

# EXTENSION SNAPSHOT

## Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit

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**Illinois Extension**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

## Seven Staff Leave Lasting Impact as They Retire

Retirements are bittersweet. It is a special time to reflect on the impact of someone's career while having to say goodbye. Seven University of Illinois Extension staff in the Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit finished up their lengthy Extension careers this summer. The group combined has over 200 years of work invested in impacting the people and communities in our unit.

Janis Blout, Sheila Bolliger, Kathie Brown, Margaret Cover, Deb Donaldson, Irene Edwards, and Cathy Ludolph are now officially Extension retirees.

Janis and Cathy have impacted thousands of youth through their role as 4-H program coordinators. For many of those youth, Janis and Cathy were a big part of their lives throughout their years in 4-H.

"I knew many of the 4-H parents of today when they were 4-H members," commented Janis, Fulton 4-H program coordinator. "I have attended weddings, showers, celebrations, and, sadly, memorial services of the many people I have come to know through working for University of Illinois Extension 4-H."

"One of my favorite groups to work with has been the 4-H Federation group," stated Cathy, Peoria 4-H program coordinator. "Teens from throughout the county meet and work together leading events and activities for the county. The members develop friendships that last a lifetime. Shy youth come out of their shell and become public speakers. All of them develop skills to succeed as leaders. I feel I learned as much from them as they did from me."

Margaret, Deb, and Irene were integral members of the Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) team.

"My duties at Extension changed over the years and I went from teaching at homeless shelters, to teaching moms how to return to the workplace, to being an assistant in the Extension office, to overseeing EFNEP as the supervising educator. Being able to help people was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life," Margaret explained.

Kathie Brown, community and economic development educator, and Sheila Bolliger, office support associate, have similar stories. They each held different Extension roles throughout their long careers, served thousands of youth and adults, and thus left a lasting impact in the communities that Extension serves.

"As each of these ladies retired, it was inspiring to see the tremendous number of well-wishes come in from families, clients, volunteers, and stakeholders thanking them for their work and wishing them well," commented Earl Allen, Extension county director. "It has been an honor to work with each of them. It is hard to even begin to summarize the impact their careers have made in our communities."



*Janis Blout*  
40 years



*Sheila Bolliger*  
39 years



*Kathie Brown*  
41 years



*Margaret Cover*  
23 years



*Deb Donaldson*  
20 years



*Irene Edwards*  
22 years



*Cathy Ludolph*  
26 years