

2014 County Highlights

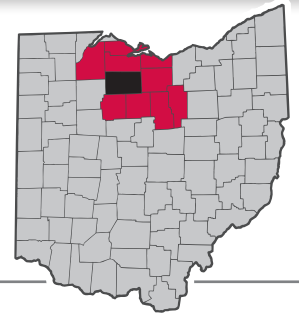


SENECA County

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PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS

- In 2014, Seneca County welcomed one new **4-H Club** for a total of 42 clubs under the guidance of 161 volunteers. Membership totaled 994 4-H youth, ages 8–19, in traditional club experiences, and 87 youth, ages 5–7, active in the Cloverbud activities. Club activities and project work provided members the opportunity to explore subject matter areas through “learning by doing” experiences. Members also developed life skills in decision-making, teamwork, leadership, responsibility, communication, interpersonal relationships and interview techniques. As a result, youth gained self-esteem, the ability to set goals and many more life skills to help prepare them for adulthood.
- In 2014, 175 sixth, seventh and eighth graders from Seneca East, New Riegel and North Central Academy schools participated in the OSU Extension signature program, **Real Money, Real World**. Topics included how occupation affects income, calculating deductions, using checking and savings accounts, and deciding between wants versus needs. Student comments included the following: “I will change asking my parents for so much money,” “The real world costs a lot of money. Don’t have children ‘till you have lots of money,” and “I plan on not buying everything I want,”
- Eighty-three junior campers, ages 8–13, gained life skills in communication, teamwork, leadership, citizenship and more as a result of their **4-H Junior Camp** experience. In addition to building new friendships, youth experienced group living and learned to get along with others. Campers’ evaluations indicated they gained independent living skills, teamwork experiences, confidence and self-esteem. Parent comments included the following: “My child became more independent,” “My child has shown more confidence since being home,” and “Camp provides a great opportunity for youth to develop relationships outside of school friends.”
- Thirty-two older 4-H youth received 24 hours of training to assure roles and responsibilities as **4-H Camp Counselors**. These young people increased their knowledge of topics such as liability issues, developmental characteristics of children ages 8–13, first aid, emergency procedures, managing behavior, identifying child abuse and neglect, conflict management and guidelines for planning a quality camp program. Counselors-in-training were provided the opportunity to develop counselor skills by working side-by-side with experienced counselors.
- Over 150 student drivers and their passengers were checked for **seat belt use and proper cell phone use while driving**. These checks were performed by 4-H CARTEENS members and SADD student groups at Old Fort and Hopewell Loudon high schools. Ninety-eight percent of those checked were wearing a seat belt. Survey results show that 92 percent make their passengers wear seat belts and 90 percent plan to change any unsafe driving habits. This was a collaborative effort between OSU Extension and the Safe Communities Coalition.
- **4-H CARTEENS** is a program initiated in Seneca County in 2013. More than 12 older 4-H youth were trained as CARTEENS instructors to teach the specially designed curriculum to youth ages 16–19 who had received a first-time driving offence. A total of 59 youth completed the program in 2014. Sixty-four percent of CARTEENS participants rated



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the program as excellent, and 32 percent rated it as good. Participant comments included the following: “I relearned a lot of things I had forgotten. I will reduce the amount of distractions in my car” and “I liked the impaired vision because it makes you realize how much alcohol affects you. I will definitely keep my phone in my pocket!”

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)** is proud to have provided education on nutrition, menu-planning, saving food dollars and food safety to many partner agencies within Seneca County. Some of those partner agencies are WIC clinics and the Healthy Options for Teens clinics, offered through the Seneca County General Health District. Senior housing units such as the Kiwanis Manor and Charles Meadow Apartments, Tiffin and Fostoria Commission on Aging, the Salvation Army, and the Attica Library were all agencies where Extension taught adults direct education classes in 2014. As a result of these classes, those county residents who participated in the programs reported that they would be changing behaviors as a result of the instruction. Clients have indicated on evaluations that the information received has helped them make healthier choices and save money at the grocery store.
- Seneca County also participated in the **Summer Food Service Program**. This is a great initiative in which the SNAP-Ed program travels to food service sites and delivers to children in kindergarten through sixth grade information regarding nutrition and MyPlate, as well as interactions with physical activity and food safety. This summer our program reached many students who took information home to their parents making it possible to reach more households.
- New to the SNAP-Ed program in 2014 was the ability to go into the schools, collaborating with the principals and/or teachers to provide nutrition classes to some of our youth in Seneca County. The SNAP-Ed program assistant taught children in kindergarten through fifth grade at what was then known as Bettsville Elementary School. The program assistant also taught the first and second graders at Riley Elementary School, which is part of the Fostoria Community School District. The kids learned a lot about nutrition and the importance of physical activity while having fun at the same time.

ENHANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Seneca County **Master Gardeners** added 13 new members in 2014. Their total membership is now 45. The Master Gardeners host annual plant sales, maintain five flower

beds and produce newspaper, radio and newsletter reports. “Preserving the Harvest,” “Perennial Gardens” and “Agri-Ability” are just some of the educational programs presented by the Master Gardeners. Fifty-three percent of program participants reported that they will change their gardening habits. For the third year, Master Gardeners also presented a \$500 scholarship to a college student majoring in plant science who resided in or graduated from a Seneca County high school.

Seneca County receives \$50,905 in federal funding for nutrition education for low-income people, thanks to Extension’s local-state-federal partnership.