

Leading Locally



Your county
extension office



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.*

We admit it. We think we have some pretty fantastic people and programs in Fond du Lac County! UW-Extension adds value to the community through a variety of programs and collaborations that improve relationships, build community, preserve land, and foster future leaders. In 2010, 10,500 local residents were impacted by UW-Extension programs throughout Fond du Lac County. Look inside and read what everyday citizens have to say about their experiences with some of our programs. Discover how UW-Extension impacts you, your community, and your neighbors...by leading locally. For a complete list of programs, please visit our newly redesigned website: <http://fonddulac.uwex.edu>.

“This is a key issue that employers are going to need to focus on if they want an engaged, creative workforce ... We want to find out how we drive the skill sets, get people the training they need so we can have an engaged, high-performing workforce. What you’re doing is one important piece of that.”



Retaining & Attracting Workers with Inclusion

Look around at your coworkers. Now imagine that half of them are gone. This is the scenario facing Fond du Lac County businesses in coming years as Baby Boomer retirements far outnumber available, younger, local workers. As competition for the best and brightest heats up around the country, what will make Fond du Lac County a destination of choice for new workers? Community Development Educator Diana Hammer Tscheschlok coordinated a group of local human resource managers, Moraine Park Technical College, and two Chambers of Commerce that focused on “inclusive workplaces” as an answer to that question. The group’s efforts in 2010 included:

- A panel of human resource managers discussing ways that they promote inclusive environments in their companies.
- Six short videos of the panel discussion edited and posted on YouTube.
- Online resources about creating productive, profitable, inclusive workplaces: <http://fondulac.uwex.edu/inclusion>.
- A preliminary plan to organize activities, goals, and indicators of progress as this effort moves forward. ■

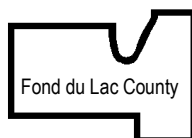
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Meat Animal Quality Assurance

The farmers that raise animals for the sale of meat make a pledge or an assurance of quality. They raise animals that will meet the consumer’s requirements of taste, smell and safety. Included in this group of animal caretakers are youth that show and sell animals at the fair. In Fond du Lac County there are two fairs, the Fond du Lac County Fair and Alto Community Fair.

In the spring of 2010, the Dairy and Livestock Agent from Fond du Lac County, Paul Dyk conducted two training sessions for youth that show at these two fairs. Over 125 youth attended these sessions at the UW-Extension office and the Alto Community Center. In 2010 the focus of the programs was on animal identification, animal feeding, and animal welfare. Paul Dyk used hands on demonstrations, PowerPoints and interactive software to teach the importance and basics of meat animal quality assurance to these youth. This program is repeated each year with a different educational area of emphasis. ■



“I learned that I need to have more discipline with my disposable income.” ~ Where Does the Money Go participant



Where Does the Money Go?

Cutting back and keeping up when money is tight might be one answer to the question “Where Does the Money Go?” With the economic challenges continuing in 2010, Fond du Lac County residents had the opportunity to learn more of where their money was going by attending financial literacy education sessions provided by UW-Extension Family Living Educator, Michelle Tidemann.

In 2010, Tidemann co-chaired 15 agencies, organizations and businesses to collaboratively provide the 4th annual Money Smart Week Fond du Lac County (October 2-9, 2010). There were 60 educational sessions offered for county residents of all ages. The Money Smart Week sessions had 512 participants. Survey data noted 41% of the attendees reported they were very likely to change the way they managed their money because of what they learned.

Additionally, UW-Extension provides managing personal finances education sessions at the Fond du Lac Job and Career Center, Marian College, and agencies in Fond du Lac County. Three hundred fourteen (314) individuals participated in these sessions offered by Tidemann. Youth financial literacy education continues through Reality Day events offered by the school district and community collaborations. Approximately 300 youth participated in Reality Day events held at Fondy High School. ■

*"I just wanted to say
"Thanks" for the excellent
Agronomy Update meeting
last Friday. My father and I
especially enjoyed your pre-
meeting remarks and slides."*

~ Local crop producer



Agronomy Education

To help farmers make informed decisions on corn silage harvest timing, the Fond du Lac County Forage Council once again coordinated three corn silage moisture dry down events in the county. In total, 170 corn samples from farm fields were processed and analyzed. A machine is used to chop whole plant corn samples for moisture determination using laboratory procedures. Whole plant moisture is the only way to determine optimum harvest timing for corn silage. Harvesting corn either too wet or too dry can result in significant economic consequences. Moisture results are reported via telephone voice recording, on the Fond du Lac County Agronomy website, and on UW-Extension radio programs.

Over 150 farmers attended the annual Fond du Lac County Agronomy Field Day in late August. It was held at the Ed Montsma farm along Highway 151 near Lamartine. The event is jointly co-sponsored by UW-Extension and AgriLand Co-op. Participants who attended the field day viewed numerous field research and demonstration trials and attended one-hour educational sessions that repeated throughout the day. Educational sessions were presented by county Extension agents, state Extension specialists, and experts employed by private industry. ■

*"Those [4-H Leaders'
meetings] make you realize
that maybe you should let
the kids take more
responsibility."*



Educating 4-H Volunteers

Three hundred twenty-five (325) adults serve as 4-H volunteers. They are role models, teachers, leaders, advisors, and mentors that care about providing enriching opportunities for young people in our community. In order to have the privilege to serve as a Fond du Lac County 4-H Leader all new volunteers must complete an orientation where they learn about effectively working with young people. To keep their skills sharp, volunteers participate in an annual strengthening club leadership series, the multi-county Leaders Around the Lake workshop, State 4-H Volunteer Forum, Horse Project Leader Conference, and North Central Leader Forum. 4-H volunteers continually learn so they can support 4-H members as they grow, learn, and develop.

There are also three county leader meetings throughout the year where volunteers come together to plan events, strategize for future goals, share ideas, and learn skills that they can use in their 4-H clubs. As a result of attending these meetings, volunteers learned about structuring an "ideal" 4-H club, which includes time for business, recreation, and education. They also gained skills in recruiting volunteers, delegating responsibility, and creating welcoming club meetings. ■



*"I will maintain a business-
like relationship with my
ex-spouse. Keep getting
along with him and make
our child feel welcome and
encouraged to have a
relationship with both of
us."* ~ Past participant



Reducing Negative Impacts of Divorce on Kids

A child's ability to adjust successfully to divorce or separation is helped when they are able to maintain a close, personal and supportive relationship with both parents AND have parents who can cooperate with one another in a non-conflictual way. The greater the level of cooperation between parents, the better the adjustment for children and the fewer long-term problems. Annually, Fond du Lac County Family Court Services and UW-Extension help nearly 300 separated and divorcing parents understand how to keep their children out of the middle of their divorce process. In end of session evaluations, parents attending the co-parenting program indicate they will use cooperative skills that are taught in class, such as:

- "I" messages
- Not talking negatively about the other parent to the child
- Helping the child to have a close relationship with the other parent

In addition, Family Court Services continues to see a positive correlation between participation in the class and reduced mediation and/or more successful mediation. ■

"I will now check my prices on my food I buy by using the unit price formula to help watch my money I spend on food."

~ Money for Food participant



Reaching Low Income Families with Nutrition Education

In 2010, 4,813 individuals attended one or more WNEP educational events. The Fond du Lac County Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) helps limited resource families and individuals choose healthful diets, purchase and prepare healthful food, handle it safely, and become more food secure by spending their food dollars wisely. WNEP is funded by federal dollars, is based in Fond du Lac County and serves Green Lake County too. Michelle Tidemann, UW-Extension Family Living Educator, coordinates the WNEP program and supervises three WNEP Educators - Pam Nelson, Kris Schaeffer and Sharon Woolhether.

Over half (58%) of WNEP's participants are youth ages 4-17, 15% were parents of infants/children, 25% were adults without children and 2% were senior adults in 2010. ■

"I enjoyed the Fiesta Hispana because I could bring my family to an event that was free of charge."

"I learned about other people's customs in this community." ~ Fiesta attendees



Expanding Outreach

This is the second consecutive year of having a VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America) who is promoting 4-H in the Hispanic/Latino community. This year marked the first year anniversary of a 4-H club called Club Sonrisa, which currently has 13 members and three adult volunteers. Some of the members have participated in opportunities such as 4-H Winter Leadership Camp and Space Camp in Alabama. They've also taken on leadership roles by being club officers and doing presentations at the 4-H Adult Leaders' meetings.

More than 350 community members attended Fiesta Hispana held to raise awareness about community services that are available to all. The event also was an opportunity where Hispanic and non-Hispanic residents could interact and learn about one another. ■

"This educational series was extremely informative. Totally enjoyed the therapy and wellness aspects of this educational series."

~ Fall Training participant



Master Gardener Volunteers

The Fond du Lac County Master Gardener (MG) Volunteer Association is a group of about 80 passionate people who have the desire to learn and share their time and horticulture talents with the community. During 2010, local MG's provided:

- 4400 hours of volunteer service time
- about 350 hours to community and youth education programs
- thousands of dollars to area beautification projects for non-profit institutions and answers to nearly 200 horticulture phone calls and e-mails that came into the UW-Extension office from local residents.

UW-Extension provides training opportunities for MG's who either have the desire to become a Master Gardener volunteer or who want to add to their current knowledge base. In 2010, 25 individuals completed the spring 36-hour UW-Extension MG Basic Training Program. A 16-hour, four-week educational program focusing on gardening and wellness was offered this past fall. ■

FOND DU LAC COUNTY UW-EXTENSION

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Agents/Educators

Nan Baumgartner, Family Living Educator (Retired Jan. 2011)
Elba Carbajal, VISTA
Paul Dyk, Dairy and Livestock Agent
Pamela Nelson, WNEP Educator
Patty Percy, Community Garden Coordinator
Mike Rankin, Crops and Soils Agent
Denise Retzleff, 4-H Youth Development Educator
Kristine Schaeffer, WNEP Educator

Marie Stafford, 4-H Youth Development Assistant
Shelley Tidemann, Family Living Educator/WNEP Coordinator
Diana Hammer Tscheschlok, Community, Natural Resource
& Economic Development Educator
Sharon Woolhether, WNEP Educator

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