



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
PORTAGE COUNTY

July 2021 Educator Update

FoodWise Education - Kelly Hammond, Penny Schmitt & Hannah Wendels

- Virtual Education for Pathways to Parenting with Children's Wisconsin, StrongBodies, McKinley Elementary and HeadStart 4k classrooms.
- FoodWise in-person education and outreach began in May with a Pop-up Produce event at the first Levitt Amp concert; we gave away free plants, seeds and provided information on home gardening to families.
- In-person education began in June with Stevens Point Elementary Summer School.
- Collaboration with Portage County HEAL coalition, UW-Stevens Point and the Portage and Wood County Health Departments on a 200K planning grant for improving food equity and FoodShare access at Farmers Markets. Grant application was submitted to the USDA Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.
- Fiscal Year 2022 plan was submitted and approved.
- Program participation in Healthy Schools Bootcamp, Tribal Nutrition Education, Mental Health First Aid, Food Systems Training, Portage County Equity and Inclusion Mapping, as well as coalition meetings and planning through the HEAL Coalition and Portage County Hunger and Poverty Prevention Partnership (HPPP).

4-H Positive Youth Development Programming - Connie Creighton

- Eighteen youth, seven counselors, and four adult leaders from Waupaca and Portage Counties experienced 4-H Adventure Day Camp at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station. Ten campers, three counselors, and three adults were from Portage County. Campers ranged from second to seventh grade and the counselors were eighth grade and older. Because this was not an overnight camp, we were able to engage eighth grade teens as day counselors providing them with a new leadership opportunity.

Counselors attended a virtual training session to prepare them for their leadership responsibilities. Keeping in mind the developmental stages of youth, second and third grade campers had a separate educational tract from the older campers. Youth experienced STEM, outdoor adventures, team building activities, and arts & crafts. Campers reported enjoying trying



new activities like archery and canoeing and making new friends. Campers and Counselors who completed the evaluation felt safe and welcomed at camp. One counselor wrote that “this (experience) was impactful because we were really in charge of our own groups and were responsible for all of the campers. It was a different kind of responsibility and was helpful in practicing skills with leading activities, being patient, and staying positive for the campers.”



- For April, May, and June we continued to hold virtual club and committee meetings, as well as, project workshops and events. Two Discovering Rock workshops, two sewing project workshops, a virtual cake decorating workshop and a chance to meet Alice in Dairyland through a virtual county-wide Zoom we offered.
- Starting in July, committees and clubs have started the process of meeting in person.

Agriculture Education - Ken Schroeder

- Held 2 youth education on-farm field days where youth learned about soil health, cover crops, prairie and pollinator plantings, and groundwater as part of the Farmers of Mill Creek Watershed project. 56 youth from 3-K through 4th grade attended on day one and 24 first graders on day two. My roles included planning and teaching the soil health and cover crops section. Dug a soil pit and talked about soil layers, soil types, and looked at root growth into the different soil layers.
- Hosted a Farmers of Mill Creek “Lunch and Learn” June 15th where farmers learned about using a roller/crimper and a rye cover crop for weed management in soybeans, watched a field demonstration of roller/crimping, and learned about our on-farm research project going on to evaluate effects of rye cover crop on white mold and weed suppression in soybeans. 25 farmers attended.
- Participated in June 17th Fishers and Farmers Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin – Boots on the



Ground Conversation zoom lunch hour zoom meeting along with Matt Hintz, lead farmer for Farmers for Tomorrow River Watershed project. Attendees learned how we are working together to demonstrate and promote soil health and improve ground water quality in the Tomorrow/Waupaca River Watershed.

Community, Natural Resources & Economic Development Education - Nathan Sandwick

- Extension and collaborating associations that support Wisconsin's towns, villages, cities, and counties recognize the Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (part of the federal American Rescue Plan Act) as a significant source of one-time funding for local governments. Colleagues are coordinating efforts to inform local officials about the program and the importance of strategic public investments. Sandwick personally reached out and offered assistance to clerks of municipalities in Portage County expected to file information with the WI-Department of Revenue, as required for them to remain eligible for these funds.
- Sandwick met with community leaders who, with help from a Portage County planner, are working on updating the comprehensive plan for the Village of Park Ridge. He discussed guidance for gathering public input, and shared related resources and examples of community surveys, to assist. Sandwick also met with a committee tasked with developing a strategic plan for the village and provided a general strategic planning process overview for discussion.
- As part of the Employee Transportation Work Group convened by CAP Services, Sandwick helped convene an informative presentation about the potential for organized employee vanpooling programs. This was attended by the managers of several companies (large employers) in Portage County and recorded. Sandwick also explored some of the available research about observed impacts of rideshare programs, and helped draft a set of survey questions (for interested companies' employees) intended to provide useful input as they explore the possibility for a company-sponsored rideshare program for their employees.

Human Development and Relationships Education - Sherry Daniels

- Continued holding virtual StrongBodies classes every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with Penny, and Hannah (Wood County) FoodWise. This will continue through August and then in person classes will begin mid-September. Currently working to get StrongBodies trained leaders back to leading classes.
- Held a RentReady training in May with 5 participants, June class had 4 participants, and the July class is scheduled for the 8th. We have placed twenty-one individuals/families in non-predatory rentals, including the last three living at the Point Motel. Plus, I work very closely with the counselors at the Hope House so many more families have got housing through their federal grant programs, after meeting with me. We had one family we placed evicted.
- In May we had our first Triple P parenting programming in Portage County. I co-lead the discussion groups, with up to 15 parents in attendance. It is a series of four 1.5-hour training sessions. Additionally, in May I was trained and accredited to teach Triple P Parenting for teenagers.
- In June I co-led the pilot Planning AHEAD (Advance directives, Home finances, Estate planning, and Arriving at Decisions for the end of this life) modules. This is a six-part training on decisions that need to be made before the end of life. We had 17 participants.

Area Director Update - Jason Hausler

Here are a few operational updates to share with you this month:

- July begins the return of our full reintegration into the physical workspace, as our organization-wide telecommuting agreements end. This transition brings us closer to Pre-COVID operations, knowing that policies and procedures are still in place to help avoid potential impacts of COVID-19 transmission within our programs.
- I have continued working with Educators and Staff in Area 7 on the Situational Analysis process. With Educators Plans of Work Due July 1st, this process has aided some in helping them prioritize work for the rest of 2021 and into 2022.
- I assisted Connie, Ken, and Denise in hiring a summer intern, Alexis Johnson, who will be assisting our office with Horticulture inquiries and 4-H programming. If you see Alexis, please welcome her.
- Budget planning for 2022 has begun with Denise and Lisa, getting ready for the budget process that will begin in July.
- The 2020 Annual Report was finalized as is being shared with you all prior to it being shared with the full board. I will be looking to secure time on the Board floor to present this in the coming months.