

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/REVITALIZATION



[¡Hola! Hispanic & Latino Experiences – Diana Hammer Tscheschlok](#)

In January, UW-Extension offered a presentation series called *¡Hola! Hispanic & Latino Experiences in Fond du Lac* in partnership with the Fond du Lac Area Association of Commerce, the Fond du Lac Public Library, and UW-Fond du Lac. In the first session, several local residents of Mexican origin shared their varied experiences of immigration, moving to Fond du Lac, family, and how they experience the community presently. The next week, we looked at the history of immigration and learned about current laws that shape the citizenship process. Week three dealt with economic factors: current & future labor force estimates, consumer buying power, and international trade agreements that impact immigration. The fourth week we discussed language issues: the pace that historic and current immigrant groups learn a new language, existing school programs, and language impact on public service delivery. Presentations from UW-Extension, WI Department of Workforce Development, ADVOCAP, Ripon Area School District, and local residents elicited thought-provoking discussions with 181 total audience members attending the series. Pod casts of two sessions can be heard at the Fond du Lac Public Library website: <http://www.fdlpl.org/podcasts.html#hola>.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



[Wild Parsnip is Going Wild in Fond du Lac County – Mike Rankin](#)

Wild parsnip is a weed that is spreading rapidly in Fond du Lac County. This generally biennial plant is showing-up in many road ditches and non-disturbed areas from the towns of Calumet to Waupun (it's especially abundant on the western side of the county). The invasive and noxious nature of wild parsnip makes this trend particularly troubling. It's a weed that resembles wild carrot (a.k.a. Queen Anne's Lace) in appearance but with a yellow rather than white flower. Also troubling is the human health risk associated with wild parsnip. People who inadvertently get the plant sap on their skin in the presence of sunlight will develop a serious rash and/or blisters that can take months to heal. Wild parsnip is relatively easy to control by keeping second-year plants from going to seed (mowing) or by spraying first-year rosette plants in the fall with a growth regulator herbicide. Unfortunately, control measures along roadsides and other undisturbed areas are often lacking in both frequency and timeliness. Over the past several months, one of my goals has been to increase people's awareness of wild parsnip and what can be done to control this weed. This has been accomplished through the media and group presentations. More importantly, county and town road maintenance crews along with private landowners are now going to have to take some initiative to identify and control the weed itself.



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES



[Family Wellness: The Couple-The Strongest Link – Nan Baumgartner](#)

Couple relationships matter – yet being a couple is hard work. All relationships go through highs and lows, so most couples can benefit from programs that provide tools and skills to support them through the various cycles of a relationship. Workshops to assist couples in their relationship are being offered in Fond du Lac County through a local coalition committed to healthy relationships. UWEX is part of the group and is currently offering a 3 part series for couples who want to make their current couple relationship stronger – or as one participant said, “I want to increase the happiness meter.” “The Couple: The Strongest Link” is based on current research about “why couple relationships matter” and teaches communication, problem solving and managing conflict skills for any couple – because healthy couples mean healthy families and healthy families mean healthy communities.

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