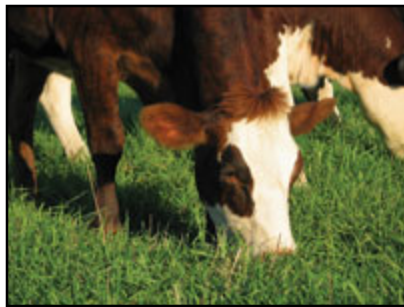




Learning for Life

Spring 2008



# Extension Impact: Education Makes A Difference



## Super Day of Learning for 4-H

**Connie Abert**  
4-H Youth Development  
**Greg Blonde**  
Agriculture  
**Marilyn Herman**  
Family Living  
**Mike Koles**  
Community Development  
**Penny Tank**  
4-H Youth Development

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### Upcoming Events

- May 28—3:30 pm, Environmental Education Board, Courthouse
- May 30—9 am, Volunteer Network Meeting, Courthouse
- June 1— Waupaca County UWEX Master Gardener Volunteer Spring Plant Sale, Fairgrounds
- June 4—Manawa Elementary Safety Fair
- June 23—4:30 pm Netsmartz, Scandinavia Public Library
- June 17—WACEC State Conference Tour of Waupaca County UWEX
- June 25—Community Partners Advisory Group Quarterly Meeting
- July 8-10—Master Food Preserver Training, Kimberly High School

More than 150 4-H members and adults found Super Saturday Project Day a perfect opportunity for fun and education in the middle of winter. Super Saturday classes range from quilting to taste testing Wisconsin dairy products to making balsam fir wreaths to exploring small engines and basic leathercraft.

Super Saturday is the largest project training held during the 4-H year and is an excellent example of youth from kindergarten through high school and adults to work together in the 4-H spirit. Three objectives for Super Saturday are for members, leaders, and parents to increase project knowledge or learn about an unknown

area, for participants to share what they learn with their club or other project members, and for youth and adults to work in partnership. Youth leadership in 4-H project experiences is a key concept emphasized in the 4-H program.

Super Saturday participants chose two of twenty six classes offered, taught by thirty-two 4-H and community volunteers, Penny Tank or Marilyn Herman, UW-Extension educators. Twelve teachers were 4-H youth members. Teens often highlight their leadership and teaching roles in club and county project meetings on 4-H and school applications.

Participants sign up for classes they knew little about to learn a new skill or a class to make a fair project. Three-fourths of participants share what they learned at future club meetings. Comments from youth evaluations included "Today was awesome!", "I liked Super Saturday very much", "wonderful program,

*keep up the good work",* and *"it was a great day."* Volunteer leaders on the 4-H Activity Committee work in partnership with Penny Tank, 4-H Program Assistant to plan Super Saturday. *~Penny Tank*



*Older youth helping a younger member with his woodworking project*



*Penny Tank working with a small group making decorative wreaths*



*Exploring small engines*

## Research on “Too Good for Drugs”

Many Waupaca County coalitions and groups of professionals target risk behaviors in youth. One of the behaviors that influences and connects to more serious risk is alcohol use. It is the drug of choice among High School age youth. In Monitoring the Future (MTF) annual study over three-fourths of 12<sup>th</sup> graders, two-thirds of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and two of every five 8<sup>th</sup> graders have consumed alcohol. When they drink they drink heavily. Wisconsin is #1 in the Nation for binge drinking problems. All of these statistics are costly and eventually negatively impacting mental and physical health.

Recently “Too Good for Drugs”, research based curriculum was implemented in our schools. Connie Abert, UW-Extension Youth Development Educator, facilitated and secured curriculum for each district. This curriculum has proven to decrease alcohol use by 38% in middle school and 50% in high school. It also reduced smoking cigarettes (33% middle school & 58% high school age), smoking marijuana (25% middle schoolers and 45% in high school age youth. Reports of fighting in high school were reduced by 45% following the use of “Too

Good for Drugs”.

How is this different from 40 years ago? In 1965 the average age of first use of alcohol was 17.5 and in 2003 it is 14 years of age. People who reported drinking before the age of 15 were four times more likely to also report meeting the criteria for alcohol dependence at some point in their lives. This alcohol dependency actually appeared much earlier during young adulthood and even adolescence. Thus the implementation of this research based curriculum is important in delaying the onset of this risk behavior as long as possible.

~Connie Abert



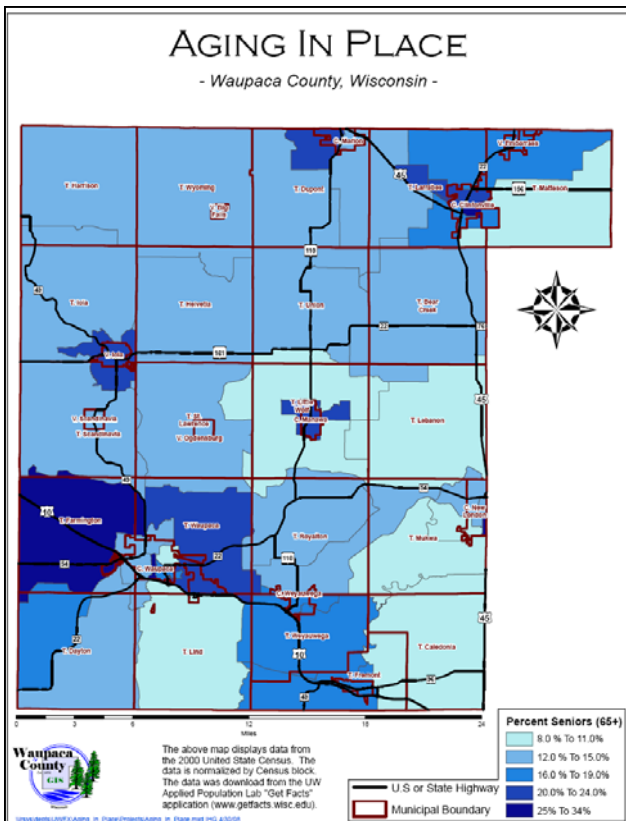
## Community Gatekeepers Respond to ‘Aging in Place’

There are many healthy, active people in our community, but others are not so fortunate. The *Community Gatekeeper Program* assists elderly citizens who are sometimes unable to help themselves. Risks increase if elders live alone and have little communication with others. If an elder becomes sick or unable to care for themselves, they may go unnoticed and unattended.

*Community Gatekeepers* is an education program that raises awareness among employees who, in the course of their daily work activities, have contact with citizens. Gatekeepers explore signs and symptoms that may indicate an elderly or special needs person could use some help. Gatekeepers are not expected to assume the role of social workers or counselors. All that is requested of Gatekeepers is to keep a watchful eye while conducting daily work activities and make a simple referral for persons in need.

Gatekeepers look for changes in a person’s overall ability to manage activities of daily living. Referrals are reported to the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 1-866-739-2372 or, in emergencies, the local police department. When the referral is received, the situation is checked out. Forcing assistance is not the goal but county residents deserve to be informed about alternatives and options that will preserve their independence and enhance their day-to-day quality of life. For a 30-minute presentation on the need for “*Community Gatekeepers*” contact Marilyn Herman, Family Living Educator to schedule a 30 minute presentation at your business or service organization.

~Marilyn Herman



70% of seniors spend the rest of their life in the place where they celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. “Aging in Place” is growing older without having to move from where you are currently living in order to get necessary support services in response to changing needs.

## Local Food for Local Schools

Greg Blonde organized and hosted a training session for local school district food service directors and local produce farmers to explore offering more locally grown food through area school lunch programs. Doug Wubben, WI Homegrown School Lunch Program manager with the Center for Integrated Ag Systems at UW-Madison was the featured presenter (via teleconference). Educational support materials, including a CD with examples from school districts in Wisconsin and similar initiatives in other parts of the country, was also provided to roundtable participants.

This initiative is part of a broader ongoing educational effort through the Waupaca County UW-

Extension office to encourage healthy nutrition and fitness among school age children. An initiative is also likely to increase the awareness and understanding of local agriculture in our communities. Another benefit is the opportunity to expand marketing opportunities for local farmers and food processors.

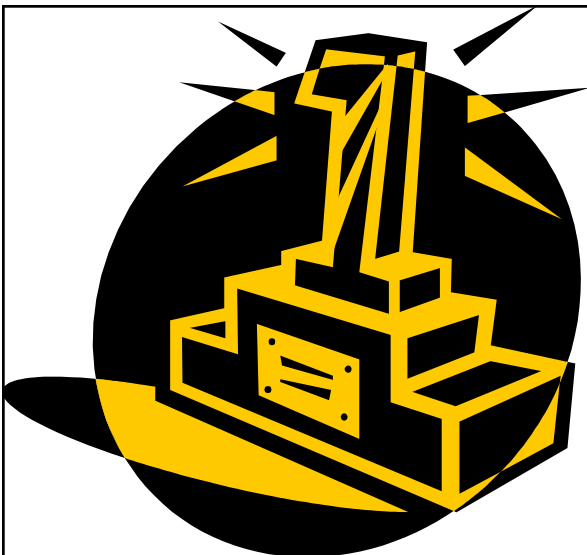
This spring, Blonde also did a follow-up survey of farmers and processors in Waupaca County already involved with direct retail sales to determine interest and availability of supplying local schools. The survey was returned by nine farmers and two processors including their name, address and contact information; past direct sales experiences; production practices; ordering and delivery information; and their willingness to provide information about their operation and/or availability as a guest speaker in the class/lunch room.

~Greg Blonde



*The Whitewater School District in Southern WI spends nearly \$50,000 each year on fresh, local produce.*

## Mike Koles Wins Outstanding Achievement Award



Mike Koles was recently awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award during the Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) annual conference. One award is provided from the Wisconsin Economic, Environment, and Community Development Association annually. The award recognizes the outstanding and continuing performance of a mid-career member of UWEX in community development. The award is given to an educator who has illustrated an extraordinary level of contribution to the county and UWEX partners, exhibited evidence of superior quality and impact, and developed innovative materials and programs. Award recipients are nominated and selected for the award by their peers. The colleague who nominated Mike noted his highly effective educational programs in stormwater monitoring, comprehensive planning, and aquatic invasive species, as well as the developing retail revitalization model that he is partnering on with the county economic development director.

~Mike Koles

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## Waupaca County Youth represented State at National 4-H Conference

Kayla Oberstadt, New London and a member of Sandy Knoll 4-H Club was selected to attend National 4-H Conference in Washington D.C. March 29-April 3. Kayla was one of five youth chosen from a statewide pool to represent University of Wisconsin Extension 4-H Youth Development. The purpose of National 4-H Conference is to bring diverse visions together, discuss them and strengthen the 4-H program at all levels. Each delegate (300) selected an issue (i.e. Education, promotion, environment, violence) and worked with other youth from across the country to develop plans to help direct future 4-H and Extension youth programs across the nation. Recommendations developed by the delegates during the conference are presented to the State 4-H Program Leaders and State 4-H Foundation Trustees. Networking skills that youth gained during the conference will help them in their after-conference work to address youth needs in their community and state as part of a national and state action plan. One day was spent on Capitol Hill meeting with legislators and touring.

Kayla reflected *“this was an unbelievable trip, not only seeing the city and meeting 4-H members from across the nation along with Puerto Rico and Canada, but realizing that the work we did there will impact the 4-H program on a national level in communities throughout the country. Being in Washington D.C. and having the opportunity to meet with legislators was a productive and engaging experience for us as youth to share our own personal 4-H experiences.”*

Kayla would like to thank the Waupaca County 4-H Leaders' Association for their partial financial support and the opportunity to attend National 4-H Conference.

*~Penny Tank*



*Kayla Oberstadt met with Congressman Steve Kagen while at National 4-H Conference in Washington D.C.*