



2018 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 COMMUNITIES

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 2018 by the Extension - Oconto County office within the outlined four educational priorities. Residents access 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.extension.wisc.edu> or follow us on Facebook!





Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
OCONTO COUNTY



Nancy Crevier,

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

You may have heard, Extension is now a part of UW-Madison, returning to our home campus in 2018. While our name, logo and color scheme have changed, our mission remains the same - through the University of Wisconsin Division of Extension, the people of the state and beyond can access university resources and engage in learning, wherever they live and work. Thanks to the support of the Oconto County Board and the Extension Committee, we provide educational resources and create community collaborations to build thriving youth, communities, and families; strong communities; resilient and productive environments; and work to increase food safety, security and health.

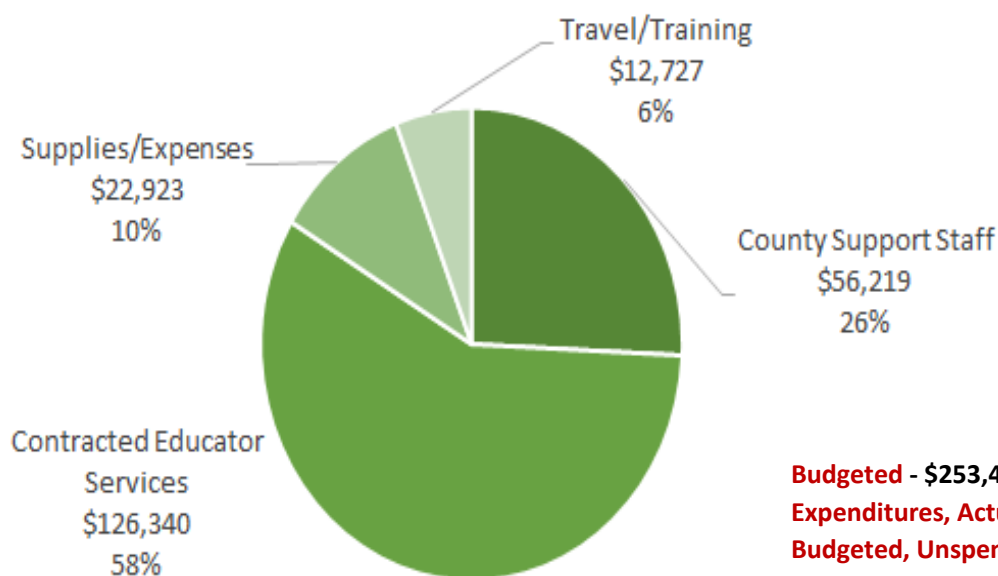
Extension's funding includes a combination of county, state, federal, as well as research/programming funds.

During 2018, Oconto County entered a contract with Extension agreeing to co-fund faculty and staff through a flat fee for services. To support their work, Extension also provides resources such as state specialists, professional development, human resources, onboarding support, as well as technical and programming support to assist our educators in meeting the educational needs of this county.

Extension - Oconto County is proud to share our work with you through this annual report. Once again we thank you for your support and we look forward to continuing the strong partnership we have with Oconto County in the future.

Nancy Crevier

Oconto County Budget Expenditures



Budgeted - \$253,475

Expenditures, Actual - \$218,209

Budgeted, Unspent - \$35,266

Educational Program Areas

Agriculture
Community Development
Health, Families &
Finance
FoodWise
4-H Youth Development

4-H Youth Development

Written by Ben Hoppe

The Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development program has a long standing tradition of youth and adult members building stronger ties with their local communities. Adult volunteers help to guide youth members, assisting in their growth as the next generation of leaders in Oconto County. From September 2017 through August 2018, the Oconto County 4-H Youth Development program consisted of 274 youth members and 61 adult volunteers.

Youth members contributed over 2,000 hours of service to their communities, participating in activities like bell ringing, caroling at assisted living homes, and making treats for local animal shelters. The 4-H Youth Development program and its 12 community clubs would not exist without the contributions of volunteers. They are the lifeblood of the program that offers opportunities for positive youth development to community members across the county. Last year, those adult volunteers dedicated over 3,200 hours of their time to Oconto County 4-H and community youth. Volunteers do many things for 4-H, including leading community clubs, organizing and running the 4-H Food Stand at the Oconto County Youth Fair, and helping teach youth specific skills like woodworking, archery, and baking.

Between the youth and adult volunteer and community service hours, an estimated \$128,388 worth of time was invested back into the Oconto County communities. Part of the 4-H pledge reads, "I pledge my hands to larger service... for my club, my community, my country and my world." 4-H in Oconto County continues to do exactly that.



FoodWise Written by Sarah Ferdon

The FoodWise Program is a community nutrition education program within UW-Extension's Health and Well Being 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 2017 to September 2018, 165 unduplicated learners were reached in Oconto County. This was in the form of in school education at Suring and Gillett elementary schools. Monthly lessons were taught to 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders on nutrition topics related to healthy living. The number of learners was significantly lower than previous years due to the vacant educator position for all of 2018.

The FoodWise program welcomed new educator, Sarah

Schindel, on January 2, 2019 and we look forward to our program getting back into full swing!

Education will resume in three school districts in the county in addition to NewView Industries and the Kingdom Come food pantry.



Pictured above is our new FoodWise Educator, Sarah Schindel.



Staffing Changes

In 2018, we said goodbye to

Arvilla Rusnak
Program Assistant

and hello to
Jenny Tyczkowski
Program Assistant

Sarah Ferdon
FoodWise Coordinator

Ben Hoppe
4-H Program Coordinator

Sarah Schindel
FoodWise Educator



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Developing Science Based Knowledge, Communication and Action on a Countywide Scale

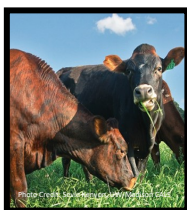
Written by Dale Mohr

Oconto County's countywide lake study and planning process has made numerous gains over the last 12 months. This vast undertaking (involving 60 lakes with public access ramps) is a joint effort between the Community Development Educator, County Land Conservationist, UW-Steven's Point Staff, and WDNR Staff whom have submitted and received three annual grants totaling more than \$300,000 bringing State dollars back into Oconto County to preserve natural resources and expand our tourism and local enjoyment of local waterways. In 2018 they have presented their research and techniques to statewide audiences through presentations to other waterway associations, districts, and property owners. They were selected as key presenters at the **2018 Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention and Symposium** sharing their methods and gathered results.



Meeting the Educational Needs of Oconto County Beef Producers

Written by Sarah Mills-Lloyd



Wisconsin has more beef farms than dairy farms, yet the average herd size is only eighteen cows. Beef producers are often "part-time" farmers working off the farm and utilizing the land to produce beef. Beef cow/calf production is popular in Wisconsin and producers with very small to very large herds have traditionally attended programs developed and hosted by UW-Extension focusing on a variety of topics relating to beef production.

Many farmers raising beef were once dairy farmers who naturally progressed into their "retirement phase", and used existing buildings and facilities with minimal capital expense to convert stanchion or tie-stall dairy barns into facilities for their beef herd. Sarah Mills-Lloyd, Oconto County Agriculture Agent, presented "Considerations for Renovating Dairy Barns for Your Beef Herd" to thirty-two attendees representing agribusiness professionals, farmers, consultants, veterinarians, and media at the annual UW-Extension Fall Beef Meeting.

Sarah Mills-Lloyd's presented information on dairy barn renovation was featured in a Country Today article, and Sarah also was contacted for more information for a Progressive Dairyman article.

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is a voluntary national program, which provides beef producers training on best management practices in animal husbandry, management, and animal health to produce a safe, high-quality, wholesome meat product for consumers.

Effective January 1, 2019, several large packers and processors will only purchase animals from Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) or National Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) certified farms. Sarah Mills-Lloyd, UWEX Oconto County Agriculture Agent hosted five in-person certification meetings in Florence, Marinette and Oconto counties for 56 beef and dairy farmers.

As a result of attending the UW-Extension Fall Beef program, participants indicated they better understood the considerations when renovating dairy barns for beef herds. Overall, BQA participants rated an increase in knowledge on all topic areas: check-off dollars; consumer perception of beef production; care and husbandry practices; feedstuffs; feed additives and medication; and injectable animal health products. In an effort to meet the need of beef producers of becoming BQA certified, additional in-person BQA trainings will be hosted throughout 2019.

Comments from Participants:

*"Program well presented."
"Good presenter—very knowledgeable."*

Locally, more than 600 residents participated in research gathering, information sharing, and individual lake's plan development through lake surveys, focus groups and local presentations. In addition, 15 planning and informational presentations were made throughout the county and more than 150 hours of volunteer time were recorded on the waterways as part of this much needed project.

"Dale's presentations at the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Symposium were very energetic and informative providing valued and timely information for our group". – Lake District President

Connecting Generations and Communities

Written by Jill Cholewa

In 2018, the Oconto County Family Living Agent led an intergenerational program for children, youth and older adults, where participants were offered educational exchanges that enable all ages to share their talents and resources. Oconto County Schools offer strong sport programs, however, there is lack of extracurricular activities in rural communities for children and youth that are not interested in athletics. To address this gap, an intergenerational program was a plausible option since greater than 19% of Oconto County residents are over 65 years of age.

Intergenerational programs bring people together in purposeful ways to participate in mutually beneficial activities.

Teaching and learning among generations has an ornate way of bringing older adults, children and youth together and form mentor-like relationships. At programs end, participants surveyed strongly agreed that the program helped them to work more effectively with younger generations and children of different ages. The benefits of an intergenerational program also showed positive

"The loving connections that these children form with older adults teach them about things that really matter - things they will never forget in their lifetime." – Connecting Generations Participant

changes on how participants think about age and view one another.

In wrap-up, demographic change means that responsibility for an aging population will fall to younger generations. Therefore, it is crucial that we spotlight children's understanding and importance of the lived experiences of older people for one day our next generations will decide how best to support us in the future.



4-H Youth Summer Camp

Written by Ben Hoppe

For many years, Oconto County 4-H shared camp experiences with other local counties at Camp Bird in Marinette County. After 2017, that camp experience was not able to be provided any longer. Thanks to the efforts of former 4-H Program Assistant, Arvilla Rusnak, as well as a generous grant from the Bond Foundation, the tradition of Oconto County 4-H youth attending summer camp did not end, it began a new chapter at Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya.

Oconto's 4-H Camp program is unique in the progressive leadership opportunities that are offered. Campers become resource counselors who help with various camp tasks throughout the week. Resources counselors become camp counselors who supervise and lead campers. Camp counselors can become adult camp liaisons who serve as the go-to for camp counselors. Camp liaisons eventually become camp directors who organize and run camp activities. Oconto has three camp directors who have followed this progression and one camp liaison; all are instrumental in the success of the camp.

In 2018, we had 73 youth attend summer camp at Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya as well, and there was a waiting list for other opportunities. They were led by 13 camp counselors who spent over 24 hours being trained in conflict management, team building, and problem solving. Because of grant money as well as contributions from the 4-H Leaders' Association, the camp was able to remain affordable for all families of Oconto County, regardless of their financial background.





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Restorative Justice - A Teen Court Program

Written by Dale Mohr

Have you ever made a mistake that got you into trouble? How about as a teen? Today, teens are inundated with pressures of society leading them to make a poor decision. This decision can follow them into their younger adult lives and keep them out of the military, lose out on their first full-time job, keep them out of a University or College. In Oconto County the Family, Municipal, and Circuit judges are looking for innovative ways to make teens accountable while offering ways to clear their records of this offense. Teen Court is one of those innovative programs based upon *Restorative Justice Research*. Teens don't get a pass for what they did, no, instead the focus

"This program is really what is needed to help these kids and their community". – Local Police Chief

is on making amends with the victim, giving back to the community and self-improvement as the price they pay. Teens are judged by their peers (other teens) that decide the actions that must be completed. Dale and Jill design, plan, facilitate and teach the Teen Court program. So far seven teens have been referred in the last six months of the year by Judges and Law Enforcement.



Heart of the Farm

Written by Sarah Mills-Lloyd

The Heart of the Farm-Women in Agriculture conference series is a University of Wisconsin-Extension program committed to addressing the needs of farm women by providing education on farm business topics, connecting participants with financial and production resources, and creating support networks. This long-standing Area 8 (Oconto, Marinette and Shawano counties) workshop is designed specifically for women in agriculture.

Negotiation is a critical business management skill. Whether you are negotiating with customers, employees or family members

there are specific strategies and planning tools that can help move the process forward in a positive direction. Sarah Mills-Lloyd, UW-Extension Oconto County Agriculture Agent adapted the work of Mary Peabody, University of Vermont Extension, "The Art of Negotiating", to create a one-day, two-part presentation for Heart of the Farm. The presentations were delivered to women farmers to help them develop critical negotiation skills necessary for effective business management. It highlighted techniques and key obstacles women encounter when negotiating.

As a result of attending the program, participants indicated they better understood the art of negotiating. When asked to list items they intend to implement as a result of attending the Heart of the Farm program, participants said:

- *[I] plan to share information with others.*
- *Negotiate purchases and use in workplace employee negotiations.*
- *Negotiating land rent lease.*

Because of the 2018 program, a need was identified for more intentionally developed information for women in agriculture. The Heart of the Farm program will continue to be offered in succeeding years by the UW-Extension agriculture educators.

"I have gained the confidence to negotiate in farm business contracts." - Anonymous, Heart of the Farm Program Participant



Photo Credit: Sevie Kenyon, UW-Madison CALS

Empowering People, Organizations and Governments

Written by Dale Mohr

"Give a person a fish, and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to fish, and you feed them for a lifetime." This saying is about empowering those to do for themselves becoming less reliant on others, including government assistance. The Community Development Educator provides evidence based resources, facilitation steps, and teaching to those looking to gain and use information in order to better their lives and their community. This year, Dale has empowered non-profits such as Marinette and Oconto Literacy Council, the Oconto Falls Library, City of Oconto Tourism Committee, Oconto Lakes and Waterways Association, Suring River Enhancement Team; as well as Local governments such as Oconto County Board of Supervisors, Village of Suring, Village of Lena and many town Plan Commissions; as well as local leadership organizations such as Leadership Oconto County, and Teen Court. In each instance, these organizations explored whom they were, what they needed to accomplish, and developed key steps to follow

"Dale's ability to get us to think about where our organization should be instead of lecturing us on what we've done wrong is a gift." – Strategic Thinking Participant



on their journey to performing their duties all the while developing individual leadership skills they can forever use to better themselves and their community.

Financial Education Program: *RENT SMART*

Written by Jill Cholewa



Rent Smart is a University of Wisconsin-Extension Family Financial Education program developed by Family Living Educators in consultation with Wisconsin Trade and Consumer Protection Division.

During 2018, the *Rent Smart* program was provided to local residents by the Oconto County Family Living Agent. *Rent Smart* provides practical education to help people looking for rental housing find, get, and keep suitable housing.

For people new to renting, homeowners transitioning to renting or individuals considered high-risk tenants, finding and maintaining rental housing can be a complicated and confusing process. *Rent Smart* focuses on the knowledge and skills essential for a successful renting experience. It challenges participants to know and understand their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, as well as know and understand the rights and responsibilities of their landlord. In the end, establishing a positive rental history is much like having a positive credit report and *Rent Smart* starts participants on the right path.

Community-based financial education programs like *Rent Smart* play an important role in improving the financial well-being of Oconto County residents. Participants surveyed after completing *Rent Smart* reported they:

- understood importance of completing rental condition checklist when renting.
- could identify essential requirements in a rental agreement.
- felt more confident communicating with their landlords about problems.



In 2019, the *Rent Smart* program will continue to expand and offer rental guidance to Oconto County residents in effort to develop improved relationships between tenants and landlords. Whatever financial area a person is looking for, University of Wisconsin-Extension Oconto County is a versatile resource and connection for Financial Security Education.



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