

2014 County Highlights



GEAUGA County

WESTERN RESERVE EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

14269 Claridon-Troy Road, P.O. Box 387, Burton, Ohio 44021-0387

Phone: (440) 834-4656 geauga.osu.edu



ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Agriculture and horticulture are the largest industries in Geauga County, consisting of 888 farms. The total yearly revenue generated from Geauga County farms is \$34.5 million. Of that, over \$24 million is generated on small dairy and produce farms. In Geauga County, 48 dairy farms ship milk. That's more than any other county in Northeast Ohio, and many of those dairy farms are Amish-owned. Unique to Geauga County, this revenue is generated on small farms, most averaging 66 acres.
- Ohio annually produces about \$6 million worth of maple syrup, and 26 percent of that syrup is produced in Geauga County. Our maple industry and its subsequent tourism dollars, attracted by maple products, has become a major contributor to the local economy. Maple trees are one of the county's most valuable resources, and OSU Extension is heavily involved with educating, advising and providing expertise to **Geauga County's maple industry**.
- Over 750 youth from the school districts of Kenston, Chardon and West Geauga were introduced to agriculture in Geauga County during the **Geauga County Fair**. This is an ongoing joint effort of Geauga County Judges Diane and Tim Grendell, Geauga County Farm Bureau, and OSU Extension.
- The **Geauga Growers Auction** was barely shy of the \$1 million of wholesale goods sold in 2014. This auction in Middlefield is the major venue by which most of Geauga County's commercial fruit and vegetable growers sell their crops.

- OSU Extension provided more than 610 individual, **on-farm consultations** this year. These expert consultations provide timely advice regarding insects, diseases, nutrient usage, irrigation timing and fungicide applications to ensure success, profitability and the perpetuation of Geauga's farming community.
- In 2014, 13 Master Gardener interns each donated at least 50 volunteer hours for a total of 650 hours. Currently, 61 certified Master Gardeners donated 4,902 hours of volunteer service, for a total of 5,552 hours. The Independent Sector organization estimates the 2013 value of volunteer time in Ohio at \$21.40 per hour. Therefore, these **Master Gardener Volunteers** donated \$118,813 to Geauga County's communities on behalf of OSU Extension.

PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- **Junior Leaders 4-H Club** made blankets and donated them to Women's Safe and Project Linus. They raised funds to award five \$1,000 scholarships to Geauga County 4-H Junior Leaders Club members who are pursuing higher education, presented gift cards and Christmas presents totaling \$3,700 to needy families for the holidays.
- **Totally Dogs 4-H Club** held their annual benefit dinner and raised \$6,130. The funds were split: \$3,065 going to the Geauga County Dog Shelter, \$1,532.50 to the Geauga County K-9 Unit and \$1,532.50 to Wags4Warriors.
- The **Geauga County Horse Committee** awarded four \$500 scholarships to Geauga County 4-H Horse Club members who are pursuing higher education.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Empowerment *Through* Education

twitter.com/dirkeithsmith
u.osu.edu/cfaesimpact
extension.osu.edu

- The 4-H Advisory Committee sponsored their **second annual educational field trip** for 4-H members and visited the Cleveland Botanical Gardens, a hydroponic farm and Sirna's Farm Market.
- Geauga County 4-H offered a **4-H Fun Day** at Alpine Valley Ski area. 4-H members, their families and their friends all enjoyed a day of snow tubing.
- The Geauga County 4-H Advisory Committee provided \$2,400 of "camperships" to 16 youths for Camp Whitewood and paid \$2,450 to cover the fees for 23 youth camp counselors. There were 123 total campers involved in Geauga County's **4-H Camp** this year, utilizing all 23 youth counselors and four camp deans, making the week camp a great success.
- The 4-H Advisory Committee provided three \$100 camperships to 4-H members to attend the **Shooting Sports Camp at 4-H Camp Whitewood**. Another Geauga County 4-H adult volunteer was state-certified in shooting sports this year.
- **Gauga County 4-H** has 752 youths enrolled, utilizing 121 adult volunteers to organize and lead 42 county-based 4-H Clubs. A new county club was formed in 2014, the Engineering and Robotics Club.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The OSU Extension educator has been trained in an employer-based stress management program entitled **Mindfulness in Motion**. Employees are taught tools to effectively cope with stress, improve sleep quality and increase engagement at work to foster a positive work climate. This program has been rigorously tested medically, and the program is ready and available to all Geauga-area businesses.
- At area senior centers, OSU Extension provided **wellness classes** and **financial education classes** on helping children and grandchildren become financially literate.
- **Canning and freezing classes** are held every summer to assist families in preserving their garden surplus.
- Family and Consumer Sciences and Master Gardeners teamed up again to collect seeds for the Geauga Metropolitan Housing Association gardens and to help start more **community gardens** at more sites.
- **Parenting classes** served approximately 40 Geauga County families in 2014. Twenty-four **classes for divorcing parents** (an issue facing schools, courts and social service agencies) have been offered as well. Our Family and Consumer Sciences educator also serves as faculty for the **Supreme Court's Guardian ad Litem training program**. This

training assists lawyers, judges and magistrates on child development and family issues that impact children in their court systems.

ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

- Youth desperately need a clear understanding of how to manage finances. **Real Money, Real World** gives middle school and high school students an understanding of how current income and life choices affect future income. Participants learn amounts to pay for housing, transportation and childcare, and how to balance "wants" and "needs". In Geauga County, this hands-on program was offered at Berkshire, Ledgemont, Newbury and Cardinal school systems. Overall this year, more than 500 students participated.
- We offer **budget and credit repair classes** and individual assistance via phone and office hours, as well as a **postdecree bankruptcy education class**, which is a requirement of filing for bankruptcy. We are working with the United Way to review resources and to implement a comprehensive program to benefit county residents.