Wanda Paris, Lyon County 4-H Agent, retired after working 17 ½ years of leading Lyon County 4-H Youth programs and working a total of 37 years with the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. Wanda’s 4-H programs helped youth find and develop their talents. Skills they developed enabled them to grow as youth and adults. These include developing confidence in their leadership potential, a sense of their own identity, self-esteem, communication skills, social skills, understanding diversity and improving their ability to relate to others, effective decision making and experience in working as a team and problem-solving situations.

Youth have opportunities to lead, travel and succeed. Programs offered include school clubs, specialty clubs, middle school and teen councils, area and state teen council, day camps and 4-H Camp. Youth involved in these programs are more likely to achieve higher development of skills required to be successful adults.

Youth also learn to be of service to their communities through the annual canned beef stew drive, making personal care bags for military members and foster children, trash pick-up days, and more.

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4-H Youth Development

Members of the Lyon County Teen Leadership Council (TLC) focus efforts on leadership, communication and service. The Lyon County TLC members are self-selected but have guidelines they must meet in order to continue participation; and more importantly to get the most benefit for their personal development.

Research shows youth who participate in leadership development opportunities are exposed to a variety of opportunities for personal development. Leadership activities help youth:

- Develop confidence in their leadership potential and their own sense of identity.
- Improve their self-esteem.
- Enhance their communication skills for sharing, reflecting and discussion.
- Understand the importance of diversity and improves their ability to relate to others.
- Learn effective decision making methods and experience problem-solving situations.
- Learn group social skills.

Asset Development

Leadership education builds several important assets in Kentucky youth and provides critical elements of youth development (Search Institute, 2004; Pittman, Irby & Ferber, 2001). The fewer assets young people have, the more likely they are to engage in negative behaviors (Benson, 1997; Eccles & Gootman, 2002). The more assets that are provided to youth, the more likely they are to exhibit positive behaviors. Strong leadership and decision making skills are essential assets in helping shape a 4-H member into a responsible adult (Jones, n.d.)

All TLC members benefit, as stated above, from participation in opportunities provided by the program. However, this year, three members have stepped to higher levels of leadership that offer more opportunities for growth. Two TLC members serve as officers on the Pennyrile Area Teen Council, one member serves as a member of the State Teen Council, one member serves on the state Performing Arts Troupe Leadership Team, and one member serves on the leadership board as a Shooting Sports Ambassador. This year the D7 Lyon County Shooting Sports Ambassador was selected to serve as a Kentucky delegate to the National Shooting Sports Institute in Bozeman, Montana.
Based on research and outcomes stated above, it can be expected that Lyon County 4-H Teen Leadership members who serve on advanced level boards will be more likely to achievement higher development of skills required for successful adults.

**Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS)**

The Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Extension Agent for Education in Lyon County, Angie York, has enjoyed a busy and productive year serving constituents in the Lyon County Community and beyond. Programs in the FCS department are designed around the seven initiatives set forth by the University of Kentucky. The initiatives include making healthy lifestyle choices, nurturing families, embracing life as we age, securing financial stability, promoting healthy homes and communities, accessing nutritious foods, and empowering community leaders.

Offering relevant and engaging programs in Family and Consumer Sciences topics has provided several program successes. One program to highlight this year is the monthly nutrition programs offered at the Lyon County Senior Center. According to the World Health Organization, senior adults are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition. Many of the diseases suffered by older persons are the result of dietary factors, some of which have been operating since infancy. These factors are then compounded by changes that naturally occur with the aging process.

In an effort to help senior adults learn more about the positive effects of good nutrition on the body, monthly nutrition lessons are conducted at the Lyon County Senior Center. Participants are able to join in hands-on lessons over topics that address high cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, and more.

Both men and women who attend the programs indicated they have used information given in the monthly presentations to reduce fat, sodium, and sugar intake in their diets. They have also indicated an increase in exercise as well as an interest in trying new and different foods.

Because of the importance of these programs, the senior citizens board awarded a grant to the Lyon County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences program to ensure the continuation of the monthly lessons. These visits with senior citizens promote the FCS initiatives of making healthy lifestyle choices, embracing life as we age, and accessing nutritious foods.

This exciting program is only a small glimpse into the many classes offered through Lyon County FCS. Continuing a tradition of excellence in education remains top priority. The Lyon County FCS program welcomes community input and ideas to further the program in its endeavor to offer research based information to improve the lives of the individuals and families in Lyon County.
Farmers requested that Lyon County Extension offer a training for tobacco workers. Farmers can conduct their own GAP certification on the farm for their workers but they prefer an independent GAP training. Tobacco companies may view the Extension training as more compliant with regulations.

In cooperation with the local farmers, a GAP training has been held for two years in Lyon County for 99 tobacco farmers and their H2-A workers in 2018 and for 110 farmers and workers in 2019. The program has included collaboration with the Western Kentucky Regional Migrant Education Program, the Department of Labor, local farmers, and local emergency services. This year CPR training was offered to the farmers; 11 farmers were certified.

Difficulties in planning and conducting this program included finding translators that were competent with technical terms including medical, agricultural and mechanical. It is required that certificates and forms signed by workers are in Spanish, as well as English, so that workers understand what they are signing. Educational materials were also translated to Spanish.

One worker reported that he used compression on a wound as a result of the information he received at the program. In addition to use of interpreters for translation to Spanish, Microsoft Translator was used to translate slides from English to Spanish. Zenaida Villoria, UKREC, reviewed and corrected online translations of materials and the PowerPoints prepared by speakers. Packets including individual certification cards were prepared for each worker and a list of certified H2A workers was provided for each farm. Farmers that participated in this program received very favorable feedback when visited by GAP inspectors.

Conducting this program has helped local people recognize the number of H2A workers in the area. The workers have a better understanding of how to use emergency services and an acquaintance with local ambulance personnel. Extension has a relationship with the Migrant Education Program personnel. It has been an interesting collaboration between organizations and a minority farm group that have little opportunity to work together.

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**Extension At a Glance**

- 110 Number of producers and H2A workers participating in a Lyon County Good Ag Practices (GAP) training.
- 82 respondents participating in a community survey and forum indicated that in Lyon County we need the following: more jobs paying good wages and benefits; access to affordable, reliable, high-speed internet; sustainability of family farms; less illegal dumping and littering; more market opportunities for farmers; more youth life skills in money management and life decision making; better family skills in reducing debt; increasing savings and financial planning; more support for prevention of school violence and bullying; more citizens helping to solve local issues; more qualified leaders to prepare the community for the future; more pride in the community and its assets.
- 4749 Family & Consumer Sciences contacts were made in FY 2019 addressing the needs of the Lyon County community.
- 11 Number of farmers who were trained in CPR this year.
- 372 Number of youth who learn leadership skills and participate in community service projects.
- 2053 contacts were made in FY 2019 to promote the FCS initiative of Leadership Development.
- 80 Number of participants gaining access to Extension programming at local farmers markets.
- 5 Number of producers utilizing new forage species, novel endophyte crops and improving grazing practices.

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**It Starts With Us.**

*Healthy Families. Healthy Homes. Healthy Communities.*