



Extending Knowledge ~ Changing Lives

University of Illinois Extension

2012 Annual Report

Serving DeWitt, Macon & Piatt Counties



Meet Our Staff:
COMMITTED TO YOUR COMMUNITY!

County Director

Doug Harlan - Serving DeWitt, Macon & Piatt Counties

Educators

Sherry Fulton - 4-H Youth Development

Caitlin Huth - Nutrition and Wellness

Amy Leman - 4-H Metro Youth Development

Jennifer Schultz-Nelson - Horticulture

Program Coordinators

Brittnay Haag - Horticulture & DeWitt/Piatt Master Gardeners

Karina Moore - Macon County Master Gardeners

Myla Ringler - Agriculture

Mindy Peterson-Lindsey - Marketing

Samantha Rusk - Macon County 4-H Youth Development

Community Workers

Kim Gibbons - DeWitt County 4-H Youth Development

Susan Houska - Piatt County 4-H Youth Development

Anita Tyus - SNAP Education, Macon County

Work Program Participants

Charlotte Cook - SNAP Education, Macon County

Marilyn Grayned - SNAP Education, Macon County

Office Support Specialist

Peggy Mechling - Macon County

Office Support Associate

Jean Carter - Macon County

Diana Leischner - Piatt County

Office Support Assistant

Jody Bobbitt - Macon County

Lindsey Burden - DeWitt County

Diane Dowd - Macon County

Lynda Hryhorysak - Piatt County

Diana Tibbs - DeWitt County



A message from Doug Harlan, County Director



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION

room to report on the substantial impact those programs had on thousands of individuals throughout the counties.

Enclosed in this year's Annual Report, you will find information regarding the areas in which our staff provides educational programming, descriptions of specific programs and the impact those programs have had on DeWitt, Macon & Piatt County residents of all ages.

CONNECT
find us in your
community

DeWitt County Office
8425 Katie Road
Clinton, IL 61727
217.935.5764

Macon County Office
3351 N. President H. Brown Blvd.
Decatur, IL 62521
217.877.6042

Piatt County Office
210 South Market Street
Monticello, IL 61856
217.762.2191

DeWitt-Macon-Piatt Website
web.extension.illinois.edu/dmp/



Cloverbuds
60 youth

4-H Community Clubs
187 youth

Short Term Programs
409 youth

SPIN Clubs
52 youth

The staff of Dr. John Warner Hospital has enjoyed hosting Health Jam. It is a great opportunity for us to educate kids on living a healthier life.

Sandy Rice
Dr. John Warner Hospital



**ECO-BOT
EXPERIMENTS**

163 Clinton School District 5th Graders participated in Eco-Bot Experiments at Weldon Springs in October for Stewardship Day. Students had an opportunity to learn what robots can do, how they are controlled, and the role that they serve in helping with our environmental problems. With over 50% of the students requesting more activities with robots in the future, staff are collaborating on future science experiments in the classroom.



DEWITT COUNTY 4-H! Investing in Youth

4th grade students from the Clinton School District, laced up their sneakers and

clipped on their pedometers to be a part of the 2012 DeWitt County Health Jam. 141 students sprinted into action to participate in a 2 day field trip and 8 weeks of classroom follow-up.

During this time, students learned about healthy lifestyles, good nutrition, physical fitness, and health related careers, all because of a Walmart Foundation Grant committed to healthy living programs within the community.

From zumba to kickboxing and hospital tours to learning about EMS, students ran towards the

goal of a healthier lifestyle. Students had an opportunity to walk across Illinois from east Dubuque to Cairo by completing 30 minutes of physical activity each day in the "Walk Across America" fitness challenge. Thanks to the work of all of the community sponsors, results from a pre/post survey showed the participants

achieved a statistically significant increase in their knowledge of health care professions, and their knowledge about their body systems and how to keep healthy.



"Are You Ready to Crunch?"

4-H Nutrition Number Crunchers

140 Clinton 4th grade students were ready to "crunch" numbers and learn about nutrition during a 4 week program offered by University of Illinois Extension. The collaboration between Clinton schools and U of I Extension is one of the many exciting programs that are offered between the two entities.

"4-H Nutrition Number Crunchers" was presented to six different classes of 4th grade students. The purpose of the program was to educate youth about healthy food choices, raise community awareness to environmental issues, and reinforce math and science curriculums being taught within the district.

Based on the results of the pre/post surveys, the students achieved a statistically significant increase in their knowledge of nutrition with an emphasis on math and science. 93.5% of the students post-tested, compared to only 52% in the pre-test, showed increased knowledge in MyPlate and the guidelines it uses for healthy eating.



DeWitt County 4-H Facts



154

Members showed at least one project at the 4-H Show

18

Cloverbuds participated in the 4-H Fair

8

Members participated in the Master Showmanship Contest

25

4-H members showed in the two day horse show

10

4-H members showed their dog at the county level and 4 went on to State Fair

WE VALUE OUR COMMUNITY

PARTNERS & SPONSORS

4-H Memorial Camp
Agriculture Watershed Institute
Allerton Library
Allstate Insurance
Archer Daniels Midland
Atwood/Hammond District
Bement School District
Blue Ridge School District
Bryant Cottage
Caterpillar
Cerro Gordo Library
Cerro Gordo School District
Children's Museum of Illinois
City of Decatur
Clinton School District
Clinton Tree Commission
Connie's Country Greenhouse
CONO
County Market - Monticello
DCC Marketing
Decatur Area Projects Board
Decatur Arts Council
Decatur Fire Department
Decatur Park District
Decatur Police Department
Decatur Public Library
Decatur Public Schools
DeWitt Human Resources Center
DeWitt County HCE
DeWitt County NRCS
DeWitt County SWCD
DeWitt County Housing
DeWitt Friendship Center
DeWitt/Piatt Health Department
DMH Wellness Center
DOVE
Faith in Action
Forsyth Public Library
Garden Path
Greater Decatur YMCA
Heart of Sangamon Eco-partnership
Heartland Region
Herald & Review
IAHCE
Illinois Chapter of the NRA
Illinois 4-H Foundation
John Warner Hospital

Kirby Medical Center
Macon County ACHIEVE
Macon County Conservation
Macon County Fairgrounds
Macon County Farm Bureau
Macon County HCE
Macon County NRCS
Macon County Public Health
Macon County Senior Center
Macon County Sheriff's Office
Macon County SWCD
Obesity Prevention Coalition
Maroa-Forsyth Public Schools
Maroa Park Program
Maroa Public Library
Monticello Community Building
Monticello Farmer's Market
Monticello - First Christian
Monticello Rotary
Monticello School District
Mount Zion Public Schools
Mount Zion Recreation Dept.
Piatt County HCE
Piatt County Journal Republic
Piatt County Nursing Home
Piatt County NRCS
Piatt County SWCD
PPG Industries
Richland Community College
Ring Container
Rock Springs Nature Center
Rotary Club #180, Decatur
RSVP
SAIL
Salvation Army
Scovill Zoo
St. Mary's Hospital
Soy Capital Bank
Tate & Lyle
U of I Plant Greenhouse
Walmart
Waynesville Library
Weldon Library
Weldon Springs State Park
WAND TV
WHOW
YMCA



COMMUNITY
COLLABORATIONS

Facts & Numbers

Extending Knowledge ~ Changing Lives

Our Mission - Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses and communities solve problems, develop skills and build a better future.

Horticulture

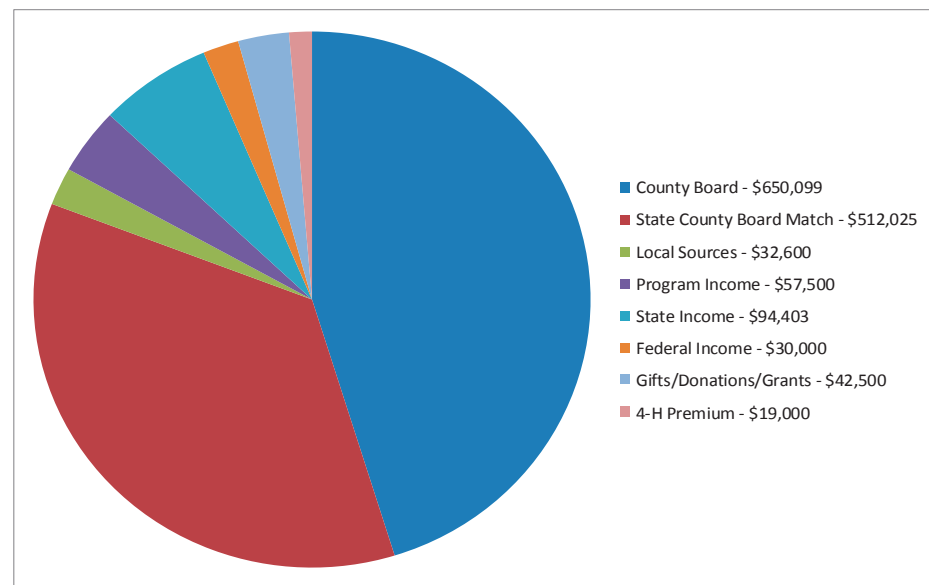
Investing in a healthy environment



“They have programs for everyone, from the cradle to retirement.”

Extension Program Participant

DeWitt, Macon, & Piatt County Extension Budget



Dewitt, Macon & Piatt Extension Council

The Extension Council participates in identifying local needs, providing guidance in programming, and program evaluation.

Council Members

Karen Allen
Bill Buechsenschuetz
Judy Coffey
Susan Cooper
Pete Daughtery
Thomas Dobson
Karen Freese
Julie Glawe
Denny Hill
Kari Keating
Randy Keith

Sharon Middleton
Laura Miller
Kathleen Piatt
Vasuda Pinnamaraju
Lynn Remmert
Alison Skelton
Judy Sochor
Rosalie Summers
Julia Taraszewski
Marcia Turpin
Jan Wenke

Identify Us: Our Brands



Creating a Vegetable Container Garden in Piatt County

Participants in a Vegetable Gardening Basics class learned about topics such as starting seeds, vegetable garden design, how to grow common vegetables, and troubleshooting vegetable garden problems. Those attending the class had hands-on opportunities to start their own seeds in class and assemble a vegetable container garden for their home.

Program Highlights from DeWitt County

- 10 Participants learned about designing annual container gardens and planted their own custom made arrangements as part of a hands-on workshop
- Approximately 200 fifth graders participated in a hands-on “Meet a Tree” nature activity at Stewardship Day in October
- Provided demonstration of proper tree planting for the Clinton Tree Commission



Growing Vegetables for Good Operation Green Thumb

Approximately 50 limited resource families participate in growing vegetable gardens in inner-city Decatur. Participants pay \$5.00 to secure a garden plot and are provided seed and plants. Seed and plants are purchased by the Extension office or received through donations from the community.



Green Thumb Gardeners donate produce to friends and family, and sell some to supplement their income. Additionally, Green Thumb Gardeners and Master Gardeners work together at the main Green Thumb Garden site to grow 30 different tomato varieties for the annual “Tomato Taste Panel” set for late summer.

Tempting Your Taste Buds with Tomatoes



Master Gardeners hosted the seventh annual Tomato Taste Panel on August 30, 2012. Approximately 60 people were in attendance and tasted 40 varieties of heirloom and hybrid tomatoes. Following the tasting, 15 people remained for a class on cooking with tomatoes.

Extra tomato seedlings were offered for sale at the annual Master Gardener Plant Sale in 2012. A similar program is planned for 2013, but with an entirely new set of tomato varieties.

DeWitt, Macon & Piatt Counties Simplify the Holidays

For the fourth year in a row, Jennifer Nelson and Mindy Peterson co-taught a hands-on workshop in each county geared toward budget-friendly holiday ideas for cooking, decorating, and gift-giving. In 2012, 16 people in DeWitt County, 35 people in Macon County, and 20 people in Piatt County participated. Several participants had attended previous years’ classes, and many commented that they had used the ideas shared in their holiday celebrations.

DEWITT & PIATT COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS



Giving Back in DeWitt County

The DeWitt County Master Gardeners hosted a hands-on Container Gardening workshop for the community in May 2012, in which 11 people attended. The participants planted ornamental container gardens and received instruction on proper care after the class.

Earth Stewardship Day is an opportunity to introduce local students to the importance of the environment and ways to help protect and care for the world around them. On this day, 200 local students participated in the "Meet a Tree" activity orchestrated by the DeWitt County Master Gardeners.



Making a Difference in Piatt County

There were 13 active Piatt County Master Gardeners in 2012. Collectively, the group volunteered a total of 671.25 hours during the year in various projects throughout the county. Total value of Piatt County Master Gardener volunteer hours = \$14,626.54 to Piatt County residents. [The value of a volunteer hour (per hour specified by the Points of Light and the Independent Sector) equals \$21.79.]

The Piatt County Master Gardener Help Desk was open 2 days a week from April through October and multiple mobile units were available at the County Market and the Farmer's Market in Monticello.

The Help Desk received a total of 128 questions from the public regarding home, lawn, and gardening problems. The Master Gardeners provided homeowners with up-to-date, research-based advice from University of Illinois Extension.

The Piatt County Master Gardeners educated staff and clients at the Neighbor House-Willow Tree Mission on planting and care for ornamental and vegetable container gardens. A total of 5 clients at the home created 4 pots to display around the house and maintained them throughout the summer.

Tri-County Home & Community Education: committed to their communities



Over 290 men and women took part in DeWitt, Macon and Piatt County HCE in 2012. Their mission is to enhance the lives of individuals and families through quality education programs and experiences encouraging leadership and service to the community.



2012 Tri-County Events

International Day

With just over 89 attendees registered, the 2012 Tri-County International Day, focusing on Trinidad and Tobago was well received by the three counties. During the event, participants had an opportunity to listen to a guest speaker, taste the foods of the country, and learn more about their culture.

Tri-County Board Meetings

Board members from each of the respective counties meet three times a year to collaborate and plan tri-county events. These meetings promote sharing of resources, brainstorming, and planning of yearly events.

Macon County HCE Awarded IAHCE County of the Year

Macon County HCE, with just over 120 members, was awarded the IAHCE County of the Year, two consecutive years in a row. Awarded to them at the IAHCE State Conference in March, Macon County HCE turned in over 25,140 certified volunteer hours for the year.

Additionally, MCHCE hosted a Disaster Preparedness Event for their community this past September. Over 250 people participated in the morning event, which showcased community educators, emergency responders, and guest speaker, Eddy Weiss.



PIATT COUNTY 4-H



THE NUMBERS

Cloverbuds
11 youth

Summer Workshops
93 youth

Short Term Programs
369 youth

SPIN Clubs & Community Clubs
156 youth

PIATT COUNTY HEALTH JAM!

This was the first year for Piatt County to provide a 4-H Health Jam experience for youth. 5th Grade Students from the Monticello School District put on their running shoes to be a part of the 2012 Piatt County Health Jam.



100 students sprinted into action to participate in a 2 day field trip and 8 weeks of classroom follow-up. During this time students learned about healthy lifestyles, good nutrition, physical fitness, and health related careers, all because of a Walmart Foundation Grant committed to healthy living programs within the community.

From boating to hiking and hospital tours to nursing and

ambulance skills, students raced towards the goal of a healthier lifestyle. Just like in DeWitt County, students even had an opportunity to walk across Illinois from east Dubuque to

Cairo by completing 30 minutes of physical activity each day in the "Walk Across America" fitness challenge. Community sponsors and support made the program a success! Thanks to their work, pre/post surveys, students showed an increase in their knowledge of health care professions, their knowledge about the body systems and how to keep them healthy.

"Through this Health Jam collaboration, we have hopefully given students the desire and the tools with which to live a long, healthy life, sending chronic health problems on a decline."

Dianne Geissal from the Kirby Medical Center



4-H PIATT COUNTY SPIN Clubs

Spin Clubs

SPIN Clubs (4-H Special Interest Club) allow members to focus on the same project or interest area. They are intended to capture the attention of youth with interests that are not necessarily a typical 4-H project.

Mid-State Marksmen Shooting Sports

29 members are mastering the disciplines of Archery, Rifle and Shotgun to hone their shooting sports skills. Members take great pride in competing in shooting sports competitions.

4-H Guitar SPIN Club

14 members have learned the structure of the guitar, how to tune their guitars, play chords, and progressions. 89% of members planned to continue instruction after participating in the club.

Cerro Gordo Reading SPIN Club

In partnership with the Hope Welty Library, members read and discussed a young adult novel in a book club. 95% of the members stated they were interested in continuing with this monthly club.

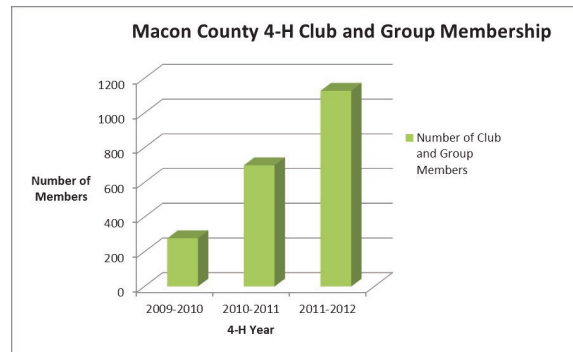
Cerro Gordo FFA Horticulture SPIN Club

FFA students have had the opportunity to teach elementary school students all about horticulture. This has given the high school students invaluable leadership experience.



MACON COUNTY 4-H

strength in numbers



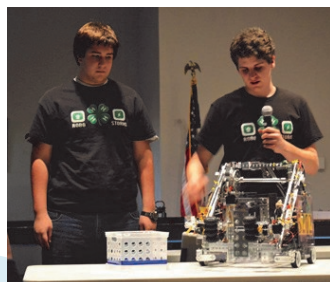
In 2012, Macon County 4-H reached **4,596 youth** with positive youth development programming. Last year, Macon County had **93 4-H clubs and groups** with an increased enrollment in clubs and groups of 12.4% from 2011. Over **332 volunteers** work with our youth to develop a sense of purpose and a sense of personal and civic responsibility.

Creating a STEM-READY Workforce

There is a low percentage of scientists in America. Recognizing this problem, 4-H Science programs have actively sought to spark an early interest in science education and related careers by providing exciting and approachable, hands-on learning experiences.

4-H Robotics

Participation in the 4-H Robotics program has expanded greatly over the years. In 2012, 50 4-H club and group members were enrolled in the Robotics project. Clubs meet in community settings, afterschool settings and school settings. Thanks to new partnerships with Heartland Tech Academy, Decatur Public Schools and the YMCA, the number of youth participating and learning from this program will continue to grow. In a survey of Macon County 4-H members participating in robotics clubs, 100% reported that their experience in 4-H has helped prepare them for their future and for their future career.



Macon County 4-H clubs participated in the:

- * Illinois 4-H Robotics Competition
- * FIRST LEGO League Competition
- * FIRST Tech Challenge
- * FIRST Robotics Challenge

Afterschool Ag-Science

4-H created a revolution of excitement for science among 4th graders in Decatur Public Schools. Through a grant from ADM, Macon County 4-H led afterschool programs teaching ag-science. The 2-week program was held at Garfield, John's Hill, South Shores and Franklin Elementary Schools, reaching over 60 youth.

Teachers reported that students in the program are more excited about learning during the school day and pay closer attention in class. Students at all schools reported that they liked science more and were more likely to choose a career in science after attending the program.

SNAP! (Super Nutrition Activity Playground)

Last summer, 30 teenagers from Decatur Public Schools led a revolution of health and nutrition during Decatur Public Schools new summer school program. Their program is called SNAP-Super Nutrition Activity Playground. The teens ran a 4-day camp teaching nutrition and health, reaching almost 400 youth. While the students at camp are learning new skills, even more important is the revolution of leaders that are developed through this program.

After the program:

- 93% of campers realize that the foods they eat impact their health, their looks and their weight.
- 92% of campers realize that the foods they eat impact their performance in sports and in school.



NUTRITION & WELLNESS

Parsons Coffee House

Thanks to a partnership between the Parsons Parent Group and U of I Extension, 25 parents participated in the 2012 Parsons Coffee House. The goal of this year's program was for parents to learn how to create healthy, quick and easy meals for their entire family.

During the 8 week program parents cooked and chopped their way to easy casseroles, healthy breakfast options, and tried new foods from different cultures and countries.

95% of the parents that participated in the program used the new and healthy recipes they were given for their family. The program was such a success, plans for 2013 are moving forward! U of I Extension is proud to be part of such an outstanding partnership that promotes healthy eating!

“Who would have ever thought my kids would eat cooked cabbage. They love it! I am so glad that I was part of the Parsons Program.”

Parsons School Parent

Cooking for 1 or 2

67 men and women from the Decatur Salvation Army participated in a Cooking for 1 or 2 lesson presented by U of I Extension. Along with learning about menu planning, food shopping and preparation, and using leftovers, participants viewed a recipe demonstration and sampled the results to excellent reviews.

Serve it Safely

14 men and women from a variety of community groups participated in Serve it Safely in Decatur offered by U of I Extension and in partnership with Macon County Health Department. They learned about food safety, sanitation, and hand washing to help them safely serve and sell food to the public.

100% of surveyed participants thought the information provided was helpful to them. One participant stated “the whole class was very effective in learning the do's and don'ts of cooking and cleaning.”



investing in a healthy community

Whoa & Go Foods

Just over 700 Decatur area preschoolers participate in monthly lessons on eating healthy. Youth learn different examples of whoa (chocolate milk) and go (white milk) foods so they can eat healthier.

OrganWise Guys

Decatur Public School Youth ages K-2, are a part of OrganWise Guys. Close to 655 students learn about how different foods work with organs in the body.

Eating Smart, Being Healthy

Each month 75 people from Macon Resources learn about the importance of healthy snacks, comparison shopping, and reading labels.

Love Your Family, Feed Your Future

In 2012, 32 Phoenix teen moms took on the task of educating themselves in basic cooking skills. The young ladies learned how to properly measure and practiced cooking techniques.

Healthy Meals on Your Own

26 disabled adults from Easter Seals meet once a month to cook meals that are simple and easy. The meals that they learn are something that they can practice making at home.

Strength In Leadership

4-H works hard to build leaders for the future. In a study of 4-H members across Illinois in 2012, 76% reported that they had a chance to lead 4-H activities and meetings. In that same study, 83% reported that they help make decisions about what happens in 4-H.



“I enjoy taking charge. Being a leader here has helped me in social aspects throughout my life. I have learned skills that most kids at my age can't do at all.”

Kevin Kappenman
Long Creek Critters 4-H Club





Agriculture & Natural Resources



“Thank you for creating this educational seminar. Knowledge is powerful!”
Pasture Restoration & Management Participant

Prairie Flower Identification Engages DeWitt County Residents

DeWitt County Extension held a prairie flower identification program, on presumably the hottest day of July at Weldon Springs State Park. Even though the temperatures were well into the triple digits, we had 10 adults participate. Carol Thompson, Natural Resources Coordinator at Weldon Springs led the program. She began the program by first discussing how the prairie was established, touched on the species of animals that reside on the prairie and then concluded with a hike, where she pointed out and identified different species of forbs, as well as gave participants tips on how to properly identify each plant.

Easing Apprehensions of Land & Leasing Issues in Macon County

Grain prices and input costs for row crop production for the 2013 planting season might be described as ‘volatile’ or ‘uncertain’. Compound that with the drought from last summer, these issues had producers and landowners concerned with the risk associated with farming. Dr. Gary Schnitkey, University of Illinois Farm Management Extension Specialist, spoke at the Macon County Extension office to 31 participants to ease the inherent apprehensions producers had of the rising cost of cash renting versus landowners who might be seeking higher rental rates due to the increased profitability of commodity crops over the last few years.

Tri-County Pasture Restoration & Management Program

In an effort to combat the drought of 2012 and prepare for 2013, University of Illinois Extension hosted an educational seminar on “Restoring & Managing Pastures after Drought.” Jim Morrison, retired U of I Extension Specialist, and Debra Hagstrom, Equine Extension Specialist, led the discussion for the day. A mixed method presentation was used so that the 13 participants, from DeWitt, Douglas, Macon and Piatt Counties could not only participate in the lecture, but had hands-on visuals and tours of pastures, weeds, and plants.



Thanks to this program, 123 acres of pastureland across 4 counties and covering 54 animals were impacted. Of those respondents, 66% will also increase weed management treatments on their land due to information disseminated during the program.



Tracking Animals in Piatt County

Despite a cold and rainy April day, the Piatt County Extension Office held a program at Lodge Park in Monticello. The program was designed to give participants training and practice identifying animal tracks, observing signs of animal existence within the park, as well as habits and habitats that native wildlife would likely choose and why. Extension Educator, Dave Shiley, led the program and was successful in engaging 6 youth and 7 adults who were in attendance.

DeWitt-Macon-Piatt Master Naturalists

The Master Naturalists are a small but very active group. The group currently has 15 active members who are logging hours at places like: Rock Springs Nature Center, Scovill Zoo and the Illinois Raptor Center. This summer we will be promoting our 2013 Master Naturalist training program to community residents who are interested in becoming environmental stewards.

Macon County Master Gardeners

PLAN ON IT!
Master Gardeners making a difference

The Power of Volunteers: 6,871 volunteer hours in 2012



Macon County Master Gardeners volunteered a total of 6,871 hours in 2012. That’s an increase of over 17% from 2011! So what’s keeping these volunteers so busy? The volunteers support others in learning how to garden and also share the rewards within the community. The Heritage Garden at Rock Springs Environmental Center regularly donates vegetables to the Good Samaritan Inn and the Northeast Community Fund. The Decatur Day

Care Garden, affiliated with St. Mary’s Hospital, brings youth and seniors together to plant and maintain the garden, with the added benefit of bridging the gap between young children and seniors. The Decatur Public Library Gardens are an impressive eye-catcher to the downtown area with a mixture of perennials, annuals, native prairie plants, herbs, grasses, and a variety of other garden plants.



“I appreciate the help and information that I was provided from the Master Gardener Help Desk. They were very helpful and provided worthwhile advice.”