



Unit Staff Hosted Campus Administrators on Project Tour



The Kim St John Butterfly Habitat is one of the several projects U of I Extension staff and volunteers partner with Wildlife Prairie Park. Dr. Czapar, Rhonda Ferree, Dean Kidwell, and Earl Allen were a small portion of local and campus-based staff to tour it and other Unit projects.



During the tour stop at the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council Dr. Czapar shared some of the successes of Extension's Cross Campus Initiative that resulted in positive impacts across the state of Illinois including the greater Peoria area.



University of Illinois Extension, Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit hosted College of ACES Dean Kim Kidwell, Director of Extension George Czapar, Community and Economic Development State Program Leader Anne Silvis, and Extension Regional Director Ryan Hobson on Tuesday, April 18, 2017. The group of administrators came with the purpose of seeing first hand some programs happening at the unit level in addition to meeting staff, volunteers, and stakeholders that are working to reach the larger audiences.

As Dr. Kidwell is getting started in her new role as Dean, she is casting her vision for the College of ACES, which includes U of I Extension. "I believe Extension embodies the essence of the land-grant mission because this is where transformation happens," Kidwell stated in her recent blog post titled Building Extension 3.0.

Extension staff work to extend research from the university to the public and private arena to strengthen local communities and improve people's lives. "I propose we work together to develop Extension 3.0 in a way that allows us to close the loop among discovery, translation, and transformation efforts," Kidwell continued.

The Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit is just one stop on Dean Kidwell and Dr. Czapar's tour plans. "We knew we could not include all of our programming impacts on the tour," County Extension Director Earl Allen explained, "So we focused on many of our unique programming efforts that included a good mix of urban and rural audiences."

The tour included presentations by U of I Extension educators, county Extension director, volunteers, and program partners. The group traveled to visit projects at Wildlife Prairie Park, Common Place Family Learning Center, and the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council office.

"The formal presentations, casual conversations, and interactions with volunteers and partners gave the group a good picture of both the good work already being done along with insights into new possibilities.," Allen said.

More tour photos and insights into the day can be found online at <http://go.illinois.edu/FMPTunitTour>.

4-H Spark Tank is a unique program that was highlighted and included a chance for staff to hear from partners and volunteers. It showcased work being done in the South Side of Peoria.

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