Spring is here (we hope!) and with it comes renewed activity, both inside the classroom, and outside in the earth.

Always feel free to contact me with questions or ideas for how we can provide solutions in your community.

Karol Dyson
Area Extension Director
University of MD Extension,
Prince George's County

Patuxent 4-H Center Pancake Breakfast
Join us on Sunday, April 7th, 9:00am-11:00am, for an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast that includes pancakes (naturally), bacon, sausage, eggs, coffee and juice.

Breakfast Prices: $6.00 Adults, $3.00 Kids 3-6, Free under 3.

The mission of the 4-H Center is to deliver a broad range of innovative educational programs to diverse school and youth groups. They provide hands-on programs in natural resource conservation, water quality, agriculture awareness, problem solving, team building, group process and leadership development.

In a day and age of video games and television, they pride themselves in conducting these programs in a manner that their image of integrity and leadership enhances the National and State credo "Learn By Doing." The money raised at this breakfast helps ensure that the Center can continue providing such important programming at a reasonable price.

The Center also offers summer camps for kids ages 8-15. For more information please call 301-218-3079 or e-mail prfourhc@umd.edu.

The Patuxent 4-H Center is located at 18405 Queen Anne Road Upper Marlboro 20774.

FSNE Participates in National School Breakfast Week
On March 8th Thomas Johnson Middle School celebrated "National School Breakfast Week" with Prince George's County Public Schools' Department of Food & Nutrition Services and invited guests.

"Breakfast is the most important meal of the day," said
Joan Shorter Director of Food & Nutrition Services. "It gives our students energy to start their day equipped and ready to learn." Students completed exercises and sampled foods that included breakfast flatbreads, sandwiches and fruit.

"Students should have at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day," said Deborah Archer, of the University of Maryland Extension Food Supplement Nutrition Education (FSNE) Program. "This morning we modeled exercises that may be done at home, at school or just in their neighborhood and doesn’t require any equipment." Archer completed squats, walking in place and breathing activities for students. Nutritional facts and other prizes were included in a bag for students to take home.

Growing Community Gardens Event a Big Hit!

On Saturday, March 23, over 60 gardeners from Prince George's County and surrounding communities came to the University’s Center for Educational Partnership for the 2nd Annual Growing Community Gardens event. Attendees networked with each other and attended three workshops taught by Prince George's County Master Gardeners including weed identification and control, small-scale composting, and season extension.

Dean Cheng-I Wei from the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources gave the welcome address and inspired gardeners to get more involved, and Kim Walsh from Chesapeake Education, Arts and Research Society lead a fun and interactive activity to help people get to know each other. Chef Rasheed from the Wild Onion catered the event with delicious sandwiches and salads and many volunteers went above and beyond to make the event a success!

The 2nd Annual Growing Community Gardens event was sponsored by Maryland Agricultural Council, Inc.; MOM’s Organic Market; Eric C. Olson, Council Member, District 3, Prince George's County, and the Prince George's County Farm Bureau, Inc.

Thanks to all who attended, volunteered, spoke, and sponsored!

Build an Outdoor Learning Community in Your Own School

This new week-long workshop builds on the Alice Ferguson Foundation's successful Schoolyards as Classrooms Project, which trains teachers in how to provide direct experience for their students outside on their school grounds. The project engages students in outdoor activities in a range of ways, from meaningful 10 minute mini-lessons to a complete issue investigation leading to a student action project.

WHO: open to all upper elementary and middle school teachers (4th to 8th grade) in Maryland and the District of Columbia.

WHERE: Alice Ferguson Foundation, Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Center

WHEN: July 8-12, 2013. 8 AM-4 PM daily, with extended day on Wednesday. Overnight bunkroom accommodations are available. Click here for information on our facilities.

COST: Free to all teachers. Funding available for follow-up school action projects.

Apply online at: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HBFTeacherInstitute2013. For more information please contact Libby Campbell.
Local Hops for Local Beer

On Saturday, March 9th the first annual NE Hop Alliance/University of MD Extension Hops Conference was held at Flying Dog Brewery in Frederick, MD. The one-day workshop for farmers identified the challenges and opportunities of commercial hops production in our state.

Cornell and University of Vermont Extensions presented results from their ongoing hops trials, and Maryland farmers growing hops also weighed in on their experiences. The workshop culminated in a tour of Stillpoint Farm/Milkhouse Brewery, one of Maryland's first licensed farm breweries.

Stay tuned for more updates as UMD Extension agents plant a small hops yard at our Upper Marlboro Research Facility! For workshop notes and more information on growing hops on your property, contact jhowley@umd.edu.

Water Bath Canning Class

On Friday, May 17th, 9:00am-12:00pm the University of Maryland Extension Office Prince George's County is offering a hands-on food preservation class to teach basic United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved canning techniques for high acid foods such as tomatoes, fruits, jams and jellies.

$35.00 per person registration fee includes a copy of "So Easy to Preserve", handouts, materials. Pre-registration is required, because space is limited!

For more information contact: Norma Fitzhugh at nhfitzhu@umd.edu or 301-868-8784. Registration form and address here.