

Spotlight

Pepple has the heart of a homemaker

By IAN BROWN
Staff Writer

Deb Pepple is a selfless contributor to her community, having served as an Extension Homemaker for 39 years.

As the current president of the Elkhart County Extension Homemakers, she is dedicated to promoting education, leadership development and community involvement.

Pepple was born in California but moved to Elkhart when she was a toddler after her father got out of the Navy. She has since made a significant impact on her community.

Besides serving as president of Extension Homemakers this year, she will continue as a member of the board next year as their advisor. She first became involved with the homemakers in 1984 when some friends asked her to help start a new club in Jimtown, where she served as a teacher for 40 years.

"I used to have on my Facebook page that I was a teacher at Baugo Community Schools. When I retired, I started thinking about how I was much busier than when I was working full time and I changed that to say 'professional volunteer,'" said Pepple.

Extension Homemakers offers eight educational lessons per year, taught by an extension educator. These are open not only to extension homemakers but also to the community.

Pepple has been director of the Home and Family Arts open class building during the county fair several times in the past and is a member of the Home and Family Arts Committee, which consists of ladies from the 15 clubs in Elkhart County. The organization is also involved with volunteer community support and have sewing days each month for homemakers and community members to come together to make comforters, pillowcases and other items, which are then distributed to organizations within the community like Bashor Children's Home and the hospitals.

A most recent activity that sticks out as impactful to Pepple is the Scatter Kindness initiative from the current state president, who challenged each county to make 1,000 hearts with tags attached that included a kindness poem and leave them in random places like on a shelf in the grocery store or a seat in the doctor's office.

They have exceeded the challenge by making over 2,000 hearts now and the impact has been significant, as the state president shared several stories of people who received them and spoke of the Kindness Boomerang this has created.

Aside from her work with



DEB THE DO-GOODER — Lou Miller, left, helps Deb Pepple deliver a special order of cookies from Wollman General Store in Hubbard Village where Pepple volunteers on Tuesdays. Photo provided.

the Extension Homemakers, Pepple serves as a member of the Health and Human Sciences Advisory Board. She volunteers each Tuesday at Hubbard Hill in the general store, and volunteers on the day care committee and in the day care at her church. She also serves as secretary of the missions committee and takes a weeklong mission trip each fall to Henderson Settlement in southern Kentucky.

For the Baugo Community Schools, she runs a needs and resources Facebook page where teachers and staff can

post their needs and the community is able to step up and help them out.

At Hubbard Hill Village, she serves as a village advisor and on the trip planning committee. Pepple is a 24-year leader for the Jamestown 4-H Club.



Pepple's dedication to her community and to the Extension Homemakers has made a significant impact on the lives of those around her. She is a true example of the importance of giving back and making a positive difference in the world.



GIVING THANKS — Deb Pepple writes Easter cards to all of her county presidents and chairpersons, thanking them for the work they have been doing for their organization this last year. They will all be receiving certificates, but she wants to personally express her gratitude. Photo by Ian Brown.

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