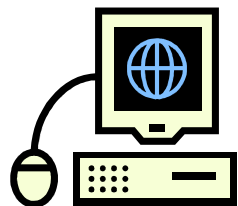


Communication & Outreach

Making sure local residents are aware of the service provided by MSU Extension and making it easy for them to access the information have been constant challenges for Extension staff. Often described as “The Best Kept Secret”, it might be the wide range of subject matter and services as well as not fitting into a neat box that causes some fuzziness about what Extension is and what it does.

Getting the word out presented an interesting dilemma even back in 1955. “One of the problems is that there are so few telephones out in the county. Most communication must be made by letter or driving to the farm or house.”

County Extension Director Ray McMullen was up to the challenge when he wrote in the 1958 annual report: “Try to work out a plan so that every family in the county will at least know what Extension has to offer. Too many people say ‘I didn’t know this was available’. Evidently they don’t listen to the radio, read the newspaper, or know their county services.”



Internet
Web Site

www.msu.msue.edu

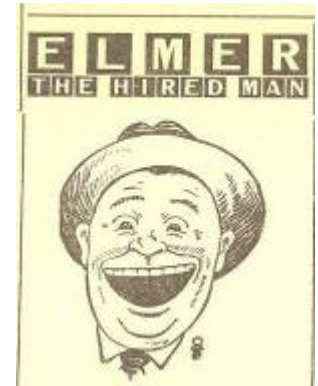
Extension uses a wide variety of delivery systems to disseminate educational information. It was reported in 1923 that “Educational endeavors augmented thru the use of a moving picture machine – agriculture films featured at a series of meetings.” Other forms of communication include:

- Special Events and Activities
- Newsletters
- Workshops and Conferences
- Meetings, meetings, meetings
- Demonstrations
- Telephone inquiries
- Office walk-in customers
- Bulletins such as these



Public Relations – Media

Weekly newspaper columns such as “Elmer the Hired Man”, “Here and There”, “Down on the Farm”, and “4-H Roundup” were featured in the Gaylord Herald Times and Vanderbilt’s Our Town.



Radio

15 minute updates were broadcast on WATC radio during the 1950s, 60s, and 70s. The agriculture report was given on Monday and Home Economics or 4-H on Thursdays.



Mike Reling, of The Eagle 101.5, hosted The Morning Show remote broadcast from the Extension office in 2004

Advisory Council

The role of the Extension Advisory Council is to provide support, advice and direction for MSU Extension efforts in Otsego County.

The council helps Extension staff identify community assets and needs, evaluate the Extension program and publicize its effectiveness. Council members also help identify resources and collaborators.

WHAT MSU EXTENSION MEANS TO ME



Michigan State University Extension is a tradition. Extension has always exhibited the tradition of serving, giving, educating, and enhancing people's lives.

Through the years, extension has adjusted to the changes in our communities and the changes in the world around us. MSU Extension continues to bring a huge variety of knowledge to the public. Extension is learning, growing, and expanding our horizons. Hurray for MSU Extension as they continue to move forward with vision and expertise.

**-- Mary Sanders
Advisory Council Member**

MAEH



The Michigan Association of Extension Homemakers (MAEH) was organized in 1936. Extension Homemaker Study Groups were formed

throughout Otsego County. The names of the neighborhood groups included Wide Open Spaces, Happy Neighbors, Meridian Line and Gaylord Evening Study Group.

Min Jackson and Gladys Fox were MAEH members for over 55 years.

Through the years, MAEH's educational programs have contributed to the improvement of family and community life and of international understanding.

To reflect its broader mission, MAEH changed its name to Family and Community Education (FCE) in the 1990s.



Otsego County MAEH members attending College Week at MSU in 1938

Master Gardener



Alpine Master Gardener Association

Approximately every two years MSU Extension offers the Master Gardener Class in Otsego County consisting of a series of horticultural workshops. This would not be possible without the assistance of the Alpine Master Gardener Association.

In 1999, the graduates of that class, along with previous Otsego County Master Gardener Volunteers, formed the Alpine Master Gardeners Association (AMGA); there are currently 69 active members. The purpose of the Association is to enhance the Master Gardener Volunteer Program, helping the MGVs maintain their commitment of renewed education and volunteer hours. The volunteer effort is focused on educating the public through lecture and hands-on gardening projects. Current projects include maintaining gardens at the Alternative Landscaping & Demonstration Garden at the Alpine Center, lecture series at the County Library, annual fall workshops, and maintaining gardens at the South Maple and North Ohio Schools.

The association offers its members educational programs, group tours of gardens, and field trips to visit local nurseries.

Collaborative Partnerships

The 1930 annual report noted the support of the **Gaylord /Otsego County Chamber of Commerce**. “The business men, both as individuals and through their organization, the Chamber of Commerce, have always vigorously supported the work.”



The battle against potato blight. “As soon as the seriousness of the situation became apparent, a visit was made to Father Kaminski, Pastor of St. Mary Church. Father Kaminski again offered his 100% cooperation and called the seriousness of the situation to the attention of his people. Circular letters were

mailed to all potato growers giving specific recommendations. The week following Father Kaminski’s announcement in church and the first circular letter, the Otsego County Cooperative Association sold 3 tons of copper sulfate to spray on the potato fields.” A second example of Father Kaminski’s assistance and influence was evident with the establishment of the Soil Conservation District in 1944. “Perhaps the most effective work in getting a good vote at the referendum was done by Father Francis Kaminski. He spoke of the organization of the District for 2 Sundays previous to the referendum. He urged landowners to get out and vote and suggested that they vote in favor of the organization of the District.”



The Gaylord Kiwanis Club played a major role in several Extension programs such as sponsoring the 4-H Fair from 1943 - 1953.

A sampling of our partners

- Agricultural Cooperatives
- Church groups
- City of Gaylord
- Farm Bureau
- FFA
- Gaylord / Otsego County Chamber of Commerce
- Granges
- Kiwanis
- Library
- Northern Michigan Beef Breeders Association
- Otsego Conservation District
- Otsego County Economic Alliance
- Otsego County Fair Association
- Otsego County Parks and Recreation
- Otsego Memorial Hospital
- Rotary
- Schools throughout Otsego County
- Sportsman’s Club
- Townships of Otsego County
- United Way
- Village of Vanderbilt

It's All About People

“Assist people in making decisions that would improve family income and protect or improve their health, safety and welfare” is the goal of Extension as stated in the 1967 annual report. People are both the recipients (“customers”) as well as the providers of Extension programs. Volunteers serve on our advisory councils, are 4-H club leaders, get involved in research projects, and re-teach what they’ve learned.

Here are five examples of Otsego County individuals and families who have been active with Extension for many years.



Ed and Francis Burzynski were 4-H leaders for over 45 years. They started the Sturgeon Valley 4-H Club in 1955 with sister-in-law Martha Nowak. All seven Burzynski children were active in 4-H projects including sewing, woodworking, gardening, and livestock.

In the photo above are left to right in the back row: Denni, Tom, Ed, and Francis Burzynski. Front row are Tom & Denni’s daughter Beth and Denni’s nephew Chad Fate.

“The story of the **Briley family**, consisting of Gordon, Robert, Clemma and Lillis and their father and mother serves as an example of several similar families. The two oldest children started 4-H Club work in 1934. Mr. and Mrs. Briley were active in the organization and leadership of the clubs. As the younger children, Robert and Lillis reached club age they also became interested in club activities. Many honors have been received by the Briley family, but more important has been the development of the family. The 4-H Club activities in girls projects interested Clemma in home economics work and as a result has enrolled in Michigan State College. Gordon is now taking over the active work on the home farm and in addition to his potato work is now growing hybrid seed corn on a commercial scale. In addition to continuing active leadership in 4-H Club activities the parents are both taking leading parts in other Extension activities.” 1939 Annual Report page 103.

Carl Widger was a charter member of one of the first 4-H clubs in Otsego County. He earned many awards and accomplishments. Later, as a young adult, Carl became a 4-H leader and served for more than 30 years. As a progressive farmer, he participated in several Extension demonstration test projects. In addition to serving on the county 4-H Council for many years, Carl was also a member of the State 4-H Council in the 1970s. A memorial 4-H scholarship was established for Carl and his wife Lila in 1986.



Margaret (right) presenting her granddaughter Beth Prusakiewicz with a special 4-H award

Margaret (Moorhead) Woodmansee has been involved with 4-H for many years and has also been an active member of MAEH for over 55 years. She attended Camp Gay-Gug-Lun as a 4-Her in the mid 1940s. Later she became a 4-H leader. “Leader Mete so inspired the two Otsego County Delegates, Mrs. Margaret Woodmansee and Mrs. Roberta Wolf, that they have organized several new summer groups.”

The **Gene and Barbara (Kelso) Fleming** family has been involved with various Extension activities. They have served in key leadership roles related to Extension’s agriculture and 4-H programs. Barbara served many years on the county Extension Advisory Council.

Students from throughout Otsego County were hosted at their farm for the annual Agriculture and Natural Resources Day. This event provided a hands-on learning experience that just couldn’t be done in a school classroom.

Their 600 acre farm in Elmira Township was the second officially designated centennial farm in Otsego County.