

A Retirement Short Story
By Majorie Hamann

(Marge Hamann was a Family Living Educator in Manitowoc County and District Program Leader in Wisconsin before moving on to positions in other states.)

I'll always know how many years I've been retired by checking with my granddaughter's age. In June of 1995 I retired from the UIUC Extension Service, moved back to Madison and was blessed with a beautiful granddaughter. She is now 13 ½ years old.

My best and most interesting work was caring for my two oldest grandchildren most days of the week until they started school. We went to library story hours, kiddie gyms, craft hours for kids and everything else we could find. We picked and ate raspberries in the backyard, raked and jumped in piles of leaves, made snowmen and generally had a great time. My best friends at that time were all about 35 yrs old; parents of the other children involved.

During that time I also worked on a research project with the Madison Police Department. I collected antidotal information on MPD middle management as the Dept moved toward community policing. I had to do a survey and write a research report just like being at work in Extension!

To this day I still know many in the MPD which comes in very handy as I work on various community projects. It's very nice to be a friend of the Chief.

I now have three grandchildren and work in their school classrooms whenever possible. It's a very nice place to observe how everyone is doing and feel that I'm making a good contribution.

Although most of my time is spent with family and friends I am involved in quite a bit of volunteering. As a member of Zonta of Madison I lead a committee called Status of Women. Our main work is to raise funds to eradicate domestic violence in Dane Co. The Zonta Zing is our main fund raiser and we have a ruckus good time in addition to raising money.

I also serve on The Board of Directors of the Pres House Student Foundation which is a campus ministry on the UW-Madison campus. We just built a 250 student residence facility right behind our Library Mall Church. We are currently involved in Strategic Planning which also sounds like Extension work!

Those of you who know me know that I travel during the cold months. Florida in January, Mexico in February and this year, Texas in March. My travel centers around friends and getting my cuticles back in shape for Wisconsin.

Summers you can find me at my Lake Michigan cottage in Wisconsin where I do a lot of biking and kayaking.

If you are thinking of retiring, do it. It is a good thing. The choice of how you spend your time is totally yours! As I decorate my house for Christmas, I'm also packing for Florida.