



# Belmont County

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## 2008 County Highlights

### Strengthening Families and Communities

- The **Belmont County Community and Family Wellness Coalition**, organized by OSU Extension continues monthly meetings to help schools meet unfunded wellness mandates. Meeting attendance increased in 2008 with all seven Belmont County School Districts represented. Grant funded teacher/staff training events for 2008 included: Tools for Schools Cook's Conference—50 attendees; and a series of School Staff Wellness Presentations—450 participants from four school districts. The *Wellness Wake-Up* newsletter is distributed on the back of school cafeteria menus taken home by approximately 5,000 students each month.
- **Belmont County Juvenile Drug Court** has contracted with OSU Extension to provide a series of monthly life skills lessons which include general nutrition, food safety, and food preparation skills, as well as, conflict resolution, communication, anger management, interpersonal relationships, basic finances, careers, attitude, decision making, and problem solving. Twelve to fifteen teens are enrolled. Cost recovery is generated.
- **Road Trip: Life—Navigating Your Future** is coordinated by the Belmont County Interagency Council and grant funded. Ninety-five sophomore and junior girls from four high schools participated in the interactive event, which featured sessions on smart dating, safe relationships, stress management, exercise, nutrition, and health. Funding has been secured to expand this pilot project to reach all Belmont County freshman and sophomore girls in 2009 and 2010.
- The **Divorce Education** program reached 237 adults, teaching parents to help children cope with divorce. This 2½ hour multimedia, cost recovery program is court-mandated and contracted by the Belmont County Magistrate.
- **Prison Parenting** classes are a six-week series taught at the local state prison. Topics include developmental stages, discipline and parenting styles, anger, nutrition, maintaining communication, and self-esteem. In 2008, 30 men participated.
- The **Family Nutrition Program (FNP)** continues to be funded by a federal grant in Belmont County. FNP has been expanded this year to include presentations at all of the nine Belmont County Senior Citizen sites. Basic nutrition, food safety, and food security skills are taught to food-stamp-eligible audiences throughout the county. In 2008, 1,818 participants attended 269

programs, with 97% reporting “some or a lot of new information learned.”

### Preparing Youth for Success

- Thirty-five teens completed approximately 30 hours of **4-H Camp Counselor Training**. They learned the responsibility of caring for children, as well as, how to plan and coordinate camp activities and educational sessions. Also, 15 teens served as **Counselors in Training** and shadowed experienced counselors during training and camp.
- Ninety youth ages 9 to 13 participated in **Belmont County 4-H Junior Camp**. The *Every Day is Game Day at 4-H Camp Piedmont* themed camp program gave youth an opportunity to learn valuable life skills during their four-day stay. They also learned about and participated in natural resources lessons, athletics, boating, swimming, crafts, and other educational activities.
- Twelve Martins Ferry High School students participated in the second **Ohio State University Extension Teen Leadership College** held at 4-H Camp Piedmont. These identified teen leaders were taught the basics of Parliamentary Procedure, participated in team-building activities, learned about what it means to be a leader, conducted a community service project for the camp, and began program planning for the coming school year. Participants indicated they valued the experience and recommended including other schools next year.
- The **“Reading Makes the Best Better” Program** reached over 350 children in its second year. Twelve 4-H youth, adult volunteers, and OSU Extension employees visited 19 kindergarten classrooms. During the 30-minute program, volunteers read stories to the students, discussed the importance of learning to read and promoted the 4-H Cloverbud program. Funded by Ohio 4-H Foundation, and Belmont County 4-H Council.
- **ATV Safety Program**—Over 600 youth and 100 adults were provided information on ATV safety during school safety programs. Information was provided on ATV accident statistics, safe riding tips and recommendations, and ATV riding laws and regulations.
- The program **Library Summer Reading Program**, “What’s the Buzzzzz About Bees,” was presented to a total of 259 children at seven Belmont County libraries and one day camp. The program presented the life cycle of the honey bee, the structure of the hive, how bees make honey, why they are important in the food supply chain, and the effects of CCD.

- **4-H School Enrichment Programs**, *Breads of the Harvest* and *The Incredible Egg*, continue their popularity with third-grade teachers because of alignment with Ohio Academic Content Standards and students enjoy the interactive, hands-on activities. Three hundred and sixty-six third graders participated in *The Incredible Egg* while 285 students participated in *Breads of the Harvest*.
- In its third year, the **Edible Schoolyard** continues to create excitement with the teachers and students at Belaire Elementary School. Four raised beds were planted with beets, lettuce, onions, radishes, tomatoes, peppers, and potatoes. The beets were harvested and sold at a local farmers' market with proceeds used to help fund the program.
- Designed to use peer pressure to elicit positive change in the driving habits of first-time juvenile traffic offenders, **CARTEENS** continues to operate in Belmont County in cooperation with the Belmont County Juvenile Court. Over 200 teens attended along with a parent this year.
- Twenty-eight youth ages 5 to 8 participated in Belmont County **4-H Cloverbud Camp**. The *Dance Your Way Through the Fun in the Sun* themed camp gave youth the opportunity to have a fun-filled day at 4-H Camp Piedmont. Campers had the opportunity to participate in a variety of educational, craft, and physical activities.

### Enhancing Agriculture and the Environment

- In 2008, 42 **Master Gardeners** from Belmont and Monroe counties provided 550 hours of volunteer service and made more than 1,200 individual contacts, and eight new Master Gardeners participated in the 50-hour training program. Since the program began in 1994, Master Gardeners have provided more than 10,500 hours of volunteer time and have reached 23,000 clients.
- Eighteen youth and 18 adults participated in the **2008 Belmont County 4-H Dairy Tour** in August, visiting four local businesses that have supported the Dairy Product Sale. The Dairy Product Sale Committee provided three 4-H youth scholarships amounting to \$2,000 and raised \$8,593.63 at the Annual Dairy Product Sale. Fifty percent of these funds will be used for future scholarships and educational opportunities.
- Many winter **educational meetings** were held, including: pond with 45 participants; sheep with 35 participants; and direct marketing with 20 participants.
- Two **Livestock Quality Assurance** sessions were offered reaching nearly 175 4-H and FFA members. Youth briefly explored each of the ten good production practices in addition to animal welfare, ethics, and food safety. Youth participated in sessions on maintaining

treatment records, proper medication administration techniques, and labeling issues.

- Thirty-four 4-H members served as barn hosts developing leadership and communication skills as they shared their knowledge about their livestock projects at the seventeenth annual "**Fair Field Day**" at the Belmont County Fair. The 627 elementary school children and 75 adult participants learned about the proper care and handling of each of the livestock species exhibited at the fair. Youth were able to gain an understanding of the variety of projects offered to 4-H members as they toured the Junior Fair Building where hundreds of still projects were on exhibit.

### Advancing Employment and Income Opportunities

- Higher education in Belmont County is reaching out to the community in the form of the newly created **Higher Learning Collaboration** formed by a joint effort of Ohio State University Extension, Belmont Technical College, and Ohio University Eastern Campus. The collaboration sponsors a series of research-based presentations, free and open to the public, which will address current issues of concern facing our community and society. Topics in 2008 included Global Climate Change and Aging in Place/Universal Design and featured presenters from OSU Extension state and county staff.
- Nearly 1,300 elementary students from throughout Belmont County participated in **Belmont County Career, Technology and Safety Exploration Day**. A total of 75 local business and community leaders brought vehicles of all shapes and sizes to the county fairgrounds and demonstrated the use of these vehicles for the young participants. The youth learned about career choices, safety aspects of careers and the vehicles used, and technology in relationship to careers in the local communities. Grant money in the amount of \$3,000 from Ohio 4-H Foundation and the American Lung Association allowed the purchase of backpacks for each of the participants. Other sponsors were Belmont County 4-H Council and East Ohio Regional Hospital.
- Sixty individuals attended the three vegetable production meetings held in conjunction with the **Captina Produce Auction**. Also, ten individual farm visits were held. In 2008, producers increased their production and sales to approximately \$225,000. When surveyed, growers marked that total sales increased by 15% due to the web site and the weekly "Market Report" that OSU Extension was able to provide. They also marked that sales increased by 15% due to the knowledge gained from OSU Extension. One hundred percent of the producers marked that their knowledge increased as a result of help by OSU Extension personnel.

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