

# 2014 County Highlights



## LOGAN County

### TOP OF OHIO EXTENSION EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

1100 South Detroit Street, Bellefontaine, Ohio 43311

Phone: (937) 599-4227 [logan.osu.edu](http://logan.osu.edu)



#### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- The Master Gardeners are working to strengthen families through a **raised-bed program**, which began in 2014. The goals are to promote gardening in families, offer practical help in best-gardening practices and foster lifelong learning and an interest in gardening in children. In its first full year, the program was facilitated by Master Gardeners in partnership with Lutheran Community Services. The project was piloted with one family through Lutheran Community Services, and the hope is to expand it to multiple families in years to come. In 2015, Habitat for Humanity and the Logan County Citizen's Corp will be helping with supplies and manual labor while Master Gardeners will continue to provide the education.

#### PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- Young people know **4-H Camp** is fun, but it also helps build critical life skills for campers and counselors. The skills learned by volunteer teen counselors will aid in job and life readiness in addition to leadership experiences. Campers learn teamwork, communication and responsibility while connecting with the natural world. This year, 117 youth from Logan and Champaign counties camped and learned together for five days at 4-H Camp Clifton.
- Logan County's 130 **4-H volunteers** acted as advisors to the county's 550 4-H members, devoting more than 25,000 hours of service at an estimated value of \$542,490. This investment provides a foundation for developing skills needed in the workforce, creates a positive resource for the community and decreases the number of youth who are at

risk of making bad life decisions. As one volunteer said, "I work with lots of kids, and you can see the difference 4-H makes. These kids take initiative and have a great sense of responsibility." A recently graduated 4-H member agreed, saying, "My 4-H career really helped me be ready for college and now my career. The interview was so much easier because of my project interviews."

Research shows that youth who volunteer just one hour per week are 50 percent less likely to be involved in drugs, alcohol, tobacco or other destructive behaviors. The 4-H program provides such volunteer opportunities. Teen leaders in Junior Fair Board, 4-H CARTEENS, and camp counseling contributed 2,480 hours of volunteer service. This contribution is valued at \$17,042, based on the student minimum wage of \$6.85. These teen leaders make our community a better place in which to live and raise families.

- Science, technology, engineering and math are areas of deficiency for many students. In an effort to increase excitement and confidence in STEM subjects, programs are conducted once a month at the Chippewa Outreach Center and Russell's Point Outreach Center, both at Indian Lake. Students in kindergarten through high school participate in science and engineering programs during family activity night at the outreach center. Anywhere from four to 12 youth attend the programs monthly. Activities conducted include the Rockets to the Rescue 4-H Science Activity, sports science, catapult building and more. In addition to **STEM activities**, a community service activity was added to instill the importance of giving back. Students made birthday cards for local nursing home residents in celebration of the 100th



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“birthday” of Extension. The original program at Chippewa was so successful and positive that another program was added at Russell’s Point.

- According to the Ohio Department of Public Safety, 56,000 traffic accidents occurred in 2013 (121 fatalities), involving drivers ages 16–20. Of those accidents, the young drivers were at fault two out of three times. This group has the second highest number of accidents and the highest percentage of accidents where the driver was at fault. The goal of **4-H CARTEENS** is twofold: to teach first-time traffic offenders between ages 15 and 18 how to make cautious and responsible decisions, and to teach them how to drive safer to prevent such tragedies. Participants take part in a series of activities that promote safe driving and encourage good decision-making skills. The 4-H educator works with teen volunteers to lead the sessions. The program also includes guest speakers who have been impacted by traffic fatalities. Between January and September 2014, 84 teen drivers participated in CARTEENS. After participating, 91 percent said the program will help them become a better driver, and 95 percent said they will use more caution when they drive. The program is a cooperative effort between the 4-H program and the Logan County juvenile court.

## ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Teaching youth best practices in the livestock industry, ensuring ethical care and treatment of animals, and producing a safe and quality product for the consumer are the goals of **Quality Assurance Training**. Nearly 350 youth completed Quality Assurance Training in Logan County, and nearly all youth took their animals to the Logan County Fair. The members’ successful care of livestock resulted in more than \$408,000 raised at the Junior Fair livestock sale.
- **Master Gardener Volunteers**, trained by OSU Extension, help share research-based information with gardeners through workshops, community gardens and one-on-one consultations. In 2014, nine Logan County Master Gardeners contributed nearly 1,300 hours through workshops, the gardening hotline, programs with the Shade Tree Commission, community programs, and spring and fall plant sales. The economic value contributed by the Master Gardener Volunteers in 2014 is estimated at \$27,000.