THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS!

National Volunteer Week is a time to celebrate people doing extraordinary things through service. Established in 1974, National Volunteer Week focuses national attention on the impact and power of volunteerism and service as a part of community living. This year’s National Volunteer Week is scheduled for April 21-27, 2013. The Howard County Extension Service would like to recognize the value of their volunteers to the citizens of the county.

Howard County Extension Homemakers are just one group who makes a difference in our county and in their individual communities. Several of their projects even reach statewide. In 2012, Extension Homemakers logged over 5750 hours valued at $125,293. This is a very conservative figure since the majority of members do not record their hours. All members give selflessly to their communities.

In Howard County, there are nine clubs located throughout the county. Most clubs meet at the Howard County Extension Homemakers Educational Center once a month to plan activities for their club and to provide educational opportunities to learn new skills to improve their quality of life.

Some of the community service projects the clubs have participated in include making lap robes and walker caddies for nursing home patients; comfort pillows, pillowcases, and turbans for cancer patients locally and statewide at UAMS; pillowcases and teaching dolls for Arkansas Children’s Hospital; baby blankets and bibs for the new mother program at the Health
Department; and hosting and sponsoring community blood drives in their communities. These are just a few of the many projects they undertake.

In Howard County, the current daytime EHC clubs are Blue Bayou, which meets the first Wednesday of the month; Liberty Belles which meets the second Thursday, New Horizon which meets the second Tuesday, North Hempstead which meets the Second Monday, and Uncommon Threads which meets the first Tuesday. Evening groups include Hillcrest, which meets the first Thursday, Moonlighters which meet the First Tuesday, Southwest Arkansas Beekeepers which meet the Third Monday, and Twilight which meets the second Thursday.

Most, if not all, of the clubs assist with youth activities taught through the 4-H Youth Development program. Extension Homemakers is open to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status.

Another group of volunteers for the Cooperative Extension Service are 4-H Volunteer Leaders. Volunteer leaders assist by planning programs and leading 4-H youth clubs located throughout the county. Most clubs meet once a month to plan activities and learn new skills. In addition, several activities are offered each month which benefit members of all clubs. Some clubs focus on specific topics; for example, shooting sports, livestock, cooking, but most clubs have a variety of interests. There are six 4-H clubs located throughout the county that reach over 150 youth through 4-H clubs. 4-H Clubs are open to all youth ages 5-19.

Clubs in Howard County include: Lucky Clovers, Show-n-Shine, Nature Seekers, Show Stoppers, Teen Leaders, and Sharp Shooters. 4-H is open to all youth between the ages of 5 and 19 without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, or any other legally protected status.
If you are interested in joining either an Extension Homemaker Club or a 4-H Club, contact the Howard County Extension Office at 870-845-7517 or visit our office located on the second floor of the courthouse. All of our educational programs and information are nonbiased and research based information provided through the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture or other land grant universities.