

WIC Field of Dreams Garden

By Pamela Seelman

A creative gardening project turned Kenosha's Field of Dreams community garden into an interactive classroom this growing season.

Kenosha County Cooperative Extension staff teamed up with Women, Infants and Children staff and participants in an effort to get WIC participants to eat more vegetables.

"The project is effective because it links WIC with existing food programs," explains Pamela Halbach, WIC nutrition director. "The program was designed to improve participants' nutritional knowledge and provide access to fresh vegetables. Learning about the vegetables being harvested, obtaining recipes and interacting with other WIC families in the garden made nutrition education fun."

Each Friday, Kenosha/Racine UW-Extension nutrition educators talked to WIC participants about the nutritional value of different vegetables and how to shop for and store them. The program also introduced WIC participants to other resources available in their community. WIC participants were encouraged to bring their children and to pick produce from the garden. Children were included in all activities.

"An important key to the program is changing viewpoints of participants from passive recipients of food to active partners in the process of growing their own food, harvesting their own food and ultimately improving their diet through the use of the vegetables in their meal plans," explains John Schluckebier, Kenosha County horticultural agent.

"The goal is to encourage WIC participants to take control of their circumstances in life instead of letting their circumstances control them. The WIC/Cooperative Extension partnership in this program is an excellent example of a way to strengthen the efforts of both agencies through a cooperative effort."

To date more than 225 people have participated in the program. "The program seemed to gain momentum as the growing season progressed. The participants have their own 'WIC garden,' but have access to produce grown throughout the Field of Dreams garden as well," Schluckebier explains. The program will be expanded in the future to accommodate the growing number of participants.

UW-Extension staff considered the ethnic diversity of Kenosha and provided a variety of vegetable seeds and transplants including



Kenosha County Cooperative Extension and the Women, Infants and Children staffs worked together this summer to help families include the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables in their diet.

tomatoes, onions, squash, hot peppers, cabbage, sweet corn, beans, carrots and many more.

The project is an attempt to motivate people to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables each day, Halbach explains. "Preliminary results from the food study conducted by the Kenosha County Cooperative Extension Office indicate many families at risk of becoming food insecure or lacking adequate amounts of nutritious foods in their diet. The Kenosha WIC Fruit and Vegetable Report for 1999 showed that 73 percent of

participants do not receive the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

The pilot program was made possible through a grant. Because of the program's success, partners hope the program can serve as a model partnership throughout the state. "The need to address availability and consumption of fresh vegetables becomes increasingly important in light of all the research regarding the importance of a balanced diet to building and maintaining a healthy body," adds Schluckebier. "This is particularly critical for children."

GWETC scheduled for Oct. 10-12 in Madison



Rosemary Lehman

In a matter of days, Madison's Alliant Energy Center and Sheraton Hotel will be filled with thousands of educators from across the state of Wisconsin. The eighth annual Governor's Wisconsin Educational Technology Conference (GWETC) 2000 will be held Oct. 10-12.

GWETC, co-sponsored by UW-Extension, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Educational Communications Board, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and Wisconsin Technical Colleges System, provides a comprehensive look at today's technology and tomorrow's vision for advancing the application of technology in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve and postsecondary educational systems.

This year's event features an appearance by First Lady Sue Ann Thompson, nationally known keynote speakers, technology and software exhibits, and hands-on workshops.

Rosemary Lehman of UW-Extension's Instructional Communications System is serving as GWETC 2000 steering committee chair. "The use of technology is increasingly important in education. The wide variety of quality presentations, hands-on workshops, exhibits and keynote speakers at this conference emphasize the critical need for technology to support teaching and learning," she says. "Through GWETC, the state's educational systems continue to work together to provide a stimulating and valuable conference for everyone committed to the education of the future."

For additional information, visit the conference Web site: www.gwetc.org.

The League of Women Voters
Education Fund

**WISCONSIN
KidsVote**

2000

KidsVote Nov. 1

By Lynn Brockmeyer

On Nov. 1, Wisconsin students from kindergarten through the twelfth grade will get a practical lesson in democracy by participating in Wisconsin KidsVote 2000.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Public Television (WPT) are partnering for this mock election in which older students will cast their ballots for actual candidates and younger students will vote for favorite animals. WPT will broadcast results on Thursday, Nov. 2.

Project chair for the League of Women Voters Ellen Sorensen says, "Our goal is to build a

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Kevin P. Reilly

Message from the Chancellor

In a previous column, I discussed my role as chancellor in leading this institution's effort to attain its long-range diversity goals. That responsibility is not mine alone. It is, in fact, a duty we all must share if we are to succeed.

Saying that "diversity is everyone's job" is easy. Giving people the resources they need to accomplish that task is much more challenging.

Our first assignment is to understand how diversity relates to our educational mission. UW-Extension's customer base — the citizens of Wisconsin — is changing rapidly, and we must respond accordingly by assessing the needs of our audiences and ensuring that programs meet their expectations. This process of custom-tailoring services and speaking the client's language is something we already do in our program design. In fact, this skill sets UW-Extension apart from many other institutions of higher education.

Success will depend not only on our ability to anticipate the changing programmatic needs of our residents, but also to ensure that the face of our faculty and staff accurately reflects the rich ethnic and cultural mix of our population.

Perhaps the most vital element of this effort is honest communication. That requires a mutual commitment between organizational leaders and individual stakeholders to identify and eliminate barriers and recommend real solutions. Our Executive Council,

for example, participated in a three-day diversity retreat this summer. The Diversity Council joined us for part of the discussion, where we identified barriers to full inclusion of all our clients and employees. Next steps include developing a strategy to eliminate those impediments.

I invite you to play an active role in this process. A good place to start is the Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity web site at www.uwex.edu/diversity. Among other resources there, you will find the names of EEO/Diversity staff and a Diversity Council roster with representatives from every division.

With open lines of communication and a shared vision of success, we will reap considerable rewards. If you have thoughts on this important subject, please e-mail me at reilly@admin.uwex.edu. Thank you.

Kevin P. Reilly
Chancellor

Wisconsin Public Radio news director **Connie Walker** was recently re-elected to a one-year term as the large station representative to the board of directors of Public Radio News Directors Incorporated. Walker, who has already served on the board for a year and a half, says that her focus as representative is to recruit new talent into public radio journalism.



Cooperative Extension Dean and Director Carl O'Connor has appointed the following faculty as academic chairs for departments in the division: Agriculture/Agribusiness — **Jim Fanta**; Community Resource Development — **Tom Geiger**; Environmental Sciences — **Jamie Robertson**; Family Development — **Faden Fulleylove-Krause**; Youth Development — **Rosanne Schleif**. All terms are through June 30, 2001, except for Geiger's which runs through 2002.

2000 Extension award winners to be honored at Oct. 26 banquet

By James Cortese

Extension faculty and staff, including campus-based faculty/staff and spouses/guests, are invited to the 2000 Extension Awards Banquet to be held Thursday, Oct. 26, at the Lowell Center on the UW-Madison campus. UW-Extension annually honors faculty/staff and supporters of the extension function with awards in five categories. This year's recipients, by category, are:

Award for Excellence, for faculty and staff who have excelled in program development, teaching or support of Extension programs—**Mike Offerman**, UW-Learning Innovations; **Carolyn Joyce**, JASON Project, UW-Milwaukee; **JoAnn Hinz**, Dean's Office, Cooperative Extension; **Eric Bangerter**, **Dana Burmaster**, **Jane Jiumaleh**, **Bruce LaBuda** and **Mike Wokasch**, Information Systems, Cooperative Extension; **Lucy Holfield**, SBDC, UW-Milwaukee.

Classified Staff Award for Exceptional Service, to recognize outstanding performance in supporting the Extension mission—**La Vone Sneen**, UW-Eau Claire; **Pat Munz**, Family Living, Cooperative Extension; **Penny Otte**, Vilas, Forest and Florence counties; **Kristin Dohm**, **Grace Homb** and **Brenda Ruf**, Wisconsin Public Television.

Friend of Extension Award, for individuals or groups who have made outstanding contributions in support of the extension mission at the local, state or national levels—

Cooperative Educational Service Agency #4 (**Robert G. Peterson**, **Mark Dyar** and **Jerry Redman**) for that organization's dedication to providing quality, cost-effective programs and services for students at UW-La Crosse; **Nancy Ambrust**, vice president of education and community relations at Schreiber Foods, for her commitment to positive relationship building and enduring support of Brown County's UW-Extension Office; **Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association**, one of the state's strongest partners in integrated UW applied research — Extension programs; **Wisconsin Department of Commerce** for its partnership with UW-Extension in such areas as the International Trade Program and the Entrepreneur Training Grant Program, and **Clarence Mitchell**, Wisconsin Public Television donor for his enduring support.

Wisconsin Idea Award, for individuals or groups who have made significant contributions through applications of concepts, techniques or principles gained through participation in Extension programs— First Book Project (**Lynne Blinkenberg**, Wisconsin Public Television; **Gloria Green**, Cooperative Extension/Family Living; **Winnie Joos**, Wisconsin Association for Home and Community Education).

Extension Career Award, honoring an outstanding faculty member who has demonstrated long-term commitment, quality, leadership

and innovation in Extension programming—**Bill Atzen**, controller.

The October 26 banquet will begin with a social hour at 5:30 p.m. in the Upper Lounge at the Lowell Center, 610 Langdon St., Madison. Dinner will follow at 6:30 p.m. in the Lowell Center Dining Room. Advance reservations are necessary. A reservation form is available at www1.uwex.edu/gea/chancellor. Or, call Rita Sears at 608/262-3786 to register. **The reservation deadline is Oct. 6.**

KidsVote, Nov. 1

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sense of citizenship among students and, by example, their parents. "It's a great partnership," says Maria Alvarez Stroud, director of outreach for WPT. "The students get a taste of what voting means, and it gives them a chance to be heard."

Wisconsin KidsVote 2000 is affiliated with the National Student/Parent Mock Elections. Other partners are the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Education Association Council, Association of Wisconsin School Administrators, CyberCivic, Ripon College, CenturyTel (Ripon) and G & G Telephone Service.

20 years of serving inventors

Whether it's a new design for a toothbrush or a motorcycle, staffers at the Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC) are able to tell the developer of a new product idea whether it has technical merit — and whether it will succeed in the marketplace.

During the past 20 years, the center, on the UW-Whitewater campus, has assisted more than 6,000 independent inventors and small business owners by offering affordable early-stage market research assessments of new products and services.

UW-Extension partners in this unique service through the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and SBDC staff statewide frequently refer business owners with bright, new product ideas to WISC.

"The Wisconsin Innovation Service Center takes pride in an extremely high rate of client satisfaction, and also in the fact that nearly 75 percent of clients have been referred by former clients and professionals," says Milissa Rick, program manager.

An international resource network of 600 technical and specialized consultants advises the center and its clients. The center's in-house staff performs quality secondary market research, analyzing market size, competitive intensity, existing patents and demand trends.

To celebrate 20 years of service, the center is presenting a regional workshop on the UW-Whitewater campus Oct. 20-21. For more information on the workshop, "Turning Ideas Into Profits," call 262/472-1365 or e-mail innovate@mail.uww.edu.

Natural resource policy expert's work benefits state's environment

By Joel Bradtke

Don Last marked Earth Day 2000 by paddling around Madison's Lake Mendota in a kayak. It was a time for him to reflect on a 30-year career that began in the lake's watershed, but which ultimately influenced water and land-use policies throughout Wisconsin.

Last retired this summer from appointments as a UW-Extension natural resource policy specialist and professor in the College of Natural Resources at UW-Stevens Point.

Last's early involvement with natural resource policy was as environmental quality agent with UW-Extension in Dane County. He encouraged farmers in the Lake Mendota watershed to curb runoff. With federal agency partners, he worked with early-adopter farmers who became the first in the nation to get cost-sharing grants for wintertime manure storage systems.

When the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began to shift its attention from "point" sources to

non-point sources of water pollution Last saw a new role for soil and water conservation districts. In 1975, he drafted a memorandum of understanding signed by the county's water management agency (Dane County Regional Planning Commission) and the county's Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The EPA distributed the memo as a national model, leading to the extensive involvement that county land conservation departments now have in non-point pollution programs.

As early as 1973, Last organized a conference on the causes, consequences and controls of urban runoff to encourage communities to address erosion in a way similar to agricultural producers. He organized and presented construction site erosion control workshops for public officials and land developers in the early 1990s. "Today, state law requires communities to enforce construction site erosion control ordinances," he explains.

Current use-value assessment practices for farmland are in part an outgrowth of work that Last began in 1988. He conducted workshops across the state, training 500 assessors on the use of tables, text and maps in soil survey reports to classify lands on their potential to produce farm crops. "We planted a seed which was the idea that using inherent productive value is the way to go," says Last. Today, the soil survey is a prime tool in use-value assessments of farmland. And Wisconsin and its counties have joined the federal government in a partnership to pay soil mapping and re-mapping costs.

During his career, Last worked extensively with SWCSs, labored for proposed legislation that stimulated recreational opportunities on privately owned lands, and developed a position statement on protection for wetlands. But the achievement that he smiles most broadly about is his involvement in founding 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, a statewide citizen organiza-



Water and land issues have dominated the 30-year career of Don Last. In retirement he plans to enjoy the resources he helped protect.

tion to advocate for land-use planning, and its sister organization, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin Land Use Institute.

In retirement Last will pursue his interests through the 1,000 Friends organization. He says the emerging issue that needs to be addressed now is "forest sprawl," the excessive dividing of forestland into smaller and smaller parcels. "That precludes a lot of the options for sustainable forest practices."

Wisconsin, no doubt, has yet to hear the last word from Don Last.

WeekEnd hits the road leading up to elections

By Chris DuPre



WeekEnd hosts Jerry Huffman and Patty Loew hit the road in October to bring you in-depth election coverage. *WeekEnd* airs 7 p.m. Friday and 11 a.m. Sunday on Wisconsin Public Television stations throughout the state.

This election season, the team that covers politics year-round is hitting the road for three special broadcasts. Wisconsin Public Television's *WeekEnd* travels to Milwaukee on Oct. 13, Green Bay on Oct. 20 and Menomonie on Oct. 27. Anchored by veteran journalists Jerry Huffman and Patty Loew, *WeekEnd* will use the tour to focus on candidates and issues in specific areas of the state while providing a larger context to voters all around Wisconsin.

"We're excited to be out and in direct contact with voters and the candidates," says Kathy Bissen, WPT executive producer for News and Public Affairs.

As the cornerstone of WPT's Wisconsin Vote package, *WeekEnd* provides insight and analysis

missing from most commercial broadcasts. The on-the-road programs underline *WeekEnd*'s position as the only regular TV public affairs program with a statewide perspective. "If, as the old saying goes, 'all politics are local,' then we're determined to help our viewers understand the local issues and campaigns in their home districts," says Andy Moore, *WeekEnd* producer.

"In terms of broadcast TV, this is the only place people are going to get in-depth coverage of the fall campaigns," Loew says. Co-host Huffman adds, "We don't care about the sound bites. We care about the substance."

WPT comprehensive election coverage

- **Field reporting:** *WeekEnd* reporter Art Hackett and Huffman will travel the state to report on the issues and candidates.
- **Joint candidate appearances:** Candidates for U.S. Senate selected congressional and some state Assembly and Senate races will appear together on *WeekEnd*.
- **Candidate statements:** Candidates for congressional seats and the U.S. Senate have been invited to make statements to the public during the on-location *WeekEnd* programs: Oct. 13 (Milwaukee)—congressional districts 1, 4, 5; Oct. 20 (Green Bay)—districts 6, 8, 9; Oct. 27 (Menomonie)—districts 2, 3, 7; Nov. 3—U.S. Senate seat.
- **We the People broadcast:** Selected Wisconsin candidates will address health-care issues at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 12, on WPT.
- **Ad and web watches:** WPT producer Steve Jandacek will analyze political ads created by the candidates and interest groups. He'll also report on candidate and interest-group Web sites. *WeekEnd* is partnering with WisPolitics.com reporter Jeff Mayers to provide analysis of political commercials and Web sites.
- **Web sites:** www.wisconsinvote.org, a joint effort with Wisconsin Public Radio and the University of Wisconsin-Extension, offers visitors instant access to updates on breaking news, candidate biographies, voting records, position papers and campaign finance reports, ad watches and more. It also will link to other web sites ranging from candidate campaign sites to sites of watchdog groups and voter resource centers. Some Wisconsin Vote web activities will be coordinated with the *WeekEnd* web site www.wpt.org/weekend.
- **WeekEnd Rhetorician:** Stephen Lucas, UW-Madison professor of communication arts, will review selected stump speeches and help viewers understand what the candidates tried to achieve and what they actually communicated.

Cooperative Extension survey finds some surprises about who uses Wisconsin food pantries

By Beth Swedeen

Wisconsin's economy, like much of the country, continues to prosper. More people are working and fewer are on welfare because of W-2. But at the same time, many of the state's food pantries report increasing demand for their services.

County UW-Extension family living agents and Food and Nutrition program (FNP) educators wanted to know who is using Wisconsin's food pantries and what the factors are that contribute to people's needs for outside sources of food.

"Here in La Crosse County, people are working and still are not able to pay all the bills," says La Crosse County FNP coordinator Sue Schultz. "Food insecurity really is an issue in all parts of the state. The economy may be booming, but there are working people who are still skipping meals because they don't make enough to meet their expenses."

Judy Bartfeld, UW-Extension resource management specialist with Cooperative Extension's Family Living Programs and a professor of consumer science at UW-Madison, responded to county interest by developing a food pantry survey last year designed to look at who was using Wisconsin food pantries, what their employment circumstances were, and what types of economic problems and employment barriers they were facing.

The survey was available to all FNP educators and family living agents in the state. Last fall, 27 Extension educators coordinated the survey in their counties, collecting data from nearly 4,000 food pantry users in the state.

"I realized that widespread county interest provided an opportunity to not only gather county data, but to do it in a way that could be pooled across counties to generate a statewide picture," Bartfeld says. "The survey helps 'put a face on



Irene Kutz, benefits specialist for the Aging Long-term Care Office at Green Lake County Health and Human Services, coordinates Green Lake County's food pantry/commodities.

Food pantry survey findings

- Close to half of clients (44 percent) have a least one employed person in their household, usually working at very low wages. While most employed clients earn above the minimum wage, only 18 percent earn more than \$8 an hour.
- A disability or health problem is by far the most frequently mentioned reason for not having a job or not having a better job. A disability or health problem was cited by 35 percent of working-age clients.
- More than a quarter of working-age clients mention a problem with either the availability of jobs or with their own level of skills, education or experience.
- Food pantries serve a very low-income clientele. Almost a quarter have monthly household incomes below \$500, and only 5 percent report incomes over \$1,500 per month.
- Despite low incomes, only 17 percent report using food stamps. Food stamp use is higher in nonworking households than working households.
- Almost a quarter of pantry users say someone in their household skipped meals in the past year because there was not enough food. That includes 4 percent of households in which a child skipped meals.
- Single parents report the lowest incomes and highest rate of skipped meals and other hardships.

hunger' in Wisconsin by helping us understand which families need emergency food assistance and what these families see as their most pressing barriers to economic independence."

In La Crosse County, Schultz works on a local Hunger Task Force that has started a food recovery program from wholesalers and a large community garden that brings 40 low-income people together twice a week on summer nights to harvest organic food and distribute it to people in need. She says the survey helps tell the community and partnering agencies the story of food insecurity in that area of the state.

And Lori Bryant, executive director of the WAFER food pantry in La Crosse, says she appreciates the detailed information on clients, as well as the fact that UW-Extension compiled the results, a task her staff wouldn't have time to do on their own.

Those sentiments are echoed in Green Lake County.

"We had seen food pantry use go up, and we were wondering who our clientele were. The survey did

a nice job of telling us," says Deb Lyons, Green Lake County economic support unit manager for the Department of Health and Family Services. In our county, 36 percent of pantry users are 65 or older. Many of the older adults prefer to access the food pantry or make do with what they have than apply for food stamps."

Many counties were concerned by the low rate of food stamp receipt among pantry clients. One response to that particular survey finding occurred in Sauk County, where the pantries have responded by including flyers about the food stamp program in food bags.

Shelley Tidemann, UW-Extension family living agent in Green Lake County, says she has shared the food pantry survey with the county's W-2 steering committee, which may be able to think of projects based on needs identified in the survey results.

The survey findings also provide a valuable way to educate the public about food insecurity in individual communities.

Extension News & Ideas is a publication of the University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX). It features articles and information about UW-Extension and extension activities carried out through the 26 UW System campuses and 72 Wisconsin counties. An EEO/Affirmative Action employer, UWEX provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA requirements. If you would like this material in another format, please contact Margaret E. (Peg) Davis.

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Photos: Joel Bradtke, Jim Gill, Michelle Tidemann

Extension News & Ideas on-line:
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