



January 2022

IMPACTING YOU

Serving Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Moultrie, and Shelby Counties



COLLABORATION FEEDS FAMILIES!



We are pleased to report that the collaboration between the University of Illinois Extension SNAP Ed Program and Master Gardener Program as well as the HSHS Good Shepherd Mission Team was very successful in 2021.

Early in March the Garden received a grant from Farm Credit of Illinois in the amount of \$500 to purchase mushroom compost to fill newly built raised beds at the new garden plot south of HSHS Good Shepherd Hospital in Shelbyville. The Community Garden board also wrote a grant to the Lumpkin Foundation and received \$5000 to build 10 raised beds, move the existing garden shed and run a water source to the new garden. Recently we were awarded a grant from the San Damiano Outreach committee (HSHS Missions) in the amount of \$4000.

For Spring planting, we harvested radishes, onions and beets. Our summer planting included a variety of peppers, summer squash, tomatoes and zucchini. We also did a late summer planting of bok choy. All of the produce was donated to Shelbyville United Methodist Church food pantry, Shelbyville Senior Center and the Towers housing site. Total produce donation pounds this year were 662.31. Master Gardeners also provided a class to the Shelby County Cloverbuds on plant care and growing tomatoes. Some of these Cloverbud tomatoes were shown at the Shelby County 4-H and Junior Fair in July.

Plans for the winter include using a portion of the hospital grant to place a "Blessing Box" on the campus at the hospital. This little food pantry is being built by Shelbyville High School Industrial Arts class. The little pantry will be maintained and supported by the hospital, Methodist Food Pantry and University of Illinois Extension. In addition to basic nonperishable items, the Blessing Box will be stocked with fresh produce from our community garden. We also are in the process of building 10 new raised beds with the hope of doubling our production next year.



What's happening around the Unit?

Cumberland County



Sisters Emma & Lila wait for the parade to start.

Toledo, the county seat of Cumberland, celebrated their Hometown Christmas event on Saturday, December 4. Our county 4-H program participated by providing ornaments for youth in the community to paint. Once they were painted, members coated them so they could be hung on the Christmas tree that evening before the tree lighting ceremony. There were over 100 ornaments decorated and hung on the tree that night! The 4-H also had a float in the lighted parade courtesy of the Raisin' Kane 4-H club. They played Christmas music, decorated with all the holiday décor, and waved to the multitude of spectators surrounding the square. It was an incredible day of celebration and small-town spirit!



4-H member Sophia Jansen decorates an ornament.

Awesome Autumn Photo Contest

Unit 19 4-H program held its first ever Awesome Autumn Photo Contest September 22-November 30. Photos taken by 4-H members were reviewed and critiqued by a photography judge in two Categories: Fun in the Fall & Autumn Beauty; and three age divisions. Cash prizes were given for each division, and the overall winner received an 8x10 of their photo framed by DJ's Custom Framing in Shelbyville. Congratulations to our overall winners Sophia Tice and Crosby Schultz!



Showstoppers

Coles County 2021 4-H Gingerbread Contest club winner! Congratulations Showstoppers!



Autumn Beauty
8-13 YEAR OLDS
Moultrie-Douglas

**SOPHIA
TICE**

**Overall
Winner!**



Fun in the Fall
5-7 YEAR OLDS
Shelby

**CROSBY
SCHULTZ**

**Runner
up!**

Welcome Our New Office Support Staff



Rob Stroud
Coles County Office
Support Assistant

Rob Stroud is the new Office Support Assistant in the Coles Extension Office, located at 809 Broadway Ave. in Mattoon. He has been with Extension since late November 2021. Prior to that time, Rob had the honor of writing about Extension and many other community organizations as a staff writer for the Mattoon Journal Gazette and Charleston Times-Courier for more than 20 years. He started his career covering 4-H livestock shows in Coles and Clark counties, and his recent coverage of Extension included an article about the Partners in Produce Program. Rob wrote Day Tripper columns for several years about taking road trips, and rail trips, in Illinois and beyond. Rob is a Mattoon native and a graduate of Eastern Illinois University in Charleston. He and his wife, Beckie, have two children, Hannah and Owen. They enjoy traveling, trying new restaurants, volunteering at Lightworks at Peterson Park in Mattoon, and taking part in school-related activities.

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