Stutsman County Narrative

COMMUNITY VITALITY

Jamestown Area Chamber Ag and Energy Committee – Harstad

I continue to serve on the Ag and Energy Chamber of Commerce committee. This quarter we hosted Ag Luncheon on March 21st at the Farmer’s Union conference room. Katie Pinke was the keynote speaker who presented “Your Seat at North Dakota’s Agriculture Table”. She spoke about how we all can play a role in explaining North Dakota agriculture to others.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

Beef Production Meeting – Harstad

This winter I hosted a Beef Production meeting in Medina on February 7th. There were about 15 people who attended. Speakers for the event included Mary Berg, Livestock Environmental Management Specialist, who spoke about mortality composting, Breana Kiser, Dickey County Extension agent, who spoke about the Veterinarian Feed Directive, Dr. Vern Anderson from the ND Corn Growers Association who spoke about expanding herds with DDG’s, Dr. Stokka, NDSU Extension Veterinarian, and Dr. Dutton from Steele Veterinary Clinic who spoke about calving difficulties and myself who spoke about net wrap feeding considerations. Participants had positive feedback after the meeting. One participant wrote in the evaluation: “Very good, will come back next year”. The meeting was sponsored by the North Dakota Corn Growers and lunch was provided.

Dr. Jerry Stokka and Dr. Troy Dutton explaining difficult calving situations.
Silage Sampling Program – Harstad
Miranda Meehan, NDSU Extension Livestock Environmental Stewardship Specialist and Carl Dahlen, NDSU Extension Beef Cattle Specialist, wanted to determine the factors that contribute to and variation in the feed quality of corn silage harvested. Extension agents across the state were invited to participate in the research project by collecting silage samples. I choose to participate in the study and took silage samples from seven producers around the county. The state-wide results are currently being compiled. Research results should be available for the 2017-2018 winter meeting season.

CROP MANAGEMENT

Stutsman County Agronomy Update – Harstad
The Stutsman County Agronomy update was held the end of March. Topics that were covered included weed resistance management, dicamba tolerant soybean stewardship, influence of corn establishment on yield, soil salinity management and soybean disease management. The guest speakers, from the Carrington Research Extension Center, were Greg Endres, Mike Ostlie and Michael Wunsch. I also was one of the presenters. About 15 people attended and participants had positive feedback which included: “This was a very good education meeting” and “Good info. Thanks for providing this education”. The Soybean Council sponsored lunch after the meeting. There was good discussion and interaction between the participants and speakers during lunch.

Private Pesticide and Fumigation Training – Harstad, Gohner, Rittenbach
This year we conducted two private pesticide trainings in Jamestown and one training in Medina. Jeremiah Lien from the Department of Agriculture talked about rules and regulations, Christina Rittenbach talked about managing stress and Alicia Harstad talked about weed identification, herbicide resistance management, temperature inversions and handling and applying pesticides safely. Shirley Gohner handled all the registrations and printed all the certification cards. There was also a private fumigation training conducted in Jamestown.

Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Certification and Board – Harstad
I am a Certified Crop Adviser and in order to keep the certification I need to complete 40 hours of continuing education every two years. This year I attended the Wild World of Weeds, Soil and Water Workshop and Advanced Crop Advisers Workshop to receive continuing education credits as well as to keep up to date on agronomic issues. I also serve on the ND CCA board as the secretary and am a member of the exam and continuing education committee.

PERSONAL AND FAMILY FINANCE

Five Keys to Understanding Health Insurance – Rittenbach
The Bloom Homemakers Club invited me to speak at one of their meetings on health insurance literacy. We had a discussion on some of the terms used in regard to health insurance, how to read a summary of benefits, and more. The participants practiced determining how much certain services would cost out-of-pocket using a sample summary of benefits and sample situations.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Busy 4-H Winter – Barnes
We were represented at the Western National 4-H Competition in Denver in early January by Victoria Christensen, Courtenay, and by Laura Levin, formerly of Jamestown, in the Horse Quiz Bowl competition. Victoria placed 3rd individually! The 4-person team, made up of our two Stutsman County 4-Hers, one from Ward County and one from Sargent County, also did very well. They placed 5th as a team. Laura also competed in the Public Speaking event. There was great representation for our county and our state!! It was a wonderful learning experience for all of us.

Back in North Dakota - the livestock judging and Hippology teams were starting up practices once a week. Our livestock team was not very large because FFA competes with 4-H at events, and most of our livestock kids are in FFA!! The 4-H State Livestock judging contest that was held the first weekend in March, is separate from FFA so we had a team of 4 compete in the senior division and had 2 junior team members. The team was coached by Austin Dockter, Medina. (continued on page 3)
The Hippology teams have attended quite a few meets and are gearing up for the State Contest held the first weekend in April. The team is coached by the mother/daughter team of Cori & Dani Schmoker.

The fair sponsorship requests were sent out in February and the premium book was finalized after the livestock committee, horse committee, and leaders' council meetings reviewed it and made any necessary changes. It went to print the end of March.

Registration is done for the Clothing Revue/Consumer Choices contest scheduled for April 9th, and soon ending for the Communication Arts/Project Expo contest on April 23rd. We host these county events here at the office.

**Ag in the Classroom at Winter Ag Expo**  
*Harstad, Rittenbach, Barnes*

This year was the 5th annual Ag in the Classroom event. About 190 3rd graders from the Jamestown and rural Stutsman County schools participated in the event this year. Youth rotated through several different booths to hear about different aspects of agriculture from soybean production to honey bees to beef and dairy production. This year the presenters were ND Soybean Council, ND Corn Council, Forager Farms, ND Department of Ag, Browning Bees, Lien Farms, Ag Country, Stutsman County Farm Bureau, and the Stutsman County Extension office.

One of the school classes commented, “Our favorite things were: the spinning wheel of corn, the dairy section where we learned how we can make our own milk, yogurt, ice cream, cheese, and butter.” One of teachers stated, “Thank you again! I look forward to the field trip every year. It does a great job at educating our students about ND--in a more thorough way than I can”.

**State 4-H Ambassadors**  
*Harstad*

I continue to serve as an adviser for the North Dakota State 4-H Ambassador program with Sue Quamme, 4-H Youth Development Specialist. The 4-H Ambassadors are comprised of youth ages 16 to 22. The Ambassadors held spring retreat in March at Medora. The Ambassadors participated in leadership development activities, conducted program committee work to work on goals, held a business meeting, painted at Medora Ministries Bible Camp as a service learning project and, of course, had some fun. We also have been busy planning for Extension Youth Conference which is in June on NDSU’s campus.

**Tech Savvy**  
*Rittenbach, Harstad*

Rittenbach was on the committee for the annual Tech Savvy event held on the University of Jamestown campus. This event is for middle school girls in and around the Jamestown area. Tech Savvy is designed to introduce STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) topics to girls by women who are in a STEM field for their career. Because STEM careers seem to have a primarily male population, the event aims to encourage girls to take an interest in those topics and also get an idea of the many different career opportunities that are available in those fields. Rittenbach and Harstad presented the Rockets to the Rescue lesson where participants were able to design and test their own pop bottle rocket.

**Living Online: Using Social Media Wisely**  
*Rittenbach*

I visited the eighth grade classrooms at Jamestown Middle School to talk about social media and how to use it wisely and responsibly. *(continued on page 4)*
Since I talked with them on this topic last year, as well, we discussed some topics a bit more thoroughly, such as sexting and cyberbullying, and what to do if they come across these things while using social media. One student commented, “I learned that many teens are being targeted for bullies and predators, so when I see that, I’m gonna stand up for myself or for others.”

**NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY & HEALTH**

**Stutsman County Social Services - Morehouse**
Social Services continues to be a strong partner and I continue to work with individuals either in a group or one-on-one setting on various topics on nutrition, food safety and food purchasing.

**Displays – Morehouse**
Various displays are being set up monthly at the following agencies: Social Services and Central Valley Health District. EFNEP/FNP target audiences frequent these sites, and it is a way to provide clientele with educational resources on nutrition, food safety and food purchasing.

**Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program – Morehouse**
This past quarter I have been working very closely with the Jamestown School food service director, school staff, students and parents on providing the nutrition education piece which is critical to the program’s success. I provide the parent connection materials for the FFVP website, including the monthly Food Wise newsletter.

**Legacy Center/Senior Citizens – Morehouse**
The “Now Serving” series is presented each month at Legacy Center/Senior Citizens. The teaching sessions for this past quarter were: Fruits, Dairy, and Protein: Beans. Each lesson consists of exploring MyPlate, food sample from EFNEP/FNP calendar, and incorporating physical activity-movement daily no matter what age we are.

**CREATEs: Essentials in Creating Family Meals – Morehouse**
Creates curriculum is designed to get participants in the kitchen where they can learn basic cooking skills, have opportunities to discuss basic concepts of eating healthy on a limited grocery budget, and practice new habits that will help them take control of their own nutrition and health.

In the 2016 pilot program, a grandmother called wanted to know if her teenage granddaughter could attend the classes. The grandmother shared with the group that she enjoyed the friendships made at these classes and spending quality time with her granddaughter. When the Creates 2017 monthly program started, I received a call wanting to know if it would be okay and if there was room to have her grandson attend. But most importantly her daughter (mom to the children) would like to attend the classes, too.

**Stutsman County Social Services Eligibility Workers – Morehouse**
In January, I gave an update to the Stutsman County Eligibility Workers about the EFNEP and FNP programs in the county which focuses on nutrition/health, shopping strategies, menu planning, movement-physical activity and food preparation for SNAP recipients. I was able to highlight the following cooking programs with successes: CREATEs: Essentials in creating Family Meals; Cooking 101; On the Move Cooking School for Kids; Washington Most School Gardens and coming soon, Eating Smart, Being Active.

We discussed the public value of the Kids Cooking School how that can help families health (whole foods vs. fast foods); daycare expense savings; employer/employee win/win situation in which there would be no loss of time for the employer, and the employee still will be able to have a full paycheck (and not have to deduct time because of having to spend 15 to 30 minutes extra at home, away from work to care for child/ren.)

In the cooking labs we did some of the cooking activities. Discussion continued about promoting the classes that would assist individuals (continued on page 5)
and families select nutritious foods that fit within a limited budget. Since the update, an eligibility worker has been attending the Creates cooking classes with her clients.

Exploring MyPlate with Food, Fun and Reading – Morehouse
I had the opportunity to present the Exploring MyPlate program to first grade at Washington School. During the five-week lessons, students learned about the different food groups on MyPlate, why we eat foods to stay healthy, sample some simple snacks that they can make, and about the importance of physical activity.

On the Move Junior – Morehouse
On the Move – Junior is a five-lesson series designed to increase student knowledge of dairy foods, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and proteins through story books and activities. As a result of this curriculum, the teachers noticed students making healthier eating choices at lunch, eating more fruits and vegetables at lunch, bringing healthier snacks, asking questions about food, and trying new foods. Second-graders at Lincoln, Roosevelt and Washington schools participated in this program.

Teacher’s response: “They really like the snacks and trying new foods.” She has noticed the students eating more fruits and vegetables at lunch. They are bringing healthier snacks, such as fruit, whole grains, and veggies. The students are asking more questions about food, willing to try new foods, and talking about the colors of their food choices.

Go Wild with Fruits & Veggies – Morehouse
I had the opportunity to present the Go Wild program this year to third graders at Washington School. During the five weekly lessons, students learned facts about nutrition, food safety and the importance of physical activity.

Student responses: “What did you learn and like about the Go Wild Program?”

- That we learned about new fruits and vegetables.
- I like the experiments that we did and meeting the new characters for each color group.
- I liked when we learned about not eating the pizza that was left out all night, especially when you see how quickly germs grow.
- I liked learning about eating healthy and tasting new fruits and vegetables.

Banking on Strong Bones – Morehouse
Fourth graders at Washington and Roosevelt schools had the opportunity to participate in “Banking on Strong Bones” five-week series. The program is designed to increase knowledge of nutrition and fitness topics, with an emphasis on maintaining bone health. Research has shown that children, especially teenagers, are falling short of their calcium needs, putting this generation at risk for osteoporosis later in life.

On the Move to Better Health – Morehouse
Students in Grade 5 at Roosevelt and Washington schools are participating in “On the Move to Better Health.” This program is a five-week curriculum that promotes a variety of healthy lifestyle behaviors (fruits and vegetables consumption, calcium needs and physical activity) among youth and their parents through hands-on classroom lesson and take-home parent newsletters.

iGrow Readers – Morehouse
I am piloting a new program called iGrow Readers with eligible kindergarten classrooms in the Jamestown schools. Washington kindergarteners participated in the iGrow Readers curriculum developed by the South Dakota State Extension Service. The program peaks young children’s interest in nutrition, with activities that promote healthy eating and physical activity. A transdisciplinary team spent five years testing the program. (continued on page 6)
The resulting data showed that children who participate in iGrow Readers were more likely to try new foods, and to ask their parents for nutritional items when they grocery shopped together.

**Cooking 101 with Medina Sixth Graders**

*Morehouse*

Cooking 101 is a program that provides grocery shopping, menu planning, and basic cooking lessons with hands-on, applicable activities to practice the new knowledge. Since many of the rural schools do not have FACS program for their students, this series is an opportunity for those students to have an introduction to learning these life skills. Students were able to learn cooking skills by bringing a portable kitchen into the classroom.

**Cooking 101, series teacher’s response:**

“After watching and listening to Lu, while she’s teaching the student’s cooking techniques, it has reminded me that cooking doesn’t have to be a chore. The student’s learned so much in the five-weeks and I noticed they are making healthier choices with their school snacks. They have shared their stories with me about Cooking 101 recipes they are making for their families, whether they were successes and a few flops. Most importantly they are willing to try something new and taste it.”

**Diabetes Prevention Program** — *Rittenbach*

In collaboration with Essentia Health and Central Valley Health, I started this program that is geared towards people with prediabetes, or at high risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. It is an involved, interactive year long program that aims to encourage healthy lifestyle changes in the participants. In this program, participants record their food intake, watch their fat grams, and strive to exercise for at least 150 minutes a week. During the first 16 weeks of the program, we meet weekly. After that, we will meet every month or every other month.

**Managing Stress for Better Health** — *Rittenbach*

Each year, I am invited to present a topic during the private pesticide trainings in Stutsman County. This year, I presented on managing stress. Farming can be extremely stressful at times, and many of those stressors are ones beyond our control. However, if stress goes unmanaged, it can have very negative health consequences — both physically and mentally. I spoke with the participants about ways to manage and minimize their stress before it gets out of hand.

**Let’s Move, Active Schools.** — *Rittenbach*

I was asked to join a committee to start a program at Hillcrest School called “Let’s Move. Active Schools.” The program aims to create a healthier school environment through encouraging and implementing physical activity practices throughout the school community. The committee has worked to set a vision statement, goals, and objectives that will be implemented over the next 1-2 years. Implementation of some of the objectives has already begun.

**Kids in the Garden** — *Rittenbach*

I started this 8-session series to the first through fourth grade students at Hillcrest School. The students learned about gardens, the parts of the plants, and how we can use food grown in gardens as a part of a healthy diet. We did many projects and experiments including placing flowers into colored water to see how the stem functions by sucking up the water, planting bean seeds, and planting grass seeds in clear cups in order to be able to view the roots as they grow.

**On the Move Kids’ Cooking School** — *Rittenbach*

The fifth through eighth grade students from Hillcrest School have been making the trip down to our office to participate in a cooking school program. The students have been learning (continued on page 7)
basic skills of cooking and using kitchen equipment properly and safely. During each session, we start with a lesson, go over the recipes, and then head in to the cooking labs for the hands on activities.

One parent shared a photo of her son preparing one of the cooking school recipes at home and said, “Thank you for inspiring Leyton to cook something full of onion and spinach!! Super impressed with your Nutrition Cooking Class!”

**ND Food & Culture – Rittenbach**
The Wildrose Homemakers club invited me to one of their club meetings to do a presentation on foods from different cultures. I presented on foods from the cultures that we have here in North Dakota. Discussion was lively, and the participants enjoyed sharing stories about their own cultural traditions they have surrounding food, and what foods they have tried from other cultures.

**HORTICULTURE & FORESTRY**

**Spring Fever Garden Forums – Harstad**
Spring Fever Garden Forums are a series of four live webinars where gardeners can participate by watching the presentation from the Stutsman Extension office or on their home computer. The sessions have been on Monday nights from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Each night has had a different gardening theme. The theme on March 20th was lawns and gardens, March 27th was shrubs and trees, April 3rd was fruits and April 10th was landscaping ideas. The average attendance of those who have come to the Extension office has been about 18 people each session. Participants that watch the webinars from the Extension office also go home with a free give-a-way such as seed starting kit, gladiolus bulbs, potatoes and sunflower seeds.

**Pollinator Gardening Presentation for Opening of 2017 Seed Library – Harstad**
The Jamestown Community Gardens, Stutsman County Master Gardeners, Alpha Opportunities and the Stutsman County Library teamed up again to offer the seed library located at the Stutsman County Library. The seed library comprises of donated carry-over seed from seed companies. The seeds were put into small packets to include enough seed for a 10 foot row. The goal of the seed library is to increase gardening in the community. The library has adult classes each month. For the month of March they decided to have the adult class be part of the kick-off event for opening of the 2017 seed library and invited me to talk about pollinator gardening. There were about 24 people who attended the event.