



Welcome to Roosevelt County

All universities engage in research and teaching, but land-grant universities like Montana State University have a third critical mission – Extension. Extension means reaching out and “extending” resources, solving public needs with university resources through non-formal, non-credit programs.

Montana State University Extension is an educational resource dedicated to improving the quality of people’s lives by providing research-based knowledge to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of families, communities, and agricultural enterprises. MSU Extension offers university resources for all Montanans to explore, even if they never set foot on campus. We provide access to useful information and expert knowledge via workshops, demonstrations, community meetings, publications, videos, the internet and other learning opportunities. Extension links a network of MSU faculty, topic specialists on the MSU-Bozeman campus and our Roosevelt County agents, to the people.



Frosty December morning in Roosevelt County. Photo courtesy of Judy Heupel

County tri-funded support

Programs of MSU Extension are funded cooperatively through a legal partnership among federal, state, and county governments. Research-based education and programming that integrates learning, discovery and engagement would not be possible without this unique funding structure. Quality MSU Extension programming in Roosevelt County is successful due to local financial support from the Roosevelt County Commissioners and community involvement and support. Community input and advisory councils provide ways to identify local issues and plan programs important to the residents of Roosevelt County.



Roosevelt County encompasses 2,385 square miles of Montana’s land, has a population of approximately 11,305 and averages four people per square mile. The county seat is Wolf Point and was founded in 1919. Other incorporated cities include: Bainville, Brockton, Culbertson, Froid and Poplar. The Fort Peck Community College is located in Poplar.

The Roosevelt County MSU Extension staff is proud to provide services in the following areas:

- 4-H Youth Development
- Agriculture and Horticulture
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Community and Economic Development

Program aimed at equipping inspiring leaders

Much of small-town life is run by volunteers on boards, committees and councils. MSU Extension in Roosevelt County sponsored Leading Local, an innovative, one-day, activity-based workshop for new and seasoned volunteers. The program was conducted by Dan Clark, director of the MSU Extension Local Government Center, and gave participants information that helped them be more effective in their volunteer roles.

Leading Local was developed in response to a need expressed by leaders across the state for help with their volunteers. In many small towns, board



Dan Clark leading a team-building exercise.

members have noticed their volunteer base is shrinking and the level of participation is changing. Leading Local participants learned key elements to effective meetings as well as other essential components of strong board, council, and committee work. The training covered the best practices for running effective meetings, how to plan for action, information on personality

styles and generations, and how they might work better together. The 13 workshop participants also learned how to get involved and work more effectively for their community.

Besides Dan Clark's educational workshop for inspiring leaders, Blake Christensen, associate director of the MSU Extension Local Government Center, and Paul Lachapelle, MSU Extension Community Development Specialist from Bozeman, conducted a board development training for several public, nonprofit and government-appointed boards in Roosevelt County. More than 20 people attended the day-long session where they obtained two hours of Real Colors® training. This training uses a personality type test where participants learn skills to understand human behavior, uncover motivators specific to each temperament and improve communication with others. Effective boards need training and development on a regular basis in order to provide organizations with leadership that can function in an ever-changing and challenging

environment. Continued training helps elected and appointed officials feel better prepared to serve as an effective board, council or committee member.

Volunteers leave lasting impressions

4-H volunteer leaders are the core group of every successful 4-H program. Volunteer leaders play a key role in helping young people grow as individuals, acquire new knowledge and skills, and become active members of their communities. Volunteers gain personal satisfaction and pride in knowing they have contributed significantly to the personal development of youth. Through 4-H, young people learn and grow in partnership with caring adults to develop the skills and confidence needed to become contributing, productive, self-directed members of society.

There are different kinds of leaders. Some adults teach members how to do things and are called 'project leaders.' They usually have a special interest or skill, such as: gardening, making clothing, or doing photography. Adults who help a group get organized and run meetings are called 'organizational leaders.' They are responsible for the proper functioning of a 4-H club and work cooperatively with the county Extension office. Next, 'resource leaders' are able to provide information and expertise. These leaders may be those who want only a limited role in 4-H. A 4-H 'activity leader' is responsible for non-project activities. They may work with club members on demonstrations, record keeping, community service projects or special events.

Records from the past indicate that some clubs have had almost as many leaders as members. Also, once an individual becomes a 4-H volunteer, many of them volunteer through the duration of their children in 4-H and beyond. That is the case with three dedicated volunteer leaders in the Roosevelt County 4-H program.

Gary and Phyllis Sethre have served the Frontier 4-H club for 30 years. Gary has been a market beef leader and has also been involved with crop science and wheat grower's projects. Phyllis organized the Frontier 4-H club and still serves as co-organizational leader. She has been a leader in all levels of the horsemanship and market sheep projects. Phyllis has also been a leader for ceramics, sewing and textiles, and food and nutrition. Gary and Phyllis have served many years as representatives for the Montana 4-H Legislative Breakfast.



LEFT: Chris Finnicum. RIGHT: Gary & Phyllis Sethre

Chris Finnicum has been a leader in Roosevelt County for 35 years. She has been the organizational leader for the Mighty Mounted 4-H Club and Exchange Club. She has also been actively involved in the Eager Beavers, Montana Mountaineers, and the Missouri River Rats 4-H Clubs over the years, serving as a project leader in sewing and textiles and leadership. Chris continues to volunteer for 4-H as a resource leader and utilizes her seamstress skills in teaching others to sew.

Leaders with longevity truly believe that 4-H is a good organization and are motivated to continue service by the contribution they can make through 4-H to the community. Because 4-H leaders use an active, learn-by-doing approach, young people see how their actions make a difference in the lives of others and the world around them.

4-H Livestock Workshops

In 2017 three livestock workshops were held for 4-H participants. These workshops included classes on nutrition, ration formulation, livestock anatomy and culminated with a livestock showmanship workshop.

The showmanship workshop was held in July, prior to the fair and was conducted in a round robin style. Thirty-seven 4-H youth, parents and volunteers attended. The participants were able to learn tips and techniques for showing steers, swine, sheep and goats from experienced adult and youth volunteers. Youth were encouraged and



Roosevelt County 4-H members learning to show lambs.

given the opportunity to work hands-on with animals. Many participants in the workshop enjoyed the chance it offered them to work with animals with which they had little-to-no experience. In addition, the showmanship workshop was largely taught by older 4-H members, under the direction of adult volunteers. This provided youth volunteers the

opportunity to pass on their knowledge and gave them vital experience in teaching and leadership.

Swank Variety Tour

Over 100 people from the surrounding area attended the thirty-sixth Swank Variety Tour, held at the Swank Family Farm north of Poplar. As with past tours, this year's variety tour provided area producers the opportunity to see how newer varieties of spring and durum wheat performed under conditions experienced in northeast Montana. A number of attendees stated that this year's tour was useful in that they could view how different varieties had performed under severe drought. Attendees also were given a chance to interact with Eastern Agricultural Research Center (EARC) director Chengci Chen, and MSU wheat and durum breeders Mike Giroux and Luther Talbert.

Additionally, Frankie Crutcher, of the EARC spoke on "Managing Fusarium Head Blight on Wheat and Barley." In 2016, many area producers experienced problems with head blight in both their spring wheat and durum crops. While this past summer conditions were less conducive to head blight, the management tools presented will assist area producers with future outbreaks.



Spring wheat and durum variety plots.

ServSafe® certification helps food establishments serve safe food

It has been just over a year since the Department of Public Health and Human Services updated the Montana Food Code that requires all retail food establishments to have a food safety manager. Also required is a person-in-charge that can demonstrate adequate food safety knowledge during all hours of operation. ServSafe® is a nationally-accredited food safety certification program and is one of the courses identified in the food code that will fulfill the requirement to have a trained food protection manager on staff.

During this past year, MSU Extension agent Ardis Oelkers teamed up with Registered Nurse Robin Warren from Northeast Montana Health Services to team-teach the eight-hour manager course and the four-hour food handler training class in Roosevelt County. Oelkers and Warren worked closely with Roosevelt County Sanitarian Michael Rinaldie to develop a plan to ensure all local and area establishments were aware of the educational opportunities. Over 30 participants were trained in food safety, representing restaurants, hospitals, schools, coffee shops and other establishments serving food.

The average passing test score of those taking the eight-hour certification class was 84%. Participants were asked “What is the most important thing that you gained from attending the training?” Comments include:

- ServSafe® Certification
- Correct receiving temperature of food
- Making sure the food is served at the correct temperature
- How important our actions are on making our restaurant and food safe
- Cleaning and sanitizing everything properly

The manner in which people handle and prepare food is a major reason why foodborne illness occurs. People must alter their food-handling behavior, but they must first have the knowledge and skills that are known to protect food from contamination with harmful microorganisms before they have the capacity to change their behavior. ServSafe® education provides the knowledge and skills needed to reduce incidence of foodborne illness and reduce impacts on health care costs.



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