

News column for use week of September 26, 2022
Wade Reh, District Director and Community Vitality Agent
River Valley Extension District
September 21, 2022

Marilyn Martin and Cloud County Resource Center Receive River Valley Extension District's 2022 Appreciation Awards

By Kaitlin Moore and Wade Reh

Each year, the K-State Research and Extension - River Valley District recognizes entities that go above and beyond to assist them in their extension mission. At an appreciation dinner in September, they presented the 2022 Extension Appreciation Awards to Marilyn Martin of Concordia and Cloud County Resource Center's Tonya Merrill.

Marilyn Martin's involvement with Extension and 4-H goes back to her own childhood. As a young girl, Marilyn was involved in 4H in Pottawattamie County where she grew up. 4-H has always been very important to her and she made a strong effort to ensure her children had a similar experience.

Marilyn has also enjoyed helping her grandchildren with their 4-H sewing projects. All of her children and her grandchildren have received the 4-H key award. She and her husband have purchased 4-H animals at the county fair. Marilyn was, at one point, a community leader for an area 4-H club. She has also volunteered at the state fair.

Marilyn is currently a member of the River Valley District Board and has served as treasurer for the last 16 years.

Beyond Extension and 4-H, Marilyn has served on the board or council for the Cloud County Community Foundation, for the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Glasco, and later the Lutheran Church in Concordia, for Farm Bureau, and Girl Scouts.

After her children graduated, Marilyn worked full-time, first for the Hospital and then for Cloud County Community College. She retired after 24 years of service to the college as the President's Executive Assistant.

This is an example of a life dedicated to service. The River Valley Extension District wants to thank Marilyn for setting such a wonderful example for us.

Tonya Merrill and the Cloud County Resource Center do so much for the communities in Cloud County and are a great partner for the River Valley District.

Here is a short list of things they provide to the Cloud County community: winter gear (including hats, gloves, coats, and even blankets), holiday meal baskets, holiday gifts for low-resource families and seniors, they offer utility bill assistance, they operate a food bank, provide school supplies, and they help fund and organize the community baby shower. Each year during Fall Fest they open their doors for people to enjoy a climate-controlled environment, yummy snacks, and the Sister Ramona Medina Art Show

Over the course of this year, they have organized several fundraisers. These efforts were not just to benefit themselves, but the money raised was donated to other organizations,

They host many educational programs in an effort to bring impactful and helpful information to the community free of charge. For example, earlier this year they hosted a virtual cost of poverty experience, open to anyone in the community.

They are always very accommodating to the River Valley Extension District.

The River Valley Extension District has used the Resource Center Event Space for a variety of programming: cooking and nutrition classes, diabetes classes, babysitting classes, family and consumer sciences, or 'FCS' lessons.

They also help us advertise Extension programming and invite us to participate in community events and make connections with other community organizations

The River Valley District – Extension Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Tonya Merrill and the Cloud County Resource Center for their continued partnership.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

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