

# River Valley District

[www.rivervalley.ksu.edu](http://www.rivervalley.ksu.edu)

K-State Research and Extension News

*Knowledge  
for Life*

**July 2016  
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## Medicare Basics Workshop



**T**his free educational program is designed for anyone interested in learning more about the Medicare maze, particularly those who are nearing age 65, who are soon to qualify because of a disability or who are helping family members with insurance and financial matters. We will cover Medicare eligibility, how and when to apply, what is covered by the various parts, and how to fill the gaps. We will also explain programs available to assist low income individuals and how to watch out for Medicare fraud.

### Hosted By River Valley Extension District

#### **Concordia Senior Center**

**Tuesday, August 2**

**6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**

**109 W 7th Street**

**Concordia**

#### **River Valley Extension Office**

**Monday, August 15**

**6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**

**322 Grant Avenue**

**Clay Center**

**To register for Concordia Workshop call the Concordia Extension Office at 785-243-185; Clay Center Workshop Call the Clay Center District Extension Office at 785-632-5335 Or the Area Agency on Aging at 800-432-2703 or e-mail [dturner@ksu.edu](mailto:dturner@ksu.edu)**

Medicare Basics is one of a series of Answers for Older Kansans (AOK) workshops sponsored by the North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging, an Aging and Disability Resource Center. Other AOK workshops focus on community living and aging in place. Call Area Agency on Aging at 800-432-2703 or 785-776-9294 for more information.



North Central-Flint Hills  
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Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact John Forshee, Director, River Valley Extension District #4, 322 Grant Avenue, Clay Center, KS 67432. Phone 785-632-5335.

**Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service**  
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**EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED  
TO KNOW ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S  
DISEASE AND DEMENTIA  
BUT NEVER ASKED**

**Thursday, August 4**

**1:30- 3:00 p.m.**

**Courthouse Extension Office (Basement)**

**Meeting Room, Concordia**

**-or-**

**Thursday, August 4**

**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

**Apollo Towers Dining Room**

**330 West Court, Clay Center**

**Presenter: Cindy Miller,  
Dementia Care Specialist  
Alzheimer's Association, Topeka**

In a 2014 report, Clay County reported 22.1% of men and women age 65 and over with Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia, Cloud County 10.4%, Republic 9.7%, and Washington County 13.1% with 10.3% overall in Kansas of that age category. Cindy Miller is very personable and will answer your questions. She will share about living with a loved one affected by the disease. Cindy provides support to family members dealing with this disease.

**Pre-Registration**

Please pre-register for the **CONCORDIA** meeting by calling the River Valley District, Concordia Office at 785-243-8185.

Enter the Courthouse at the front door or west entrance & take the elevator to the basement.

Pre-register for the **CLAY CENTER** meeting by calling the River Valley District, Clay Center Office at 785-632-5335.

Parking at Apollo Towers is available on the west and north sides of the building.

**Program Sponsors:**

River Valley Extension District, K-State Research & Extension and Clay County Wellness Council through a Clay County Task Force grant are sponsoring this event.

Light refreshments will be provided following the program.

Please join us for an informative and interactive opportunity for learning about what is becoming a more common illness.

**"UNEXPECTED HEROES" PROGRAM**

**"Unexpected Heroes"**

**Intergenerational Program**

**By Rosie Cutrer, Storyteller**

**Friday, July 29 from 1:30-3:00 p.m.**

**Apollo Towers Dining Hall**

**330 West Court Street**

**Clay Center**

**No Cost to attend - Snacks Provided**

Uncanny grannies, bold boys and gutsy girls take the stage in storyteller Rosie Cutrer's delightful retellings of old folktales and songs. Rosie's hilarious bear puppet comes along for the ride to help tell the story. Rosie is a former elementary school teacher and shares her stories throughout the Midwest at festivals, schools, libraries, and museums.

Young and older people are welcome to join in the fun. Parking is available on the west and north side of the building. There is no preregistration needed for this meeting. The program is sponsored by the River Valley Extension District, K-State Research & Extension, and Clay County Wellness Council through a grant by the Clay County Task Force.

Here the stories of Unexpected Heroes! Invite your young friends and older friends, children and grandchildren!

**TAKING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE**

The white coat syndrome may cause your blood pressure to rise around a health care provider. If that is the case, often it is suggested to take your blood pressure at home. Follow these practices when your blood pressure is taken.

- Go to the bathroom before getting your blood pressure taken. Surprisingly a full bladder can raise your blood pressure.
- Sit with your back straight and supported. It is best to position your feet flat on the floor with your legs uncrossed.
- Suggest your blood pressure be taken again near the end of your appointment if it is high the first time. When taking it at home, wait a few minutes before taking it again.
- This is a time to keep quiet and not talk. Otherwise it can raise your blood pressure by as much as 10 points.

## REST TRAINING

### Respite Education & Support Tools for Caregiver Helpers

Tuesday, August 9

8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Cloud County Courthouse

811 Washington St.

Concordia, Ks

Do you know a caregiver who needs a break? Caregiving can be demanding, stressful, and all-consuming. Plan to attend this training to provide respite care for caregivers. Marsha Rogers, certified instructor from the Area Agency on Aging, will present this program. Topics discussed in the training will be caring for older adults diagnosed with a form of dementia, adults recovering from a stroke or an accident, and children with developmental disabilities. There is a fee of \$25 for the manual and lunch.

The North-Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging and K-State Research & Extension River Valley District are sponsoring this program. To pre-register call the Area Agency on Aging at 800-432-2703 or the Concordia District Extension Office at 785-243-8185. Also participants can e-mail Marsha Rogers at [marshar@ncfhaaa.com](mailto:marshar@ncfhaaa.com) or Deanna Turner at [dturner@ksu.edu](mailto:dturner@ksu.edu)

## NIGHT VISION

Have trouble driving at night? As a person ages, glare tends to bother a them more. Keep your car windshield and your glasses clean. When appropriate, use your vehicles high beams at night. When a vehicle approaches you, look at the center lane or line on the road shoulder. Avoid flashing your lights on high beam if an approaching car does not dim their lights.

Mention your night vision problems to the eye doctor at your next appointment. It could be due to dry eyes, cataracts, or another eye condition.

## UPCOMING MEDICARE APPOINTMENTS IN WASHINGTON

Deanna will be taking Medicare Appointments at the Washington District Office on these upcoming dates:

Thursday, August 18

Wednesday, September 7

Thursday, October 13

Please call 785-325-2121 to make an appointment.

## NOTHING TASTES GOOD ANYMORE

“That recipe just doesn’t have the flavor that it used to.” You might hear this comment from an older adult, or maybe you’ve said it yourself. The truth is that the senses of smell, taste and touch may decline gradually with age. Medications and health conditions might also alter your flavor perceptions.



Smell and taste affect the quality of life and overall health. We all recognize such simple pleasures as the variety of flavors in a holiday meal, the aromas of bread baking or turkey roasting in the oven, and the sounds of popping popcorn or the sizzle of food on the grill. Food’s wonderful flavors encourage a healthy appetite and help stimulate digestion.

At about age 60 or so, smell and taste gradually start to diminish; although, these sensory changes may not be noticed until about a decade later. As with changes in sight and hearing, it doesn’t affect everyone the same way. As the senses of smell and taste get duller, food may lose some of its flavor, appeal and pleasure. Some older adults lose interest in eating which results in poor nutrition.

Flavor is affected by the senses of smell and taste, as well as touch (temperature and mouth feel). With aging, taste buds and smell receptors may not be quite as sensitive or numerous. The ability to sense sweet and salty tastes may decline sooner than bitter and sour tastes. That’s why many foods may seem bitter, and why some older people reach for the salt or sugar. Differences in saliva (composition and amount) may also affect flavor.



Age isn’t the only reason for changes in taste and smell — medications and chronic health problems may play a part as well. Some medicines leave a bitter flavor, which affects saliva production. Some medications can cause nausea, resulting in a loss of appetite. Medications can also suppress taste and smell. Health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, and liver disease may alter taste and smell too.

### Try these tips to help improve the taste and appeal of foods:

- Add color to meals to stimulate appetite with eye appeal.
- Use more herbs, spices and lemon juice to add flavor.
- Add crunchy textures to stimulate saliva production.
- Include foods of different temperatures at each meal.
- Chew slowly to stimulate saliva production.
- If you smoke, stop! Smoking diminishes taste.
- Eat or drink moderate amounts of strong or bitter flavors such as coffee.

University of Missouri Extension

## REDUCE RISKS TO PREVENT FALLS

Falls are the leading cause of injury and death in adults age 65 and older according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Falls can increase the risk of elderly death and cause moderate to severe injuries such as hip fractures and head traumas. Falls cause most fractures among older adults. The most common fractures are of the spine, hip, arm, hand, leg, ankle, and pelvis.

### Who is at risk?

- White men have the highest fall-related death rates, followed by white women, black men, and black women. Older Hispanics have less fatal fall rates than non-Hispanics.
- Over 90% of hip fractures are caused by falls. Women sustain about 80% of all hip fractures.
- The risk of falling and of being seriously injured in a fall increases with age and is greater for women than men.
- Adults age 75 and older who fall are four to five times more likely than those age 65 to 74 to be admitted to a long-term care facility.
- Many people who fall develop a fear of falling. Fear of falling is linked to decreased mobility and social activity and increased risk of falling.

Researchers found some modifiable risk factors including lower body weakness, problems with walking and balance, and taking four or more medications. People can modify these risk factors by exercising regularly and focusing on increasing leg strength and improving balance. Exercises have shown to be very effective. Lack of exercise and physical activity can result in decreased muscle strength, loss of bone mass, and loss of balance and flexibility.

Discuss your health conditions and concerns with your doctor. Have your doctor review your medicines for side effects and interactions that may increase risk of falling. Talk about what you can do to reduce the risks.

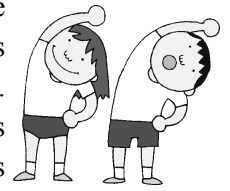
### Prevention Tips:

- Exercise regularly. Focus on increasing leg strength and improving balance. Talk with your doctor to identify an exercise plan that is right for you.
- Discuss your health conditions with your doctor. Certain ear and eye disorders may increase risk of falls. Have your vision and hearing tested regularly.
- Stand up slowly after eating, resting, or lying down. Getting up too quickly can make you feel faint.
- Use a cane or walker to help you feel steadier when you walk. Arrange furniture and other objects so they are not in your way.
- Wear rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes to fully support your feet.
- Make your home safer by improving lighting throughout the home, removing tripping hazards, having grab bars next to the toilet and in the tub or shower and handrails on both sides of stairways.

## STAY STRONG, STAY HEALTHY

“Stay Strong, Stay Healthy” is a strength building program designed for older adults. Participants enrolled in the program will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays for 8 weeks starting August 8 from 10-11am at Clyde’s “The Branch” (507 Broadway). The program will focus on improving health and the general quality of life by building muscle strength which, in turn, improves balance, reduces fractures, decreases arthritis pain, heart disease, and depression. Other benefits may include better stress management and improved sleep quality.

Activities included in the program include warm-up and strengthening exercises with and without weights and a cool-down period. The cost to participate in SSSH will be \$20 with the class size limited. Weights will be furnished for all participants or participants are welcome to bring their own weights. The “Stay Strong, Stay Healthy” sessions will be led by RVD Extension Agents Deanna Turner and Patricia Gerhardt, certified instructors. For more information and/or to pre-register, contact either the River Valley office in Clay Center 785-632-5335 or Concordia at 785-243-8185. The program, designed by Tufts University for Women, has been adapted for men and women by the University of Missouri.



## CHRONIC DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM STARTING

Do you live with a chronic health condition? Do you struggle with managing the emotional, physical and social aspects of the disease? Join us on Thursday mornings starting August 25 at Concordia’s Neighbor-to-Neighbor facility located at 103 E. 6<sup>th</sup>. The group will meet from 9-11:30 a.m. for seven weeks. Participants will have the opportunity to share their challenges and successes in the group and learn from one another and build confidence in dealing with the chronic health condition. Discussion will center on techniques for coping with all the challenges of living with the disease. Using the book “Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions”, the course is specifically designed for persons with arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, etc. Sessions are appropriate for anyone dealing with an ongoing chronic health condition, as well as family members and caregivers. For more information and/or to sign up, contact either Neighbor to Neighbor [neighbortoneighbor@csjkansas.org](mailto:neighbortoneighbor@csjkansas.org) or 785-262-4215 or the RVD Extension office in Concordia [pgerhard@ksu.edu](mailto:pgerhard@ksu.edu), or phone 785- 243-8185. There is no fee to attend the sessions.

## HAS YOUR HOME BEEN TESTED?

Radon. Yes, it's still around. Yes, it's still a problem in north-central Kansas and still the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. It doesn't matter if your home is old or new. What matters is what kind of soil is beneath the foundation and how it was constructed.

We usually promote radon testing when the home is closed up and furnace running. Summer is also a good time to test if the home is closed and air-conditioner running. Test kits are easy to use, inexpensive (\$5) and available at every River Valley Extension district office. Once your home's been tested and it had a score of 4.0 pCi/L or lower, you do not need to test again. (The exception is if you've had work done on or around your home's foundation or if the land has shifted as in an earthquake.)

## ARE PESTICIDE RESIDUES A RISK?

Each year, the Environmental Working Group publishes the "Dirty Dozen" report of foods that test positive for pesticide residues. While these foods may show pesticide residue is present, the risk is negligible. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) tolerance levels for pesticide residues is protective of human health. Test results are at levels well below tolerances set by the EPA.

Drs. Carl Winter and Josh Katz of the Department of Food Science and Technology at the University of California-Davis are leading experts in the issue of pesticide residues.

In a peer-reviewed, scientific article in the prestigious Journal of Toxicology (2011) they state the following conclusions:

1. "Exposures to the most commonly detected pesticides on the twelve commodities pose negligible risks to consumers."
2. "Substitution of organic forms of the twelve commodities for conventional forms does not result in any appreciable reduction of consumer risks."
3. "The methods used by the environmental advocacy group to rank commodities with respect to (potential) pesticide risks lacks scientific credibility."

For more information read the article at this link: [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3135239/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3135239/)

## NEW FOOD PRESERVATION VIDEOS

Thanks to the KSRE Video Production team, new food preservation videos are now available to help learn how to preserve foods safely. These videos were a part of the 2015 Kansas Health Foundation grant for food preservation education. The videos cover the following topics:

- Recommended recipes and choosing the right recipe
- Canning salsa
- Water bath canning
- Science behind home canning
- Canning meat
- Pressure canning
- Maintenance of canners

Look for these videos on the River Valley Website or KSRE YouTube channel at: <http://bit.ly/1ZOTZnd>

## STAYING SAFE IN THE HEAT

We have already had several days of hundred degree weather this summer and more is sure to come. Everyone needs to be careful when working out in this heat and humidity, but children and the elderly need to be especially careful. These populations are often unaware of the symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke and tend to be at a higher risk than the rest of the population. If you have to be out in the heat try to follow some of these tips to protect yourself: wear light colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing like cotton. Avoid synthetic clothing \*Gradually build up to heavy work \* Schedule the heaviest work for the cooler parts of the day \* Take more breaks when doing heavy work in high heat and humidity \* Drink water frequently. Drink enough water so that you do not become thirsty.



It is also important that you are aware of the symptoms of heat stroke and heat exhaustion so that you can seek medical attention. Heat stroke is a condition that occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature, and can cause death or permanent disability. Symptoms include: High body temperature \* Confusion \* Loss of coordination \* Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating \* Throbbing headache \* Seizures or coma. If you notice any of these symptoms in someone you should request medical assistance immediately. Get the person to a cool, shady area. Remove any excess clothing and apply cool water to their body. Heat Exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through sweating. Symptoms include: \* Rapid heart beat \* Heavy sweating \* Extreme weakness or fatigue \* Dizziness \* Nausea, vomiting \* Irritability \* Fast, shallow breathing and \* Slightly elevated body temperature. If you notice any of these symptoms have the person rest in a cool area, drink plenty of water or other cool beverage and take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath.

Staying hydrated is important. If working in the heat you should be drinking about a cup of water every 15 to 20 minutes. Sports drinks may be consumed to replace electrolytes but most of the sodium lost through sweat can be replaced with regular meals and snacks.

## INTRODUCING...KALETTES!

The choices for vegetables just added a new member! Your local grocer may be offering Kalettes. What is this new vegetable?

It is a cross between kale and brussels sprouts. It looks like a little cabbage with heads that are loose and frilly, green-purple leaves. Kale and brussels sprouts are in the same family, Brassica Oleracea, along with cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli. The goal was to create a versatile vegetable that is easy to prepare and attractive. Their flavor is said to be sweet and nutty.

Kalettes can be eaten raw or sautéed, roasted, or grilled. Kalettes were created in Britain after a decade of research by Tozer Seeds using traditional hybridization techniques. Learn more about Kalettes at [www.kalettes.com/](http://www.kalettes.com/).

## CANNING SEASON IS HERE

Garden produce is starting to ripen and before you know it you will be leaving zucchini on your neighbor's porch in the middle of the night. Being prepared to deal with fresh produce is important. The USDA updated its [Complete Guide to Home Canning](#). This guide has a few changes and updates from the last edition. You can check out a copy at all four River Valley Offices. Another great preservation guide is [So Easy to Preserve](#) from the University of Georgia. Both of these guides give you recipes for many foods and proper processing times. The River Valley Website also has some great preserving guides on it. If you don't have access to the internet stop by your local office and we will be happy to provide these handouts to you. Be sure that you are following safe processing procedures to keep you family and loved ones safe. It seems that every year we hear of someone getting food borne illness by eating food that is improperly preserved.

Some of the most common mistakes include:

\*Not adjusting the processing time for altitude. Processing times are usually set for 0 to 1,000 feet. If you live above 1,000 feet above sea level you should probably be adjusting your time. All the River Valley Districts county seats are above 1,000 feet. Belleville is 1,550 feet, Clay Center is 1,201 feet, Concordia is 1,369 feet, and Washington is 1,335 feet. By not adjusting the processing time for your altitude you may be allowing *Clostridium botulinum* or botulism to grow. Recipes have different times for different altitudes.

\*Not using a canning recipe. As much as you may love the salsa recipe you created it just isn't safe to can. If the recipe hasn't been tested in a canning lab then you really shouldn't can with it. It can be difficult to make sure that all ingredients have been heated to the proper temperature for the proper amount of time. If you really want to make that salsa, then consider freezing over canning.

\*Be sure to acidify all tomatoes products no matter if you are pressure canning or water bath canning. All tomato products need added acid. You can use lemon juice, citric acid, or vinegar. A tested recipe should already call for one of these.

Often times we think that since we have done something the same way for years our methods are sound, but in food preservation there is new information coming out all the time. Take a minute to look at the new handouts from K-State Research and Extension and make sure that you are following the most up to date information in the area of food preservation.

### K-State Research & Extension Risk & Profit Conference

The Farm Financial Situation  
*Navigating a Struggling Ag Economy*

August 18-19, 2016

K-State Alumni Center

Info & Reg.: [www.AgManager.info/events/risk\\_profit/2016](http://www.AgManager.info/events/risk_profit/2016)

Questions: Rich Llewelyn, 785-532-1504 or [rwl@k-state.edu](mailto:rwl@k-state.edu)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MULCHING

Soils are warm enough now that tomatoes can benefit from mulching. Tomatoes prefer even levels of soil moisture, mulching provides this by preventing excessive evaporation. Other benefits of mulching include weed suppression, moderating soil temperatures, and preventing the formation of hard crust on the soil. Crusted soils restrict air movement into and out of the soil and slow the water infiltration rate, which could cause your tomatoes to wilt.

Hay and straw mulches are very popular for tomatoes but may contain weed or volunteer grain seeds. Grass clippings can also be used but should be applied at a relatively thin layer-only 2 to 3 inches thick. Clippings should also be dry. Wet clippings can mold, become hard, and not let water pass through. Also, don't use clippings from lawns that have been treated with a weed killer until some time has passed after the treatment. With most types of weed killers, clippings from the fourth mowing or after treatment may be used. If the lawn was treated with a product containing quinclorac (Drive), the clippings should not be used as mulch, because this product stays in the grass. If the weed killer used has a crabgrass killer, it most likely contains quinclorac.

Remember your tomato plants will produce better when they are in ideal growing conditions. Mulching keeps the weeds down, the soil temperatures cooler, and the soil moist longer.

## FARMER'S MARKET QUALITY & SAFETY A PRIORITY

Whether you are selling or buying at a Farmers Market, food quality and safety must be a priority.

As garden production moves into full swing we continue to get questions into the Extension office concerning what one must do in order to sell products at a Farmers Market. The first answer is to contact the local market manager to find out if there are any market specific rules, costs, etc. The second step is to thoroughly read the K-State Research and Extension Bulletin MF3138 rev. dated January 2016 entitled Food Safety for Kansas Farmers Market Vendors: Regulations and Best Practices. This 16-page color bulletin was developed by K-State Research and Extension, The Kansas Department of Agriculture, and From the Land of Kansas and contains all the regulations and best practices for products ranging from fruits and vegetables, to eggs, to honey, to dairy, to meats. It has the guidelines for the measures to be used for selling each item, to certifying scales, to keeping food at correct temperatures, to labelling and licensing. Many vendors increase sales with free samples but there are rules for that as well.

When purchasing at a Farmers Market ask questions of the vendor. What are their production practices? Do they follow correct protocol for washing and handling? When was this product harvested? Purchase from those vendors that have the best production practices and then be sure to follow proper handling techniques to transport, store, and prepare it a home.

Contact any River Valley Extension Office for bulletins on safe food storage and preservation.

## BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

Last month we ran an article in the newsletter based upon the Idaho Extension 4-H paper on Effective Delegation for volunteers. This month we want to follow up with part two of Effective Delegation based upon some 4-H work at The Ohio State University.

There are several reasons why leaders and managers should delegate whether in organizations or in business.

\*More people can contribute and have ownership. This is a fairly straightforward in concept. Simply put, if the project is “yours” then I may or may not be excited to give input and may or may not have much interest in its success. On the other hand, if the project is “ours” with buy-in, I don’t want to fail and so therefore will give it my all to see it succeed. Delegation helps make projects “ours” vs “yours.”

\*Wider interest and expertise might be tapped. An example right here in my office is that I can wade my way through a variety of topics such as crops, horticulture, or livestock but if I bring in those agents I can tap into more expertise.

\*Decision-making can be shared. To be honest, many people, including me, are not great decision makers. Sometimes bringing in that extra person can improve and speed up our decision making.

\*More scheduling flexibility is possible. By delegating tasks out it allows us to schedule more items to be accomplished and share those items to persons with the time to carry them out.

\*Leader can devote time to the overall effort. Again, this is straight-forward in concept. By delegating the individual tasks the leader can concentrate on the big picture goal instead of keeping busy with those day-to-day tasks.

We must recognize that delegation can come with some concerns and so we must plan to eliminate as many of these pitfalls to improve chances of delegation success.

\*Action May be slower. We often hear the phrase, “It would have been faster to just do it myself.” Although this may be true for individual tasks, we must again focus on the big picture and evaluate what the leader would not have accomplished by doing that individual task faster. In the big picture, hopefully more was accomplished overall by delegation.

\*Responsibility may be scattered and leaders may have difficulty keeping track of all the tasks assigned. Anyone who supervises a number of employees, possibly at different locations, can relate to the situation presented here. In these cases a good plan of checks and balances will be needed.

\*Over-delegation on simple projects may risk the project importance being overblown.

Finally, let’s take a look at why leaders don’t delegate. Many fear that by delegating too much they appear to not be doing their job. Many leaders feel they have all the knowledge or information, assume they have all the good ideas, want the recognition for themselves, or simply think it is easier to do it themselves. Although we might be able to relate to these, the reality is that for most tasks effective delegation will not lead to any of the above scenarios.

Occasionally delegation will fail for a variety of reasons. My typical response in these scenarios would be to take the task back grumbling about how I should have just completed it myself. However, it is often beneficial to check the emotions and simply ask the person what can be done to get the project back on track. Many times one will find that resources are missing and the volunteer person it was delegated to just did not feel comfortable asking for that resource. Sometimes there may be extenuating circumstances and the person may be relieved to have the task reassigned and avoid that possible failure.

It is important to remember that nobody wants to fail. If we follow the steps to effective delegation as outlined these past two months we can empower our employees or volunteers to take ownership, we can help them grow personally and professionally, and in the end our business, organization, or programs will benefit.

Thanks to The Ohio State Extension Service 4-H Blast (Building Leadership and Skills Together) program for this great set of Effective Delegation guidelines.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF REALLY LISTENING

Most times when we are listening to someone, we are so intent on how we’re going to respond to them that we miss out on what they are actually saying. However, this doesn’t help the communication process and relationships can suffer. To become a better listener (and, so, build stronger relationships), practice ‘active listening’ by:

\*Focusing your full attention on the other person talking. Face them and maintain eye contact. If they are standing, you should stand. If sitting, join them. Just be sure to be on the same level as the person you’re communicating with.

\*Ask good questions and avoid blaming or accusing. Ask open-ended questions and make sure your tone of voice remains sincere.

\*Keep yourself from judging what the other person is saying. Try not to assume you know what they mean or what they are thinking.

\*Put yourself in their shoes. Accept their feelings, thoughts and ideas about the situation, whether or not you agree or share their perspective. This doesn’t mean that you ‘give in’ to the other person but that you acknowledge what they are saying, thinking and feeling.

\*It often helps to repeat back to the other person what they just said, but in your own words. That way you are checking to see if you have heard them correctly. This can provide more information and the other person has a chance to correct any misunderstandings. It also shows that you are interested in what they are saying.

Active listening takes time and practice. It gets easier with practice and can help you to navigate through difficult conversations. Plus, it improves communication, builds understanding and improves relationships with family, friends, and co-workers.

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**RIVER VALLEY DISTRICT  
“2016 UP-COMING MEETINGS & EVENTS”**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
July 12	5:30-6:30pm	Poultry Testing	Washington-Fairgrounds
July 14	8-10am	Poultry Testing	Belleville-Fairgrounds
July 19-23		Washington County Fair	Washington-Fairgrounds
July 20-23		Clay County Fair	Clay Center–Fairgrounds
July 26-30		Cloud County Fair	Concordia-Fairgrounds
July 29	1:30-3pm	Unexpected Heroes	Apollo Towers Dining Rm.-Clay Center
August 2	6-8pm	Medicare Basics	Concordia Senior Center
August 2-6		Republic County Fair	Belleville-Fairgrounds
August 4	8am	Kansas Turfgrass Field Day	Manhattan-Rocky Ford Turf Research Cntr.
August 4	1:30-3pm	Alzheimer’s and Dementia Q & A	Courthouse Ext. Mtg. Rm.-Concordia
August 4	5:30-7pm	Alzheimer’s and Dementia Q & A	Apollo Towers Dining Rm.-Clay Center
August 8	10-11am	Stay Strong Stay Healthy (Mon. & Wed. thru Sept. 29)	The Branch– Clyde
August 9	8:30-4pm	REST Training	Cloud County Courthouse
August 15	6-8pm	Medicare Basics	Extension Office Mtg. Room-Clay Center
August 18-19		Risk & Profit Conference	K-State
August 25	9-11:30am	Chronic Disease Self-Management (Thursdays thru Oct. 6)	Neighbor to Neighbor– Concordia
October 5		2016 KSU Ag Lenders Conference	Manhattan

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