
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

After-School Program - Gail Roberts

Fond du Lac County 4-H has worked with the Fond du Lac Boys and Girls Club After-School program for about three years. The After-School program is a safe place at two local schools for students to go after their school day. They are served a meal, participate in fun learning sessions, and receive assistance with their homework. The state 4-H program has an After-School work team and last year the Riverside School program was a pilot to provide information to other 4-H After-School sites around the state.

Through the activities the children develop skills such as getting along with others, decision-making, and communications. These skills are acquired depending on the sessions that are taught.

Currently, on Mondays from 3:30 to 5:00 we are making presentations at Fahey and Riverside school where about 25 to 30, 4th and 5th graders are attending our sessions. Dr. Mike Jurmu, UW-Fond du Lac geography/geology professor; Carrie Hovland, Service-Learning coordinator and Gail Roberts, 4-H Youth Development, have collaborated on six weekly sessions. Dr. Jurmu's Weather and Climate students are leading the sessions as a service-learning project and are being graded on: developing lesson plans, giving a practice presentation to fellow students, giving the presentation at the After-School site and writing a reflection paper. Their teaching topics are earth/sun relations, light, pressure and wind, temperature, clouds and lightning, and precipitation and humidity.

This is a win/win project for UW-Extension, for the college's service-learning projects, but most importantly for the After-School youth.

AGRICULTURAL PROFITABILITY

New Dairy & Livestock Agent – Paul Dyk

On September 1, 2006, Paul Dyk began as the new Dairy and Livestock Agent for Fond du Lac County. Paul grew up on a dairy near Woodstock, Ontario. He received his undergraduate degree from Dordt College, Sioux Center, IA in 1992 and his Masters degree from Michigan State University in 1995. While at MSU, his focus was on dairy nutrition. Paul worked in Extension in Michigan for 1½ years before moving to Wisconsin. For almost the last 10 years Paul has been living in Wisconsin. For 5½ of those 10 years, he worked for two different feed companies as a dairy consultant. In between those two jobs, he and his wife owned and operated their own dairy. This background has given Paul a good mix of practical on-farm experience, consulting experience, and academic knowledge that he hopes to put to use in Fond du Lac County.

Paul's primary goal for the initial months of employment are to acclimate himself to the agriculture industry in Fond du Lac County and assess the needs of the community. Paul has put out his first newsletter (Dairy Frontiers) this past October and plans on continuing to provide current and relevant information for dairy producers in this format. Future changes are planned to improve the Dairy and Livestock portion of the Extension website. In addition, plans are in the works to develop an employee newsletter for both English and Hispanic farm laborers.

HUMAN HEALTH & NUTRITION

WNEP Works with Salvation Army's Brown Bag Lunch Program – Shelley Tidemann

Is hunger a problem for Wisconsin families? Hunger is a real problem for Wisconsin families. Statewide over half a million people live in households that are food insecure; they do not always have enough food for an active, healthy life. This means that 1 out of 11 Wisconsin households is food insecure. One in 30 households experienced hunger in Wisconsin.

What do "food insecurity" and "hunger" mean? Food insecurity exists when people have uncertain or limited access to food. They may worry about having enough food. Or they may need to juggle what little money they have to meet basic needs, such as rent, heat, medicine and food. Food insecurity happens at different levels. When most severe, food insecurity includes hunger. Households may experience hunger if adults or children reduce the amount of food they eat because they cannot afford what they need.

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The Salvation Army has supplied for families in need the Brown Bag Summer Lunch Program. The program provides a nutritionally balanced noon time lunch for those who come to the Salvation Army for food. In 2006, the Army provided lunches on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On average 1,200 lunches were built and distributed each week to families with children in Fond du Lac. WNEP partnered this year with Salvation Army to provide an educational component to the brown bag lunch. WNEP developed and produced nine different educational activity sheets that were placed in each brown bag that was distributed for the nine weeks of the summer food program. The educational activity sheets were written for youth to do while they were eating their lunch. Topics that were written about included eating vegetables and fruits every day, importance of food safety (especially hand washing before eating) and eating healthful with a simple recipe that a youth and their parent could make. The topics were addressed through word finds, crosswords, mazes, misplaced pictures and trivia questions.

The WNEP program evaluated the effectiveness of this method of providing education to families and children. The Brown Bag distribution sites were surveyed at the end of the summer. Five hundred fifty-seven lunches were distributed (258 were adults and 299 were children). Families coming to get their lunches were randomly asked for their input on the educational sheets in their lunches. 50 families were surveyed, some of their comments regarding the inserts were: Liked the word searches and puzzles; I have saved all of them and will use the recipes later; I liked the internet sites and the educational pieces on the sheets. We found that adults were doing them with their children and were just doing them themselves. We also received suggestions for next year to put on the inserts.

Salvation Army felt the inserts were a great addition to the brown bags and were encouraged that WNEP would create them and provide them again for the next year. The collaboration between the two partners to provide food to our families needing food, as well as providing education in a fun/interactive manner for children, has grown.

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