

## MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose to which we commit:  
We teach, learn, lead, and serve,  
connecting people with the University of  
Wisconsin, and engaging with them in  
transforming lives and communities.

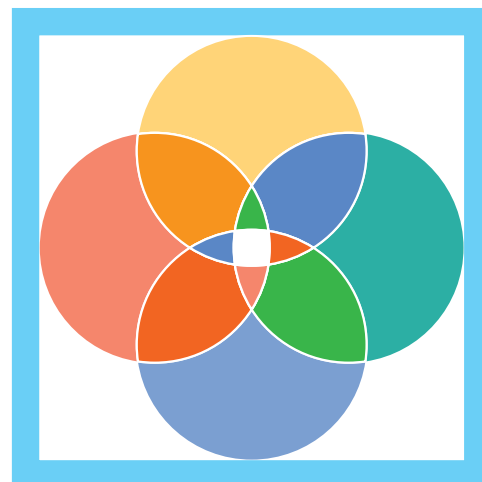


Samantha Behnke, Junior Master Gardener,  
plants the seeds to the 2015 garden.

## Educational Priorities

This report features a snapshot of impactful programming conducted in 2015 by the UW-Extension Fond du Lac County office within the educational priorities described to the bottom right. Residents access UW-Extension for educational programs addressing the needs of youth, individuals, families, businesses, farms and communities. We partner with local neighborhoods, communities, organizations, volunteers, businesses and state/federal agencies to deliver research based education. We thank the various branches of Fond du Lac County government for their steadfast support and encouragement. We invite you to learn more about us on-line at [fonddulac.uwex.edu](http://fonddulac.uwex.edu) or friend us on Facebook at [facebook.com/uwexfdl](https://www.facebook.com/uwexfdl).

Due to reduced state funding, UW-Extension statewide will be reorganizing in 2017. UW-Extension will remain a contemporary, dynamic educational institution in the 21st century. We will continue to adapt, respond and maximize our resources. Updates will be communicated with Fond du Lac County residents and our partners as the new model is put into place.



### STRONG ECONOMIES

focuses on workforce development and support, family financial capabilities, and a locally supportive workforce and business climate.

### FOOD SAFETY, SECURITY & HEALTH

focuses on the availability of and access to nutritious, affordable and safe food, and decision-making regarding healthy behavior and access to medical care.

### RESILIENT & PRODUCTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

focuses on the protection and sustainable management of built and natural environments.

### THRIVING YOUTH, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

focuses on the conditions that support and enhance community members' growth and support, civic engagement and community cohesion.

## Managing Employees Effectively ●

Effective employee management is a critical aspect of any successful agribusiness. Developing the necessary management skills doesn't happen overnight. The challenge of training good managers is important to the profitability of any business.

Many managers on today's farms are individuals who started on the farm as employees, performing everyday tasks to help a farm operate smoothly. The transition from employee to manager can be tough to navigate.

To address this need in the county, UW-Extension developed a two-day bilingual farm manager training. The series engaged 23 individuals (English- and half Spanish-speaking) wishing to manage employees effectively.

**"I have received very positive feedback from our Middle Managers and Lead Milkers that attended the training. Please continue offering this kind of training in the future!"**

*– Farm Owners/Participants*

Six months after the training, five individuals managing 34 employees indicated what they learned:

- [The personality framework] Colors showed me how to treat people during conflict and to communicate with supervisor. Now I tell the supervisor if something wrong happens. I communicate better. I did not communicate much before because I would feel ashamed.
- I treat workers better. I learned to not be explosive and manage my character better.

- To point out mistakes without offending.
- Learned to respect other people's [personality styles] to avoid
- Understand different cultures and respect them. For example, the role of family.
- [The personality framework] helped to manage people better.
- I'm being assertive. Managing without being aggressive.
- I listen better now and motivate the workers.

**"My employees that attended your employee management meetings last week were really impressed with the personality test...I was wondering if that was something we could give on the farm."**

*– Farm Owners/Participants*



Tina Kohlman trains farm managers during the "Managing Employees Effectively" class.



Farm managers participate in an activity during the "Managing Employees Effectively" class.

**"Thank you to all that made this conference possible. It was very useful. I personally feel very grateful and leaving with more knowledge."**

*– Farm Owners/Participants*



## Master Gardener Volunteers

"When a mom tells me her son won't eat breakfast on Tuesday mornings because he wants to eat tomatoes at the museum, I know we've not only enhanced the museum, but – most importantly – the child," Cyndy Trent of the Children's Museum of Fond du Lac told the *Fond du Lac Reporter* in July. This little boy is one of many who are enjoying the seven raised vegetable beds and 25-plant butterfly garden at the museum. Master Gardener Volunteers started the garden at their homes and transplanted them when the museum opened at its new location in 2013. Now a certified Monarch WayStation, the museum garden is a site for children to plant fruit, herb, and vegetable seeds and watch them grow all season long.

The Children's Museum partnership is one of several dozen occurring in the county with more than 60 certified Master Gardener Volunteers teaching children and adults horticulture skills while beautifying the area. Their work and teaching influence has been felt this year at Rosenow School, Pier School, Riverside School, Free Spirit Riders, Lamartine Veterans Memorial Garden, Waupun Community Gardens, UW-Fond du Lac campus gardens, and Sisson's Peony Gardens in Rosendale, among many other sites.



Cindy Boudry, Master Gardener Volunteer and Board Member, works with students in the school garden at Riverside Elementary.

**"The Master Gardeners are a constant resource...at the museum. They have built trellises, answered numerous questions and are featured teachers during WinnePLAYgo Garden Club."**

*– Andrea Welsch, Children's Museum of Fond du Lac, quoted in the Fond du Lac Reporter, July 20, 2015*

## Junior Master Gardeners

The Junior Master Gardener Program (JMG), a gardening and nutrition program for youth aged 8-12 years old, is a partnership between Master Gardeners and the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP). In its 15th year, the program had 162 educational contacts during the 18 sessions, including Boys and Girls Club participants. The program provided the full gardening experience



Weston Huempfer displays his fall harvest.

for participants, from seed to plate. In addition, the youth participated in a community service project by donating to the food pantry, working with guest speakers, and taking field trips in the community.

Educators used the "Eating from the Garden" curriculum to introduce new, healthy foods. During a taste test evaluation, 89% of JMG participants were willing to try new fruits and vegetables and 69% said they would eat them again, including snow peas, broccoli, kiwi, mango, and rutabaga. The students were asked what they liked about the program. They responded: "I liked getting to know new people", "I liked the garden and the vegetables", and "I liked trying different foods."

**"JMG is a good way to get children to try vegetables they might not have tried before."**

*– JMG parent*

## 4-H Summer at Green Meadows ●

Green Meadows is a community located northwest of the City of Fond du Lac, where the schools, library, and parks are located on the opposite side of Interstate 41. Twenty-eight percent of residents are Hispanic, had no previous knowledge about the 4-H program, and were not involved in any community events or programs. FLOOD Homes, Inc. (property owners) partnered with us to bring educational programs to the community by providing a space to meet.



Estrella Falcón, working as a team member, makes the group's banner.



Citlali Falcón paints a lantern made out of an empty soda can.

UW-Extension staff visited residents to initiate a personal relationship with the families and to invite youth to a five session summer program. The session topics were chosen to help participants understand the 4-H program, provide life skills, build leadership and citizenship, and incorporate the four essential elements of positive youth development (belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity).

**"I would like to participate in programs like this more often."** – *Green Meadows youth*

A total of 15 youth participated in the program, which included building paper rockets, creating crafts from recyclable materials, and even making their own ice cream! Youth enjoyed working on projects and having something to take home and show their parents. Young children were cooperative and well-behaved, while the older members helped the younger ones. Youth gained ownership of the program by making personal and group decisions. Parents appreciated the opportunity for their children and receiving information and materials written in Spanish.

UW-Extension recognizes the importance of creating a space for youth to empower themselves and develop their special interests and will continue programming in this area.

## Lifting Women to Better Health ●

The Strong Women™ program is a national evidence-based exercise and nutrition program for older aged women. Created by Dr. Miriam Nelson of Tufts University, the program was a result of extensive research on the significant effects of strength training on improving bone density and reducing risk factors for osteoporosis.

Today, the program is offered through a strong, nationwide partnership with UW-Extension educators, including Wisconsin. The Strong Women™ vision is "a diverse community of women who are fit, strong, and healthy; in turn these empowered women become agents of change for their families, communities, and beyond."

**"A proven tested routine that gives me the most bang for my buck."** – *2015 participant*

UW-Extension Fond du Lac County and UW-Fond du Lac Continuing Education, with a trained facilitator, offered a ten week Strong Women™ series at two locations in the county. The program reached 52 women with the following health outcomes after participating in the program – 97% reported their overall health was better, 94% felt physically stronger, 84% had more energy, and 68% had less painful joints.

**"Working out with a group of women approximately the same age adds an additional incentive and moral support."** – *2015 participant*





## E-Cybermission ● ●

A developing relationship with the STEM Academy (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Academy) has allowed Mike Winkler, Entrepreneurship Educator, to work as a project mentor for three separate teams in a STEM based nation-wide competition called E-Cybermission. These teams develop problem statements and use scientific or engineering based problem solving to formulate solutions for community issues.

Three teams have been formed and they are working on:

- 1) Designing a thorium nuclear reactor

**“This work is really high impact, and makes a difference to our students.” – Don Smith, STEM Principal, FDL School District**

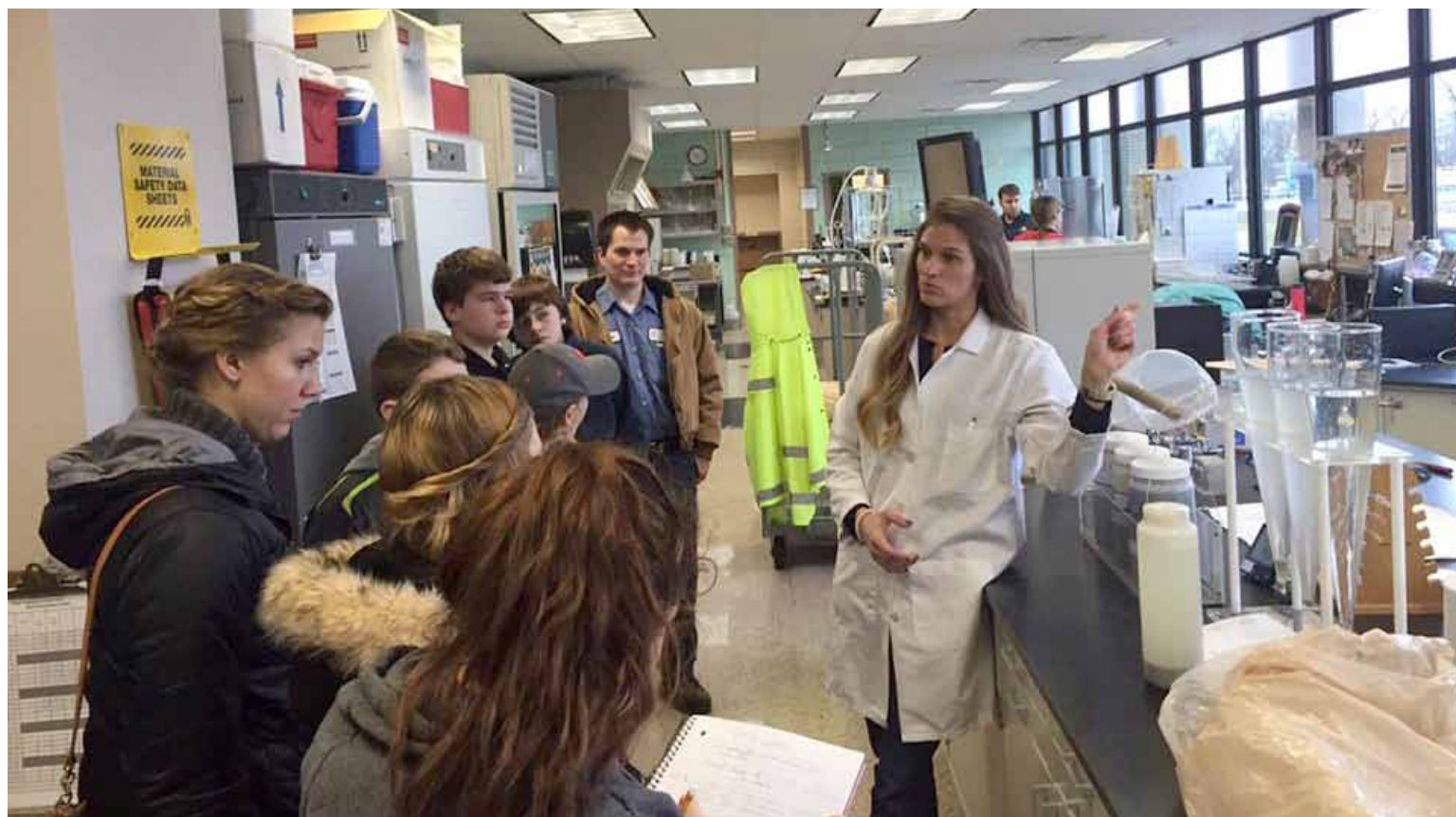
- 2) Getting power from a microbial fuel cell using wastewater
- 3) Providing potable drinking water to remote areas in Africa.

The teams will be competing first against other Wisconsin based teams, then against teams in the Midwest, if they progress. Winners of the national championship will be rewarded with a trip to meet the President at the White House.

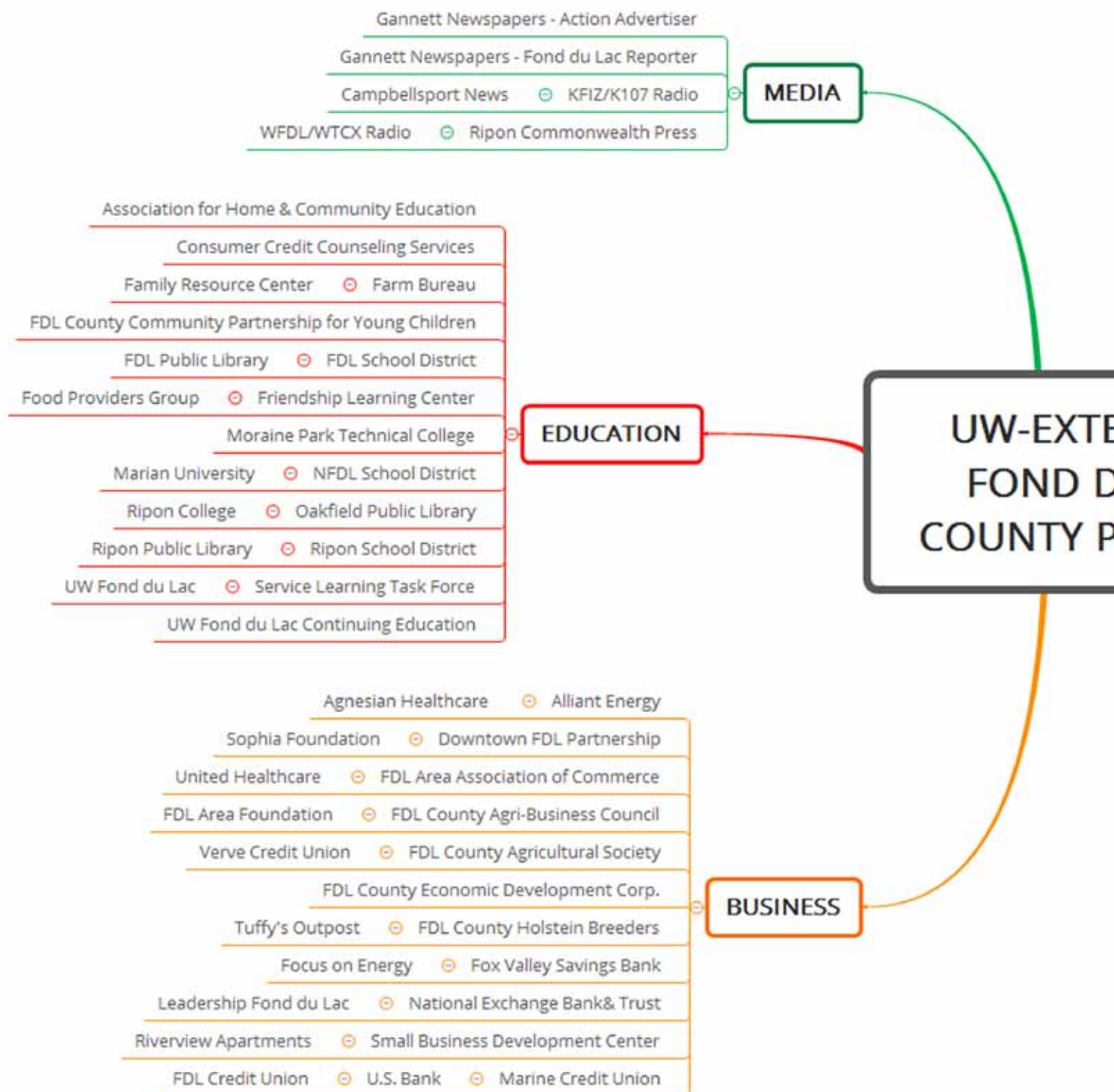
The teams have visited several sites with UW-Extension to get information from designers and engineers, including;

- Nuclear power plant in Kewaunee.
- Wastewater treatment plant in Fond du Lac.
- Municipal water supply in Fond du Lac.

One team also Skyped with a Nobel Prize Nominee from The University of California at Berkeley.



Students visit a City of Fond du Lac water lab.



# ESNION DU LAC PARTNERS

## GOVERNMENT

City of Waupun ☉ City of Fond du Lac

FDL County Code Enforcement ☉ FDL County Board

FDL County Dept. of Social Services ☉ FDL County Energy Team

FDL County Land & Water Conservation Dept

FDL Housing Authority ☉ FDL County Executive's office

Transitional Living/Independent Living ☉ Sprout

Wis. Dept. of Natural Resources ☉ Village of North Fond du Lac

Wisconsin Towns Assoc. FDL County Unit

WIC (Women, Infants, Children) ☉ Ripon Senior Center

FDL County Job Center ☉ FDL County Health Dept

## FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Catholic Charities

Grace Lutheran Church ☉ Salvation Army

Holy Family Catholic Community

St Vincent de Paul ☉ Youth for Christ

## NON-PROFITS

ADVOCAP (Fresh Start, Head Start) ☉ YMCA

Noon Kiwanis Club ☉ Morning Kiwanis Club of Fabulous FDL

Lakeside Evening Kiwanis Club ☉ Ripon Noon Kiwanis

Evening Kiwanis Club ☉ Ripon Early Bird Kiwanis

Arc Community Services of Fond du Lac ☉ FDL County Fair

Beacon House ☉ Waupun Kiwanis

Boys & Girls Club ☉ Robert E. Berry House

FDL County Forage Council ☉ Ebony Vision

Forward Services ☉ FDL Housing Coalition

Legal Action ☉ Healthy FDL Co 2020

NE Wisconsin Fair Housing ☉ Lutheran Social Services

Ripon Food Pantry ☉ Ripon Community Thrift Store & Pantry

Solutions Center ☉ SCORE ☉ Goodwill

United Way ☉ United for Diversity



## Public Input and Decision-Making

The Fond du Lac City Council created the Lakeside Park Exploratory Committee (LPEC) in July 2014 and charged it to answer the questions: “Can Lakeside Park be better used for the benefit of the City’s residents, stakeholders and visitors?” and, “If so, how?” UW-Extension was chosen to facilitate and teach sustainable, inclusive decision-making strategies to the 17

As a result of the committee’s approach and results, negative public perceptions of the committee’s work diminished. The city has budgeted \$20,000 to develop the recommendations into a

**“I’ve been impressed with the way [UW-Extension has] led this...group. It’s been fair and democratic. You’ve gotten information from everyone and analyzed it carefully. Thank you.”**

*– LPEC Citizen Observer*



LPEC members discuss notes during an activity led by Diana Tscheschlok.

members. Over the year-long process, the committee identified and communicated with more than 30 stakeholder groups and received survey input from more than 3200 area residents including 800 middle-school students and 24 Hmong residents. The committee identified strategic issues that should be addressed in the park’s future and presented recommendations to City Council in July 2015.

**“[UW-Extension] identified strategies, exercises and measures that kept the LPEC on task, helped develop an esprit de corps, and generated a group focus despite the committee’s desire to ‘just get to the recommendations.’”**

*– LPEC Final Report Acknowledgements*

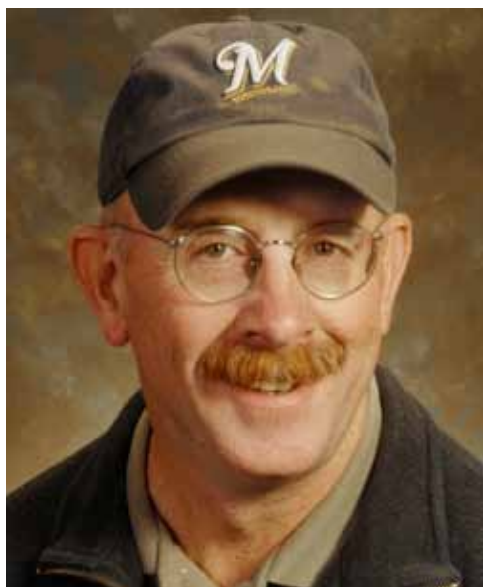
full master plan and \$465,000 to implement recommendations in the next five years. Committee members agreed in written evaluations that “teaching by UW-Extension increased my understanding of the steps in the process”, further agreeing that “I would be able to explain this step to another group if needed in a future decision-making process.”



LPEC members participate in a group activity led by UW-Extension.



## Crops and Soils Agent Retires



Mike Rankin retired in 2015 after 27 years as Crops and Soils Agent.

Mike Rankin, Crops and Soils Agent from 1988-2015 retired in March 2015. As an UW-Extension agent, Rankin authored numerous crop management factsheets, conference proceeding papers, and spreadsheet decision-making tools. He wrote a weekly newspaper column and many feature articles for state and national media publications. Rankin presented crop management information on over 3000 radio programs and gave forage presentations at state, regional, and international conferences. He also collaborated with UW-Extension specialists on numerous forage and field crop research projects. Rankin co-chaired the state UW-Extension forage programming team for 15 years and maintained the Wisconsin forage resources website.

In his final column in the Fond du Lac Reporter, Mike wrote, "Through the years, we battled droughts, frosts, floods, low markets and a bevy of crop pests. We also enjoyed the good times. Together, we sat through thousands of pesticide applicator certification slides and talked for countless hours on the phone....Like this column, all careers must come to

an end. I am proud that I got to play a small part in forwarding the Wisconsin Idea: expanding the boundaries of the university to the boundaries of the state. Though I will now take-up a new challenge and opportunity, be assured that my years in Fond du Lac County will forever define who I am. Thank you all."

**"If I can give them the information they need to think about and make an informed decision, whatever it may be, then I think I've done my job."**

*– Mike Rankin in "Not-So-Secret Agent" by Harley Bucholz, Published in A Measure of Success by Gannett Wisconsin Media, 2009.*



Mike Rankin is a world-renowned expert in forages shown here teaching about alfalfa yields in 2011.

## 4-H Teens Enhance the Boys & Girls Club Experience

Teen Leader Association (TLA) members of Fond du Lac County 4-H led hands-on activities for 4-H afterschool at Chegwin, Pier and Johnsonville Boys & Girls Club sites during the school year. Topics included art, games, nutrition and teamwork.

TLA also sponsored and organized a trip for B&GC members to Marsh Haven Nature Center in August where they learned about seed dispersal, went on a nature hike, and met and learned about many animals.

Boys and Girls Club members also took advantage of coming to the four day

summer 4-H camp where they swam, canoed, danced, made crafts, played games, participated in a talent show and campfire, made new friends, and ate healthy homemade meals. Being away from home provided young people an opportunity to practice self-responsibility and grow in self-confidence.

This ongoing partnership is a unique learning opportunity for the B&GC members. It also develops skills of planning and organizing, teamwork, and communication in the 4-H teen leaders as they prepare and deliver the activities.



4-H teens, Cassidy (gray top) and Jenny (pink top), invite Boys and Girls Club members at Pier to experiment making homemade play dough.

**“What a great group of people you had come to the Club! Everyone was very friendly and informative to our kids. Thank you for a great collaboration.” – B&GC Staff Member**



## Co-Parenting for a Lifetime

Education and resources offer strategies to educate parents and children about the impact of the family transition and adjustment to their new life as co-parents. Further, co-parenting education and resources are needed by families that have children, yet were not married to one another. In 2015, Fond du Lac County data showed 539 marriages, 492 divorces with 363 (74%) of the divorces involving minor children, plus 267 paternity (never married) cases.

“Living Apart-Parenting Together” (LAPT), a co-parent educational course for court ordered divorcing or separating individuals



Shelley Tidemann teaches communication to Fond du Lac County parents.

with children, is collaboratively taught by Fond du Lac County Family Court Services and UW-Extension Family Living Programs respectively on a monthly basis. In 2015, the LAPT program worked with 353 individuals who parent 406 minor children.

“Keeping It about the Kids” (KIAK) began in 2014 and is collaboratively taught by the above mentioned partnership. Co-parent education for court ordered paternity cases helped to address the specific co-parenting needs for this never married audience. In 2015, KIAK reached 87 individuals who impact the lives of 84 children.

Parent comments on evaluations reported significant gains through attending the co-parent classes, i.e. improving communication between themselves, and how to write and use an “I” statement. In a follow up evaluation (LAPT 12% & KIAK 13%, respectively) parents noted the continued use of “I” statements and focusing on children’s needs while not having children be caught in the middle.

**“From class I learned the importance of getting along with the other parent and to do what is best for our child.” – Quote from Parenting Together, Living apart participant.**



## Raising Healthy Children ● ●

One-third of U.S. children are either obese or overweight before their 5th birthday, which increases their chance of developing chronic diseases at an early age. Teaching children to try a variety of healthy foods at an early age can play an important role in helping them develop good eating habits as adults.

For National Nutrition Month in March, the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program and Head Start offered a two-part series to 201 preschool children, who were introduced to MyPlate and taste tested new, healthy foods. Teacher post evaluations found that 56% reported a change in student variety and amounts of fruits or vegetables eaten at school or home.

**“I now talk more about healthy food choices in the classroom.”**

*– Head Start Teacher*

- “The students are using the colors of the rainbow as a way to taste more. They get excited if their friends do too.”
- “The students talk about trying new foods at meal time. They remember to try things, even if it’s just a taste.”
- “The students are more willing to try new foods.”
- “I use new phrases to have children try new foods.”
- “It is okay if a student doesn’t like a food right away, but to keep trying.”
- “I encourage and recognize my taste testers.”



A Head Start student practices her small motor skills by cutting a vegetable.

**“I now remind my students that they need to try something more than once before they know if they will like it.”**

*– Head Start Teacher*



## COMMUNITY GARDENS BY THE NUMBERS

In 2015:

- 135 plots were rented by 85 families.
- New topsoil prevented standing water.
- Garden volunteers built a wooden platform for the new water tank.
- Funded by a grant from the Master Gardener Association, unused portions of the garden were seeded with a cover crop to improve soil health and prevent erosion.



## UW-Extension Fond du Lac County Staff

- Cody Baierl, *Marketing Intern*
- Tina Engelhardt, *Program Assistant*
- Angela Folske, *Program Assistant*
- Ann Kaiser, *Program Assistant*
- Gloria Kelroy, *Program Assistant*
- Tina Kohlman, *Dairy & Livestock Agent*
- Amanda Miller, *WNEP Coordinator & Family Living Educator*
- Pamela Nelson, *WNEP Educator*
- Araceli Oswald, *Bilingual 4-H Youth Development Assistant*
- Patty Percy, *Community Garden Coordinator*



- Denise Retzleff, *4-H Youth Development Educator & Co-Department Head*
- Kristine Schaeffer, *WNEP Educator*
- Michelle Tidemann, *Family Living Educator & Co-Department Head*
- Diana Hammer Tscheschlok, *Community, Natural Resource & Economic Development Educator*
- Mike Winkler, *Entrepreneurship Educator Special Assignment*
- Vacant, *Crops & Soils Educator – New colleague starting June 1, 2016*