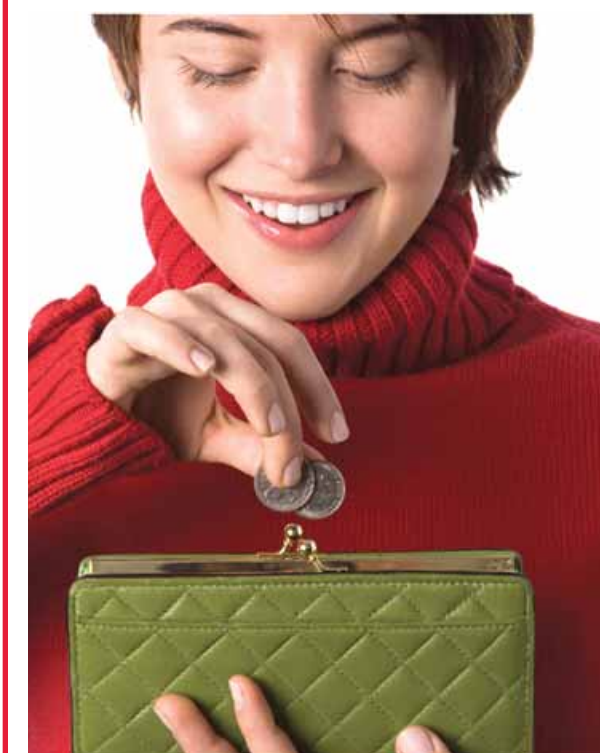
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800.443.8336

Financial Education for Families Now Available Online



by Michele Hogrefe

If you are looking for a way to improve your finances from home, the Take Control of Your Money program is for you. This free online program focuses on five key steps in managing money. There are an additional three special topics it highlights: dealing with debt, building financial security and family communication with money. The program is self-paced, but the suggested involvement time to fully utilize the program's resources is around one month. Some tools of the program include: audio-visual lessons, quizzes, forums for sharing with other participants, and tools to plan or track your spending. Those enrolled in the course will receive a weekly e-mail MoneyTips from ISU Extension and Outreach, and can opt to continue receiving the tips even after they are done with the course. To enroll in this free program, visit the website at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/homebuyer/>.

preparing for home ownership, shopping for a home, getting a mortgage, closing the loan and being a home owner. The focus of this program is to find a home that fits your needs and your budget. The cost of the program is \$45. Learn more about this program at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/homebuyer/>.
Jan Monahan, Family Finance Specialist, serves Clay County and many surrounding areas. For any questions about family finances, you can reach her at 712-336-3488 or jmonahan@iastate.edu.

[edu/humansciences/take-control](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/take-control).

The MoneyTips blog is an online resource that highlights different ways to make the most of your money. Blogs range from current financial events calendar specific topics to money-saving ideas and family financial issues. In all blog posts you will find unbiased, research-based information that is applicable in everyday finances. To check out the MoneyTips blog, go to their website at <http://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/moneytips/>.

The saying is that the American dream is to own a home. This is probably the largest purchase a person will ever make. While it is not a simple task, the online course "A Place of Your Own" is here to help. This course will guide you through the steps to home ownership:

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