

# Lewis County Annual Report 2020

## Putting Knowledge to Work!

The West Virginia University Extension Service works to provide solutions in your community through key programs and resources, including agriculture and natural resources; 4-H and youth development; food and nutrition; health and wellness; financial planning; and home gardening. These research-based programs and services are available to all Lewis County residents thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners, including the Board of Education and County Commission.

## Highlights

- 200 active members, including Cloverbuds, participated in one of 10 community 4-H clubs.
- 254 calves were marketed through the Central Calf Pool, realizing an increase of \$62.97 per head, which totaled \$15,994.
- In the year of a global pandemic, Lewis County CEOS members reported 61,000 volunteer hours, valued at \$1.4 million.

## 4-H/Youth Development

### *Energy Express*

- The Energy Express program was held virtually in 2020 and served 64 Lewis County youths. Pre- and post-program reading assessments showed significant increases in letter-word identification, reading fluency, passage comprehension and broad reading.
- 384 take-home books were sent home with students during the program.
- 2,700 hours of service were provided by AmeriCorps members during Energy Express in Lewis County, valued at \$62,127.

### *Camping*

- Due to COVID-19, residential camping was canceled in 2020. The Camp URLinked initiative was the summer camping replacement. In effort to provide opportunities for all Lewis County youth regardless of internet access, we offered a combination of online and offline camping activities.
- \$1,600 was received in sponsorship of Lewis County 4-H Camp URLinked.
- 76 youths participated in Lewis County 4-H Camp URLinked and received camp care packages.
- 12 Cloverbuds participated in Lewis County 4-H Camp URLinked.
- 40 Lewis County 4-H'ers participated in state camping programs during 2020.

### *Jamboree at the Mill: County 4-H Showcase*

- Due to COVID-19, Jamboree at the Mill was canceled for 2020. However, Lewis County 4-H members were able to display project work in a virtual format.
- 39 non-livestock 4-H projects earned blue ribbons in the virtual 4-H exhibit.
- One Lewis County 4-H member's project won Best of Show at the State Fair Fun Week, the virtual statewide project exhibit for 2020.

### *Traditional 4-H Programming and Clubs*

- 200 active members, including Cloverbuds, participated in one of 10 community 4-H clubs throughout Lewis County.
- 70 4-H'ers were recognized with medals and certificates for exceptional project work.
- Secured funding to provide 4-H Welcome Packets to all Lewis County 4-H members and Cloverbuds. Packets included the following: USB flash drive for county Chromebooks, disinfecting wipes, snacks, pencils, ruler, new 4-H masks made by CEOS members, calendar, hand sanitizer, vintage WVU Extension Service T-shirt, color changing cups and wildflower seeds.

### *Special Interest Programming*

- There was interest in expanding the air rifle program in Lewis County, so two volunteers became certified in February 2020, bringing the total of certified instructors in the county to three. This group of instructors received a grant of \$3,600 from Dominion Energy Transmission to support the program and have applied for another grant. While they were not able to kick off the program in 2020 due to COVID-19, they have secured a location to shoot and are acquiring the guns and accessories to begin the program when allowed.

## **Agriculture and Natural Resources**

- 254 calves were marketed through the Central Calf Pool, realizing an increase of \$62.97 per head, which totaled \$15,994.
- WVU Extension Service personnel and the Lewis County Farmers Market established a connection point in Weston to a statewide food hub. The overarching goals are to increase market access for central West Virginia growers and provide more locally-grown food to consumers. To become part of this hub, space was leased, a cold storage room built and a dry storage room was set-up. This work was done with a \$10,000 grant from Appalachian Sustainable Development, and the central location of Lewis County led to it becoming a key part of this statewide network.
- 1,512 acres of pasture were sprayed for brush by helicopter as a result of WVU Extension Service connecting the helicopter applicators with farms looking for the service. About one-third of those acres were in Lewis County, with the balance in surrounding counties.
- Lewis County hosted a key site in a cooperative research project with the goal of learning more about germination of two invasive grasses, Japanese stiltgrass and jointhead grass. Learning the conditions necessary for germination will help predict germination and therefore, pre-germination treatment, which is one control. Lewis County will host the project again in 2021 to confirm the data from 2020.

- 22 farmers received assistance in the areas of weed and brush control as well as overall pasture management, including specific topics like grazing management, mixing herbicides, calibrating sprayers, using weed wipers, different herbicide options, integrated pest management for weeds, and long-term management.

### **Family and Community Development**

- 50 people attended the breast cancer educational awareness drive-in event hosted by the Lewis County Educational Outreach Service (CEOS), Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital and the WVU Lewis County Extension Service.
- For its small population and rural geography, Lewis County boasts a significant number of CEOS members. In 2020, there were 199 members in six clubs countywide.
- In the year of a global pandemic, Lewis County CEOS members reported 61,000 volunteer hours, valued at \$1.4 million.
- Lewis County CEOS members provided over 400 masks to Lewis County 4-H'ers, including masks that were distributed in the camping and welcome packet efforts.