

REPORT TO THE PEOPLE

Gallatin County 2024-2025

SPIRIT OF PUBLIC HEALTH MINI-GRANT

The Gallatin County Cooperative Extension Service collaborated with the Gallatin County School Early Childhood Education Coordinator to address public health in the community. Collaborators received a Spirit of Public Health Mini-Grant, which focused on health and nutritional wellness with a multi-tiered approach targeting all ages from birth to seniors with five community partners. Other community partners include the Gallatin County Family Resource Center and the Three Rivers District Health Department.

Collaboratively, the community partners plan to continue serving Gallatin County by providing engaging events, clubs, and projects for all age demographics. The partners kept the project goals at the forefront of their minds and worked diligently to help Three Rivers District Health Department reach their Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goals through various ways of educating our community. The Gallatin County Cooperative Extension Family & Consumer Sciences Agent, Ronda Rex, partnered with the Family Resource Center Coordinator, Kerry Tackett, to provide hands-on cooking and baking classes for the Grand Love Program. This is a program called Cooking for a Purpose which was also in collaboration with the Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD).



Focusing on mindfulness activities at the Senior Center.



Collaborators for the Spirit of Public Health.



Cooking lesson teaching students about making heart healthy snacks.

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LITERACY, EATING AND ACTIVITY FOR PRIMARY (LEAP) FOR HEALTH FOR GALLATIN COUNTY

In an ongoing effort, the Gallatin County Cooperative Extension Service Family & Consumer Sciences Agent, Ronda Rex and 4-H Youth Development Agent, Lora Stewart, collaborates with the Gallatin County Lower and Upper Elementary School Librarian, Amanda O'Connor, to conduct LEAP once a month throughout the school year. Ronda also collaborates with OVEC (Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative Head Start) to conduct the LEAP curriculum each month. Lora extended the LEAP program to include an international component for all 2nd grade students. This program has reached more than 400 elementary students (3- to 4-year-olds and K-3rd grades).

The books for the year included:

- Jack and the Hungry Giant/The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Smelly Ghost
- Amelia Bedelia's First Apple Pie
- Clarabella's Teeth
- Rodeo Ron and His Milkshake Cows
- The Little Red Hen Bakes a Pizza
- Green Eggs and Ham
- Dinosaur Diner
- IQ Gets Fit



Multiple hands-on activities were implemented to enhance the children's learning experience.



LEAP Books are read during each lesson to teach children about nutritious foods, healthy eating habits, handwashing, food safety, and being physically active.

The children completed hands-on projects such as how to create a MY Plate, how to properly brush their teeth, how to construct their own pizza, how to make a smoothie in a bag, how to do fun exercises and how to dance using dance streamers to achieve physical activity. Parents receive the LEAP newsletter each month that informs them of the highlighted book, hands-on activities, and foods that the children learned about and try. The children also take home their hands-on projects.

At the beginning of each class, the School Librarian and Extension Agents discuss with the students about their learning goal for the day and how to reach their goal. At the end of each school year, the School Librarian evaluates how each child achieves their learning goals for each class in each grade.

EXPLORING NATURE AT HARTIG PARK!

Movement. As a society, we are always being told that we need more "movement" in our daily lives. And while it's true that adults and children will certainly benefit from moving more, wouldn't it be nice if an educational component could be added to this activity?

Outdoor Recreation was identified as a major area of programming for the Gallatin County Extension Service. And as such, we have offered several opportunities for Gallatin County residents to not only increase physical activity, but to also learn something in the process.

Since September of 2023, the Extension Service has conducted eight nature hikes at Hartig Park & Wildlife Preserve. Two of these hikes were targeted towards parents with children, three towards teens, and three towards the general public.



The Hartig Park map shows over 30 trails for visitors to walk or hike.



Multiple groups have spent time hiking Hartig Park learning about how to identify trees, shrubs and other topics.

During the autumn hikes, participants learned how to identify trees and shrubs by leaf shape and fall color. During winter, they learned about bark characteristics of common forest trees. And during the spring hikes, most of the emphasis was on flowering trees, shrubs, and wildflowers.

In all, over 60 people participated in the nature hikes. Show of hands surveys revealed that as a result of the nature hikes:

The majority could better identify trees, shrubs, and wildflowers;

The majority felt safer in the woods and would likely find more opportunities to hike;

The majority recognized that, even though the hikes were not overly strenuous, they tired too easily and should try to exercise more.

EXTENSION ART GALLERY

The Gallatin County Extension Council (CEC) was presented an Urban Extension Initiative, a Community Arts Extension Program. After discussion, a committee was formed and the new “Extension Art Gallery” was started in the Fall of 2024. Each month, art kits are put together by the CEC committee, that consists of paint, brushes, canvases, and directions both written and a video. They complete the painting and turn it into the Extension Office where the paintings are hung for a month. They also compete in a contest. There are four different age groups – Cloverbud, Junior 4-H, Senior 4-H, and adults. Prizes include different art kits so that people can learn art and/or embroidery skills. The project started with 50 kits and soon it was realized more would be needed. The project is introducing new people to the Extension program. Families want projects to work on together, and this provides a creative outlet. Major events from Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS), Agriculture and Natural Resources(ANR), and 4-H are also included in the bag.



All Gallatin County Extension Art Gallery Artwork is submitted for judging and are judged in 4 age divisions.

Community members continue to show enthusiasm for this program and are always asking when the next kit is coming. Several parents have said they enjoy working with their children. One parent said they enjoyed all the grab and go bags during COVID and was glad Extension was providing project kits again. This is an on-going project with hopes of making it into a traveling Extension Art Gallery.

EXTENSION AT A GLANCE

- **13,606.25** Number of hours volunteered by Gallatin County Extension Homemakers. According to the Independent Sector, the latest value of a volunteer service hour is \$33.49 which is a 5.3% increase from the previous year. With that being said, the estimated value given by the Gallatin County Homemakers in the year 2023-2024 is **\$455,673.31**.
- **315** Number of individuals who reported improved knowledge, opinions, skills, or aspirations regarding the safe storage, handling, preparation and/or preservation of food
- **395** Number of Youth (5-18) engaged in FCS 4-H Programming
- **292** Number of Youth (5-18) engaged in Health 4-H Programming
- **1790** Number of individuals who reported they utilized delivery systems/access points (e.g. farmers’ markets, CSAs, WIC, food pantries) that offer healthy foods
- **90** Number of people gaining knowledge on establishing and maintaining pollinator habitats
- **60** Number of people who collected soil samples for testing



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