

University of WI-Extension

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**Environment, Agriculture & Extension
Committee – Douglas County**

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COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Fariba Pendleton

On April 15, 2008, a Douglas County Board of Supervisors and Department Manager training was implemented. The purpose of the training was to provide a foundation of information to assist in making knowledgeable decisions while carrying out responsibilities of a County Board Supervisor or Department Manager. Pendleton, who served on the planning team, also co-facilitated the training. This training was well attended by 50 individuals (26 County Board Members and 24 Department Managers & staff).



Subject matters learned by participants included, but were not limited to: County Organizational Structure, and topics such as Open Meetings Law (taught by Pendleton), Strategic Planning (co-taught by Pendleton), Ethics, and Roles & Responsibilities of the Board, Administrator, Department Managers. The feedback received from participants was extremely positive; and in general, they perceived the information learned as very beneficial. As a result of this successful educational program, a similar training will be held for the City of Superior elected officials.

WI NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

Grace Gee and Toni Britton

The Douglas County Nutrition Education Program (NEP) partnered with the School District of Superior to provide nutrition education to its students in grades K-5 at Bryant, Cooper, Lake Superior and Northern Lights elementary schools. Kindergarten received five 30 minute sessions and first through fifth received five 60 minute sessions. The topics covered were food safety, MyPyramid and physical activity. Food samples were provided to encourage students to try new foods.

It is a goal of NEP to show behavior change in clients based on the education. A new tool was used in 4th grade classrooms called "Guided Goal Setting". This tool provides goals about fruit and vegetable intake. An example is, "I will eat fruit for a snack at least ___ times." Students chose a goal and filled in the number of times (1 to 7) to achieve it. Students kept track of their intake and the nutrition educator collected the data the next week. Students were eager to set goals and shared reasons why goals were or were not achieved.

A total of 244 fourth grade students were taught about fruit and vegetables. Two hundred of the fourth graders set a goal about eating fruit. Eighty-seven percent (173) of those who set a goal achieved their goal. For vegetables, 192 fourth graders (79%) set a goal. Ninety-eight percent (188) achieved their goal. A possible reason for the higher percentage of achievement for vegetables is most students chose a lower number of times to eat them in a week than they did with fruit.

Overall, the students learned about setting goals making healthy food choices. The plan is to continue with nutrition education in the classrooms next year.

EXTENSION & INTERNATIONAL LIAISON AGENT

Tom Syverud

Master Composter Workshop Held

This workshop was held on Saturday, April 26, on a snowy cold day. Thirteen attended and learned how to compost leaves, yard and garden materials, and kitchen waste to convert those materials into a valuable resource for their gardens. At the same time, those materials won't be sent to area landfills. Composting works best in the presence of oxygen or air, however the most common mistake is that the compost pile is allowed to become too dry. Piles should be damp like a freshly-squeezed sponge. To start a compost pile, a mixture of brown and green materials is layered together, approximately in a ratio of three brown to one green, by volume. Don't compost meat, cheese, bread or pet waste. Pine needles and shredded paper is alright to use a little.

A compost pile can become 'out-of-balance'. When that happens, it comes down to one of four factors: browns, greens, air or moisture. If the pile smells like sulfur, turn the pile for more air. If the pile isn't working or heating up, add water and turn. If it smells like ammonia, add brown material and turn the pile. Turning the pile once a week for the first month is important. To check if your compost is ready to use, put some in a sealed plastic bag, after several days open, if ready it will not smell bad.

A Compost Bin Sale will be held 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Saturday, May 31, by WLSSD at Lake Superior College in Duluth. The cost of the Earth Machine Composter will be \$40.00, a value of \$100.00. A home composting booklet will be distributed and some of the workshop Master Composters will be on hand to answer questions about composting. Look for the compost display in the courthouse atrium soon. International Compost Awareness Week is May 4 to May 10.

FAMILY LIVING PROGRAM

Linda Bruce

REALITY STORE



During two days in April, over 600 middle school students participated in a Reality Store initiated by Northwestern Middle School. Students traveled from Siren, Northwestern, Washburn, South Shore, Cathedral, and Superior Middle Schools to take part in the sessions. The event was held at Wessman Arena in Superior and was designed to help students start thinking about planning for their futures beyond high school. Students were assigned a specific career, income, and family circumstance, and set out to determine what housing, transportation, services, savings, and luxuries they could or could not afford.

Nearly 40 business, service, and agency volunteers helped out with this community event, including utility providers, higher education, volunteer opportunities, banking, insurance, and others. Students met with the volunteers to determine the cost of the lifestyles they chose, and then make revisions accordingly throughout the day.

Linda Bruce and Joan Wimme, Youth Development Educator, assisted with all events, providing information and activities on how to spend less, and save more money. They are working with Solon Springs and Minong to host a similar event in 2009.

Following the Reality Store experience, students reflected on the relationship between their grades and their future, planning for expected life events, making wise financial choices, understanding the added expenses of children in a family, and the importance of staying in school and receiving a good education.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Sarah Wilcox

Creativity Flourishes at 4-H Cultural Arts Festival

4-H offers 80+ arts and communication projects distributed over three broad categories: visual arts, performing arts, and communications. Research shows 4-H is different from arts and communication programs offered in school, private lessons, church, and community organizations because of opportunities to interact with new people, more choices and freedom in creativity and expression, and a more nurturing, comfortable setting in which to explore, take risks, and develop one's creativity, self-confidence and leadership.



On April 26, 2008 Douglas County 4-H members participated in the annual Cultural Arts Festival at Northwestern Elementary School. Participant feedback included:

What did you learn about yourself today?

- Reading my story makes me feel good.
- Don't be nervous.
- I can do better if I try.

Why is the Cultural Arts Festival important to you?

- I learn new things to make and do.
- Gives homeschoolers a great venue for performing and speaking.
- It's a lot of fun!

COMMUNITY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Joan Wimme



Northland Wisconsin Financial Wellness held its second annual essay contest for students in K-8th grade. There were three different divisions for students

based on their grade. A total of forty-three students submitted entries. Students of winning entries received savings bonds and piggy banks donated by local financial institutions. April 29th was National Teach Children to Save Day. Working with AmeriCorps workers, volunteers and staff offered financial education programs that reached students in 17 elementary classrooms. Plans are also underway to provide educational programs at the Superior Housing Authority's Family Fun Fest on June 5th and at the Douglas County Fair in July.



We are currently recruiting for Youth Representatives on the Douglas County Board of Supervisors and the Superior City Council. If you know of a youth going into grades 9-11 that may be interested in this opportunity, please have them contact the Extension Office or visit our website. Youth serve a two year term. Three UW-Superior Social Work students are conducting a research project (in conjunction with a statewide evaluation effort) of the Youth in Governance program. Students will be working on the project through November and will be interviewing current and past youth, Board Supervisors, and county officials.