



2017 Annual Report

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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.

THRIVING YOUTH, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

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

STRONG ECONOMIES

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

RESILIENT & PRODUCTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

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

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.

Educational Priorities:

This report features snapshots of impactful programming conducted in 2017 by the UW-Extension Oconto County office within the outlined four educational priorities. 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 Oconto County government for their steadfast support and encouragement. We invite you to learn more about us online at <https://oconto.uwex.edu/> or follow us on Facebook!



Due to reduced state funding, UW-Extension statewide is under a reorganization. UW-Extension will remain a contemporary, dynamic educational institution in the 21st century. We will continue to adapt, respond, and maximize resources.



Nancy Crevier,
Area Extension Director—
Marinette, Menominee, Oconto,
and Shawano Counties

Thank you to the Oconto County Board and the Extension Committee for your continued support of the Oconto County UW-Extension Office during 2017. Working collaboratively with county partners, UW-Extension is able to reach across all of Wisconsin's 72 counties bringing the resources of the university to the people where they live and work. In Oconto County, we provide educational resources and create community collaborations to build thriving youth, families, and communities; strong economies; resilient and productive environments; and work to increase food safety, security and health.

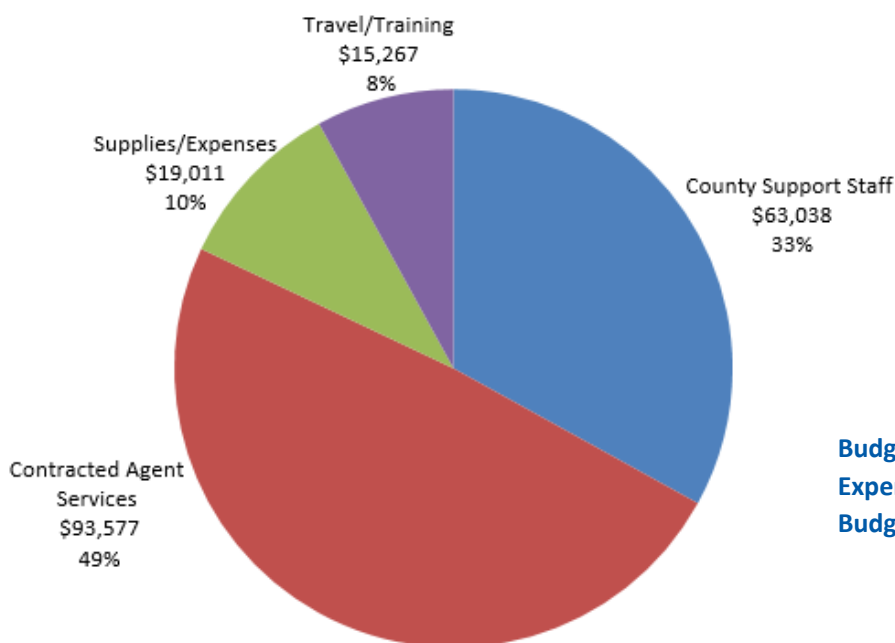
UW-Extension's funding includes a combination of county, state, federal, as well as research/programming funds. During 2017, Oconto County provided 40% of educator salaries plus support staff and operation costs. The state provided 60% of salaries and fringes of educator costs, plus many other forms of support including state specialists.

In July of 2017, as part of UW-Extension's reorganization, I joined the staff as the Area Extension Director serving Oconto, Marinette, Shawano and Menominee Counties. I look forward to my work here, continuing UW-Extension's partnership with Oconto County.

Sincerely,

Nancy Crevier

Oconto County Budget Expenditures



Educational Program Areas

Agriculture
Community, Natural
Resource & Economic
Development
Family Living
Food Wise
Parent Resource Center
4-H Youth Development

Budgeted - \$256,616
Expenditures, Actual - \$191,523
Budgeted, Unspent - \$65,093

■ County Support Staff ■ Contracted Agent Services ■ Supplies/Expenses ■ Travel/Training

4-H Youth Development

Written by Arvilla Rusnak

4-H offers various opportunities for youth to develop self-confidence. With the help of the Project Development Committee, an adult and youth partnership working to expand access for Oconto County youth to individuals with special skill sets, opportunities have opened up for 4-H members to develop confidence by teaching project sessions to other 4-H youth. The sessions are three-part events, held in fall, winter and spring and created to assist 4-H youth in exploring project areas from start to a finished product worthy of exhibition in the Oconto County Youth Fair.

As youth explore project areas, they become confident in their skills-so confident they are invited to become project leaders and teach the sessions. Each session requires a lesson plan and a challenge which Project Development Committee members work with the youth to develop. The lesson plan helps the youth leaders create a focus and the challenge requires the participant to come to the session prepared. Youth project leaders run the sessions and hold the participants accountable for their challenges. More than 12 youth project leaders have developed from these events, several have continued in the 4-H program as adult project leaders.



FoodWise

Written by Sarah Ferdon

The FoodWise Program is a community nutrition education program within UW-Extension's Family Living Program. FoodWise (FW) is federally funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) and serves Wisconsin residents with limited income providing education to assist individuals and families to make healthy choices. From October 2016 to September 2017, educators in Oconto County reached 563 unduplicated learners.

In addition to direct education to elementary school students, Oconto staff also provided indirect education to parents through printed materials distributed to all children. Oconto County FW Coordinator John Pinkart and Nutrition Educator Dawn Schroeffer collaborated with the Oconto School District food service staff to improve lunchroom practices at the elementary school. This included increasing student involvement, providing consistent health messages and increasing the visibility of health foods. School staff

worked with students leaders to produce videos promoting healthy eating messages which were played in the cafeteria area. These were so popular, they were even shared on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/WisDPI.SNP/>.

The year ended as both Dawn Schroeffer and John Pinkart retired from UW-Extension. Both have been missed by their FoodWise participants and agency partners. We thank them for their years of service to the program.



2017 Retirements

Paula Huff

4-H Youth Development

Becky Dolata,

County Program Assistant

Dawn Schroeffer

FoodWise Nutrition
Educator

John Pinkart

FoodWise Coordinator
Oconto & Marinette
Counties

All four of these individuals were long-time employees of the UW-Extension Oconto County office. We recognize them for their work over the years and wish them well in retirement.

"The lunch program is always changing for the better. I have a lot of kids expressing how they like the school lunches now." ~ An Oconto School District Teacher

Land Use Planning—Communities Working Together

Written by Dale Mohr

Local officials in large and small communities throughout Oconto County have many issues they face daily. One of those key issues is that of providing oversight to their community's land use development. The State of Wisconsin has mandated that communities across Wisconsin prepare with their residents a plan for future growth scenarios governing their residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, institutional, and recreational developments and their specific uses. UW-Extension staff have developed an annual program that instructs and informs local officials on all that they need to know about implementing their localized plans. Each year some 35 officials will go through this Plan Commissioners' Training program designed and facilitated by Dale Mohr. Additionally, UW-Extension has teamed up with the Oconto County Planning Office to work on updating these mandatory plans. With more than 23 local communities this would have been a costly and time intensive effort to have achieved if done solely on one's own, but it becomes more manageable when

Reducing Cancer Risk through Prevention Education

Written by Jill Cholewa

UW-Extension Oconto County and community partners including public libraries and community church organizations are helping Oconto County residents and families learn about cancer prevention and their cancer risks through a new outreach program called *Cancer Clear & Simple*. Oconto County is one of 33

Cancer is a leading cause of death in Oconto County. We all know that a variety of factors contribute to our overall health and taking steps to prevent cancer is the best way to reduce cancer risk. First step involves choosing healthy behaviors, such as eating healthy food choices, staying active and avoiding tobacco

"I am a Cancer Survivor, I learned more from these three sessions than from all pamphlets and booklets I received from doctor's office. Great program-explains everything in normal language." ~ Susan, CC&S Program Participant

counties in Wisconsin participating in this USDA-funded project. In 2017, four *Cancer Clear & Simple* series were delivered to Oconto County residents.

Cancer Clear & Simple was created specifically for a rural audience in Wisconsin. It covers three related but distinct topics: **Cancer Basics, Cancer Prevention and Cancer Screening**. The program uses a learner-centered approach to paint a clearer picture of what cancer is and promote steps to help individuals adopt healthy behaviors.

products. Cancer screening tests is another important step of cancer prevention. Screening benefits by locating a cancer early when it may be possible to treat the cancer more effectively.

84%

Participants demonstrated increase in knowledge about ABC's of skin cancer, self-care, and talking to their doctor about screening recommendations.

100%

All participants reported confidence in taking steps forward to reduce their own cancer risk.

approached as a effort. In 2017, through one-on-one consultations and community engagements, 21 towns and one village have decided to work cooperatively (with a defined timeline and process) with the county and Extension to review and update their plans meeting State mandates and saving roughly \$198,000 in the process.



Ensuring a Farm Legacy

Written by Sarah Mills-Lloyd

The successful transfer of a farm operation to future generations is integral for the longevity of agriculture in Wisconsin. Farm succession was identified as a programmatic need within Oconto County based on the 2014 Oconto County Needs Assessment performed by Sarah Mills-Lloyd.

The “Ensuring a Farm Legacy” program was designed and co-hosted with other county agriculture agents to

residents in northeast Wisconsin Counties—Oconto, Marinette and Shawano. The meeting offered information on pertinent topics related to successful farm transfers and estate planning with an opportunity for participants to ask their questions to the presenters during free, personal, scheduled one-on-one consultations. Attendees indicated their knowledge changes in the following areas: estate planning, long term

care, securing a farm loan, and UW-Extension farm meetings/facilitation.

Those in the agriculture industry may feel that farm succession meetings are passé; however, education on this topic is still needed. UW-Extension is essential in the process of farm succession as residents seek the knowledge of their local agriculture agent to help with facilitation and planning.



Financial Coaching – Converting Knowledge into Action

Written by Jill Cholewa

Financial security is a shared goal for most every person today. However, simply knowing how to handle one’s personal finances does not always translate into good money management. Financial coaching is a newer approach to finance education; it builds financial capability by helping individuals tap into their own motivation to not only reach goals, but to maintain positive financial behaviors long-term.

Financial coaching techniques allow educators to develop trust and better understanding with their learners. This program is grounded in the principle that learners select their own goals, so they are in the ‘driver’s seat’ during the entire process. Financial coaches do provide accountability and facilitate action planning focusing on two key skills **active listening** and **powerful questioning**.

In 2017, data collected from 43

financial coaching participants surveyed before the program and again 4 months later showed increases in:

- having a personal spending plan or budget in place,
- spending less with respect to income,
- paying fewer late fees.

Financial coaching participants have also proven other successful efforts, including checking credit reports; paying off judgments and collections; saving for future emergency funds; and paying down debt.

Financial coaching may not be right for everyone, but it is proving to be a powerful approach for individuals wanting additional support and accountability to move forward on their goals. Whatever financial goal a learner selects, UW-Extension Oconto County is a versatile resource and connection for Financial Security Education.



UW-Extension and Oconto Land Conservation teamed up to design key programs in order to help protect and/or enhance the many waterways within Oconto County. Aquatic invasives, both plant and animal, pose a significant threat to the health and use of the waters within the county. Millions of dollars in Tourism, alone, can be negatively impacted by the spread of these non-natives. Working together, this team brought together a group of citizen volunteers along with the Oconto County Lakes and Waterways Association to acquire \$235,000 in grants from the WDNR to research, design and plan for 21 Lake Management Plans. Throughout 2017, some 90 riparian land owners and 400 county residents expressed their concerns and preferences on key issues facing the water resources. A countywide Operational Strategy and Plan: for Surface Water Management and Protection was drafted and unanimously adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in response to the many concerns. Additionally, another \$243,000 was set aside by the County Board to initiate a first of its kind Oconto County Healthy Waters Initiative



"I do not think I would have undertaken this complex project without the assistance of UW-Extension." ~ Ken, Oconto County Land Conservationist

Grant Program to assist lake organizations with their projects. UW-Extension staff collaborated on the design guidelines, policies and marketing approaches needed for implementing this new program.

Using Multi-Media Outlets to Influence Change in Agriculture

Written by Sarah Mills-Lloyd

A myriad of media outlets have been utilized to effectively disseminate agriculture educational information to the geographically-expansive audience of Oconto and Marinette Counties, many who often lack reliable internet connection, on a variety of animal health, animal well-being, and farm financial health and management topics.

An overall program evaluation

was distributed to farmers and agribusiness professionals in Oconto and Marinette Counties during summer 2017. Of the respondents,

79 percent had utilized University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX) Oconto County educational resources, citing reading the monthly Oconto/Marinette UWEX agriculture newsletter (77 percent), attending a local UWEX meeting (44 percent), and reading the *Oconto County Times Herald* articles (25 percent) for

This increase in knowledge led to positive change, with 23 percent of respondents further discussing the veterinary feed directive with an agriculture professional/consultant, 21 percent benefiting from improved family communications regarding farm succession, 14 percent starting farm transfer planning, and 12

"Sarah is a valuable resource for us in the county with a wealth of knowledge, and a tremendous asset to both our agricultural producers and public." ~ Local Agribusiness Professional



information. Fifty-eight percent reported an increase in knowledge of agricultural best management practices after utilizing educational materials and programming. Specifically, respondents reported an increase in knowledge of farm succession planning (28 percent), veterinary feed directive rules (24 percent), and UWEX services (18 percent).

percent developing standardized cleaning protocols for calf feeding equipment. Eighteen percent of respondents experienced an increase in farm productivity from implementing suggested management changes, with decreased cow or calf illness and decreased cow or calf death as the most cited farm improvements.

Fishing for Fun

Written by Barb Truttman



Pictures say a 1000 words.....and the 12th Annual "Fishing for Fun Day" was no exception. Through a collaboration between the Parent Resource Center and local Sportsmen Clubs and Businesses, this event was held at beautiful Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya.

125 participants took advantage of the good fishing day! This event encourages kids and adult males to have fun together, and create a bond. Research shows that children with active adult male role models receive benefits that children without involved fathers do not receive, such as good grades, positive problem solving skills, good health, close friendships as well as compassion and empathy. Children received a pole to keep, to encourage more fishing. Lunch was enjoyed by the group, and children decorated a fishing hat.

Participant "Dad" Dustin said: ***"Fishing with Dad and Grandpa Day, put on by the Oconto Co. UW-Extension at camp U-Nah-Li-Ya was a huge success! P.S. Thank you to all the volunteers and people who donated and made this event possible!"***

Guiding Plan for Multi-County Literacy Council

Written by Dale Mohr

The Marinette & Oconto Literacy Council Inc., is a non-profit whose function is to help adults and families improve their literacy in reading, writing, health, speaking English, math, digital skills and cross-cultural awareness. The power of literacy enables adults to become self-confident, contributing members of



their communities. UW-Extension's Dale Mohr helped to establish the organization five years ago by being a valuable resource in drafting guiding principles, providing legal and administrative advice as well as

leading the Board of Directors through the development of two Five Year Plans. These plans identify key obstacles and challenges the organization faces while strategizing specific actions addressing each of them. By 2017, the Literacy Council had raised some \$35,000 and recruited and trained more than fifty volunteer tutors who have taught more than 60 students within both of the counties, making positive changes in their students' lives and the communities they live. Some students went on to start their own business, as a result.



"Thank you, thank you! What a great job you did!" ~ Janet – M&O President

Raising a Thinking Child

Written by Barb Truttman

A class designed for parents of 4-7 year olds was held in three Oconto County communities in 2017 by the UW-Extension Parent Resource Center. Throughout the eight week class series, parents learned to teach children "how to think, rather than what to think". It was reported both parents and children they were able to control anger/frustration more, and children learned to keep trying and not give up at a greater rate after completing the series.

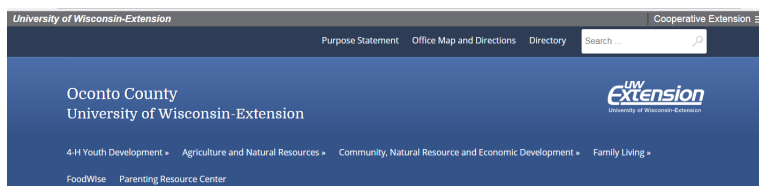
"I have become more patient and as a result my children have become more thoughtful about their actions." ~ Anonymous Parent

Because children learn the taught skills, they lose their temper less, are more helpful, happier, and they think things out.

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UW-Extension Oconto County Annual Report Designed, Developed and Created by Sarah Mills-Lloyd

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