



Henry/Stark Counties
358 Front St. Galva, IL
(309) 932-3447
Tues, Wed, Thur. 8 am - 4 pm

Mercer County
910 13th St. Viola, IL
309-513-3100
Tues, Wed, Thur. 8 am - 4 pm

Rock Island County
321 W 2nd Ave. Milan, IL
(309) 756-9978
Mon-Fri. 8am - 4 pm

Visit our website: extension.illinois.edu/hmrs

Sprinkle more kindness for heart-health benefits

Kristin Bogdonas, Illinois Extension nutrition and wellness educator.

Kindness is more than a simple act—it’s a heart-healthy habit. A study in the Journal of Social Psychology found that performing acts of kindness for seven days significantly boosted happiness. Whether it’s being kind to yourself, a friend, or a stranger—or simply witnessing kindness—these actions elevate mood and create a ripple effect of positivity.

Kindness Toward Others:

Kindness has many forms, but the purest requires no expectation of return. Challenge yourself to a 7-day Kindness Intervention: Do one kind act daily and notice the physical and emotional impact.

Ideas include:

- Shoveling a neighbor’s sidewalk.
- Offering help to someone struggling.
- Bringing food to an animal shelter.
- Writing a positive review for a local business.
- Sending flowers to brighten someone’s day.



Kindness Toward Self:

Kindness isn’t just something we extend to others—it’s vital to show kindness to ourselves. Our internal dialogue shapes how we feel and function. Replacing self-critical thoughts with compassionate ones can lower stress, boost self-esteem, and improve overall well-being. For example, instead of thinking, “I’m not good enough,” try reframing it to, “I’m doing my best, and that’s enough.”

Treat yourself as you would a close friend—acknowledging your efforts, offering grace for mistakes, and celebrating small victories. Self-kindness fuels resilience and creates a strong foundation for emotional and physical health

This month, pair kindness with heart-healthy habits like balanced eating and staying active—remember, 80% of heart disease cases are preventable!



READ ABOUT OUR FEBRUARY EVENTS:

Winter Wellness Family Event

SAT. FEB 8, 10 AM - 1 PM
BLACK HAWK PARK, ROCK ISLAND
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Nursery School: Lessons in Gardening

SAT. FEB 22, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM
VIBRANT ARENA, MOLINE
PAGE 4

4-H Cloverbud Academy

SAT. FEB 22, 8 AM - NOON
WIU-QC CAMPUS, MOLINE
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February Webinars & Classes



Tips and Tricks for Winter Sowing Annuals: Four Seasons Gardening | Tues Feb 11, 1:30 PM

Do you like starting seeds but don't enjoy all the work of setting up a growing system inside? Let Mother Nature do the work. Join a lively discussion on winter sowing annual flowers, vegetables, and herbs.

Winter sowing is a practice of starting seeds during winter outside using empty plastic jugs. No more thin, weak seedlings, as winter-sown seedlings are stout with huge root systems. Learn several winter sowing improvements to make the process more effective.

The series is free, but registration is required at go.illinois.edu/4SGWinterSowing



Tree Care Series Continues in February

Learn from Illinois Extension experts how to keep your trees healthy and thriving!

Tree Identification and Health Assessment

- Date: Wed. Feb 12, 9 AM
- Learn: Identify tree species and assess tree health. Discover corrective and preventative actions.

Abiotic and Biotic Stressors

- Date: Wed. Feb 26, 9 AM
- Learn: Understand non-living (abiotic) and living (biotic) stressors affecting trees. Diagnose diseases and identify notable tree pests.

Details:

- Cost: \$10 (general), \$50 (CEUs)
- Registration: go.illinois.edu/TreeCareSeries



Inflation: How it Affects a Fixed-Income Budget: Lessons for Living | Thurs. Feb 13, 10 AM

Have you visited the grocery store recently and noticed that an item you regularly purchase is more expensive than usual? According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, inflation happens when goods and services prices increase over time.

In this session, we will dive deeper into what inflation is and how it affects our buying power, how we can adjust our budget with increasing prices, and provide resources to better understand the effects of inflation in our everyday lives.

The series is free, but registration is required at go.illinois.edu/InflationBudget



Vegetable Gardening Series, Mondays, Feb 24, March 10, 24, April 7, and 21, 11 AM- 12:30 PM Rock Island Public Library (Watts-Midtown)

Want to start a garden, but not sure where to start? Join Emily Swihart, Illinois Extension horticulture educator, for a five-part Vegetable Gardening Series this spring! The sessions will be held at the Rock Island Public Library (Watts Midtown Branch).

Dates and Topics:

- February 24: Where will you Garden?
- March 10: Seed and Plant Choices, Soils and Fertilizers
- March 24: Cool Season Vegetables
- April 7: Warm Season Vegetables
- April 21: Insects and Diseases

The library is taking reservations for this FREE program. Sign up at: go.illinois.edu/VeggieGardenSeries

Join us for the perfect winter day escape into health and wellness!

University of Illinois Extension and Black Hawk State Historic Site
invite you to our 4th annual

Winter Wellness Event

Sat, February 8, 10 am - 1 pm








Watch Tower Lodge, Black Hawk Park
1800 46th Ave. Rock Island, IL

Join us for a day of wellness, discovery, and fun!



Take a break from screens and connect with nature, creativity, and community.

Event Highlights:

-  **DIY Food Creations** – Make delicious pancakes and pizzas and choose your own healthy toppings.
-  **Hands-On Crafts** – Explore your creative side with fun make and take projects.
-  **Youth-Focused Games** – engaging activities that make learning about health and nutrition fun for kids from SNAP-Ed, AOK, and the Early Childhood Learning Center.
-  **Hauberg Museum** – Discover the story of the Sauk and Meskwaki people.
-  **Nature Walks** – Explore the beautiful grounds at Black Hawk Park.
-  **Master Gardener Booths** – Get tips on gardening, nature, and bird-watching.
-  **Information Booths and Wellness Checks** – Illinois Extension and Oak Street Health will have great information on health and wellness to share.

Why "Unplugged"?

This year, we're encouraging participants to:

- **Reconnect** with loved ones through face-to-face interactions.
- **Recharge** mental health with mindfulness and outdoor activities.
- **Learn** ways to live healthier, more balanced lives.

Admission is free, and all ages are welcome!

Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy wellness, creativity, and connection in a fun and supportive community atmosphere.

For more details, visit go.illinois.edu/WinterWellness
or call (309) 756-9978

Special thanks Rock Island County Extension & 4-H Foundation for their support



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

University of Illinois Extension
321 W 2nd Ave. Milan, IL
(309) 756-9978
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YOUR GARDENING STORY STARTS HERE!

NURSERY SCHOOL

LESSONS IN GARDENING

**SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 22
8 AM – 2:30 PM
VIBRANT ARENA
MOLINE, IL**

Turn the page on winter and dive into a day of gardening inspiration when you join us at Nursery School, Sat, February 22 at the Vibrant Arena in Moline, IL. Experts are ready to help you author your garden's next chapter. From practical advice to creative ideas, you'll gain the knowledge to grow your gardening story to new heights.

Kickoff Keynote – 8:45 AM | Pollinators

Start your day with "**Perfectly Paired: Plants, Pollinators, & You**" by Emily Swihart, Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator, who will unveil the essential connections between plants and pollinators.

Tailored Learning, choose one topic each session

– 10 AM Session: (choose one)

- **Plan Your 2025 Garden: New Plants for Current Trends**
Kate Terrell, President of Wallace's Garden Center
- **Honey and Health: Nature's Sweet Treat**
Kristin Bogdonas, Illinois Extension Nutrition and Wellness Educator
- **Jumping Worms: Identification, Impact, and Prevention in IL**
Chris Evans, Illinois Extension Forester

– 11:15 AM Session: (choose one)

- **Tapestry Farms: An Urban Farm System in the QC**
Ann McGlynn, Executive Director of Tapestry Farms
- **Elevate Expectations with Raised Bed Gardening**
Ken Johnson, Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator
- **The Enchanting World of Dragonflies and Damselflies**
Amy Loving, Director of Education at Nahant Marsh

Midday Break – Lunch, Shopping, and Networking

Enjoy a taco bar buffet (included) and visit unique garden vendors. Complete your "Nursery School library card" by visiting the vendor booths for a chance to win a gift basket to be given away during the closing keynote.

Closing Keynote – 1:15 PM | Landscape Design

Conclude your day with the final session on Landscape Design, led by Nancy Kreith, Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator, who will inspire you to craft stunning and sustainable outdoor spaces.

Register at: go.illinois.edu/NurserySchool2025

Registration fee: \$70 (due by February 15)

Download a brochure with all the details at go.illinois.edu/NSbrochure



Connect with experts and grow in your gardening knowledge!



Morning coffee and rolls and a taco bar lunch are included.



Shop unique items from a variety of garden vendors.

Are you a vendor with garden-related items or services? Join us at Nursery School to connect with gardeners! Sign up at go.illinois.edu/NSvendor



Ignite Your Child's Curiosity at
4-H's Cloverbud Event!

4-H CLOVERBUD ACADEMY

Attention, young explorers ages 5 to 7!
Embark on a fun and educational
adventure with 4-H!

Engage in hands-on explorations of:

1. **Nature:** Discover the beauty of our natural world and an appreciation for the environment.
2. **Animal Science:** Explore the animal kingdom and learn fascinating facts.
3. **Visual Arts:** Foster creativity making a unique art project to take home.
4. **Health & Well-being:** Move your body with some fun games, and learn to make a healthy snack.
5. **WQPT PBS Kids:** Dive into the world of PBS Kids where fun and learning come together!

Sign up at: go.illinois.edu/4-HCloverbud2025

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.
If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, contact (309) 756-9978.

Calling all
youth ages
5 to 7!
"Learn by
Doing!"

SAT FEB 22
9 am - Noon

WIU- QUAD CITIES

3300 River Dr. Moline, IL

COST IS \$5

REGISTER @



go.illinois.edu/4-HCloverbud2025

or call 309-756-9978

University of Illinois Extension
Serving Henry, Mercer,
Rock Island, & Stark Counties



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



Feb. 11 Is an Unofficial Holiday Encouraging People To “Make a Friend Day”

Research shows that socialization and enrichment are good for aging brains. There are several brain health factors, and socialization is one of the key ingredients to a long and healthy lifestyle. On this day or throughout the month, stepping out of one’s comfort zone and meeting new people can lead to new friendships.

Here are a few tips for making new friendships or restoring old ones:

1. Say hello to people: The 10/5 rule. When within 10 feet of someone, always smile and make eye contact. When within 5 feet, say hello in a friendly or polite way.
2. Look at community events and choose to attend a local meeting.
3. Consider attending an event that was initially off the agenda.
4. Call or text a friend you last contacted a while ago due to the busyness of life.
5. Ask a coworker to go to a gym class together.

FIESTA QUINOA SALAD

Ingredients

- ½ cup uncooked and rinsed quinoa
- ½ cup corn, drained and rinsed or thawed from frozen
- ½ cup black beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup red or green bell pepper
- ⅓ cup red onion, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and chopped (optional)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice from 1 lime
- 2 teaspoons fresh cilantro, chopped
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

Servings: 7

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water. In a saucepan, heat 1 cup water to boiling. Add quinoa. Return to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Fluff with a fork and allow to cool slightly.
2. Add corn, black beans, bell pepper, red onion, and jalapeño to quinoa.
3. Whisk together olive oil, lime juice, cilantro, cumin, garlic powder, pepper, and salt in a small separate bowl.
4. Add dressing to vegetable mixture and gently toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours before serving.

Store in an airtight container and refrigerate for up to four days.

Nutrition information per serving:
90 calories; 4.5 g fat (0.5 g saturated fats);
70 mg sodium; 4 g carbohydrates;
0 g added sugar; 2 g dietary fiber;
3 g protein.

Game Plan for Food Safety: Don’t Fumble on Gameday

Set the play clock: Don’t let cold food sit on the sidelines for over two hours. Use ice to keep it cool and refresh the ice as needed.

Clean before the snap:

Wash hands and veggies before serving. A USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service study revealed that over 95% of people need to improve their hand-washing. Rinse fruits and veggies to tackle harmful bacteria before serving.

Keep hot food in the end zone:

A thermometer is the only safe way to check if hot foods stay above 140 F. Keep wings, dips, and nacho toppings warm with an oven, warming trays, or slow cookers. Preheat slow cookers according to the playbook or manufacturer’s instructions.

Stay in the food safety league — don’t let bacteria intercept party plans.



Think about having a Frugal February. Be intentional about finances this month and into 2025.

Learn more: **Tracking Expenses**
go.illinois.edu/track-expenses

Spending Plan
go.illinois.edu/spending-plan

Managing Debt
go.illinois.edu/managing-debt