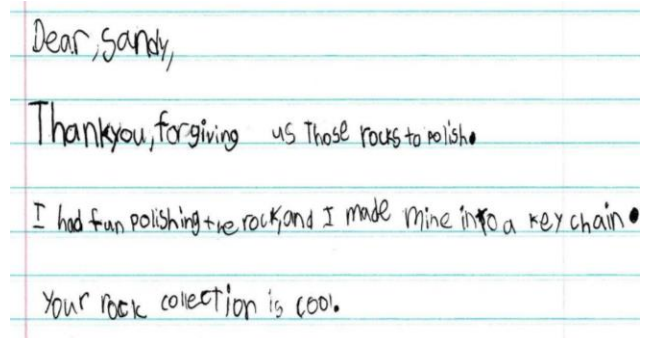


*We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.*

## 4-H – Positive Youth Development

*Connie Creighton, 4-H Youth Development Agent*

- Two training workshops for Junior Camp counselors where they learned to develop their leadership skills and to increase their understanding of how important it is to provide a safe environment for campers.
- Completed four virtual Discovering Rock workshops where over 50 participants signed up and 30 youth attended. Youth learned about polishing rocks by hand and with a rock tumbler. They gained skills in collecting rocks, working with rocks, identifying rocks, and making items using rocks. Pictured right is a thank you note we received from one of the participants.



## Agriculture

*Ken Schroeder, Agriculture Agent*



Set up the 2022 on-farm adaptive nitrogen management trials. An on-farm research project to evaluate adaptive nitrogen management strategies for field corn to reduce the environmental impact of growing corn. The goal of this project is to improve grower's understanding of N cycling such that they can implement and adapt N management practices to optimize economic return and improve efficiency of N fertilizer resulting in more sustainable corn production. Plots planted, staked out, soil samples pulled, cover crop biomass samples taken, and at-plant fertilizer applied.





Set up 2022 on-farm Potassium source and rate effects on Wisconsin hops research trials. An on-farm research project to evaluate effects of potassium rate on hop yield and quality. Data will be used to inform future updates to the University of Wisconsin Extension hop nutrient application guidelines. Fertilizer treatments applied May 19 and June 1.



Held a conservation education field day May 18th in cooperation with Farmers of Mill Creek and Portage County Land and Water Conservation Department. Thirty first graders learned about Prairies and Pollinators, groundwater and Macro Invertebrates, Soils.



Published the May Farmers for Tomorrow Watershed Council Newsletter with information about the 2022 conservation cost-share incentives, No-Tilling Vegetables, Planting Green, No-Till Corn Planter Setup, the 2021 roller/crimper project, crediting on-farm nutrients, and determining optimum nitrogen rates for corn.



## Additional Agriculture work being conducted in Portage County

- Planning for the Agriculture Education area at 2022 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days, an outdoor trade show for farmers and rural communities to increase knowledge of Extension Agriculture programs in crops and soils, dairy, farm management, livestock, and horticulture. – *Matt Lippert, Wood County Extension Agriculture Agent*
- Live radio interviews on local radio stations where the listeners learned about current agriculture programs and issues. The purpose of this effort is to increase understanding of food production systems. – *Matt Lippert, Wood County Extension Agriculture Agent*



A study to learn about how much neonicotoid pesticides from seed treatments and from field applications leach into groundwater in areas of sandy soil. Results will help WDNR regulate this class of pesticides to protect water supplies statewide and agricultural producers to design farm management practices to mitigate pesticide impacts. – *Geoffrey Siemering, Outreach Specialist, UW-Madison, Department of Soil Science*

- An interactive web-based class for novice gardeners with limited resources, where participants learned direct seeding and transplanting techniques. This effort was designed to increase awareness and knowledge of resources to address environmental contamination and pollution (due to overuse of horticulture chemicals in urban and suburban environments). – *Janell Wehr, Marathon County & Wood County Horticulture Educator*



*Denotes educational or planning efforts that work toward improving water quality in Portage County, Central Wisconsin, and the State as whole. While these efforts are highlighted in this report, there is more work being done by Extension to address water quality concerns outside of what is here. For more information about these efforts, or other efforts Extension has undertaken regarding water quality, please reach out to our office.*



## Community, Natural Resources & Economic Development

*Nathan Sandwick, Community Development Educator*

- A two-day Housing Symposium (May 16-17) that provided an opportunity for extension educators to learn from experts, practitioners and local government leaders working to address community housing issues and concerns regarding the availability of affordable housing in our communities. Sandwick attended and moderated a discussion about roles for Extension educators and had previously helped to organize the symposium and recruit knowledgeable presenters.
- Joined a roundtable discussion about WHEDA's programs to address the need for affordable housing and how well they work in rural communities. This took place in Portage County and was attended by representatives from several agencies.
- Shared information about County Officials Workshops organized by Extension and the Wisconsin Counties Association. Sandwick encouraged newly elected Portage County officials to attend any of these workshops offered in May and June and answered questions about the training.

### Additional Natural Resources work being conducted in Portage County



A study to better understand neonicotinoid concentrations in groundwater and surface water in the Central Sands Region of Wisconsin. Results from this study will help farmers, citizens, scientists, local/county/state officials, and regulatory agencies make decisions regarding water-resources. – *Michael Parsen, Hydrogeologist, UW Madison Division of Extension*

- A field trip event for Assumption Elementary first graders, where students visited three stations on the topics of agriculture, prairie, and macroinvertebrates to create learning opportunities around agriculture and natural resource conservation. – *Rachel Whitehair, Wood County Natural Resources Educator*

## FoodWise

*Kelly Hammond, Healthy Community Coordinator; Hannah Wendels & Penny Schmitt FoodWise Nutrition Educators, OPEN; Nutrition Administrator*

- Kelly Hammond is transitioning to the (new) role of Healthy Community Coordinator. Team will be hiring a new administrator position in June/July to support direct education and policy, systems, and environmental work.
- A partnership with ADRC that provides "Stockboxes for Seniors", a monthly food box service where low-income seniors can receive at least 10 pounds of pantry staples and nutritious foods. The goal of





this partnership is to promote the boxes with community partners with the overall goal to improve food security. May was the first month where Farmshed contributed local produce to supplement the boxes, with funds provided from Marshfield Clinic. See story from WSAW: <https://www.wsaw.com/2022/05/17/stockbox-program-helps-central-wisconsin-seniors/>



- Interactive Grocery Store Tours offered twice monthly at Walmart in Plover and Wisconsin Rapids to low-income families. The goal of this educational program is for participants to learn about shopping healthy on a budget, increase fruit and vegetable consumption and improve overall health.
- Start conversation with Almond School District to support a new school and community garden to encourage student involvement with growing food. Connect school with Indoor Growing Hydroponic system for student gardening and to grow lettuce for school lunches.
- Presented at Local Food Fair for Food Accessibility, where community members could take part in the panel discussion or listen to the podcast version to raise awareness of hunger and food accessibility issues in Central Wisconsin.
- Hired a “Wisconsin Idea” Intern (WIIP) to support research at Farmers Markets in Central Wisconsin. Intern Abbey Rosenthal is a Stevens Point Native and will contribute to supporting the advancement of promoting food equity at Farmers Markets.

## Human Development and Relationships

*Sherry Daniels, Human Development and Relationships Educator*

- A course for renters where participants learn how to find and apply for rental housing, understand their responsibilities as a renter, how to communicate effectively with their landlords, and manage housing expenses. Through this, homeless populations and those who have negative rental records are able to increase their ability to find and keep safe affordable housing, thereby increasing their stability and decreasing their reliance on public support.
- A program for families and individuals, where participants learn how to create financial goals and gain money management skills. The goal of this program is to enable participants to prepare for and take charge of household financial situations that occur due to changes in income or unforeseen hardships.

### **Additional Human Development and Relationships work being conducted in Portage County**

- Planning for the Human Development and Relations/Health and Wellbeing/ and Farm stress educational area at the 2022 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days, an outdoor trade show for farmers and rural communities to increase knowledge of Extension Educators' programs that will benefit the rural community members who attend the event. Through this, trade show visitors will have the information they need to sign up for programs that can help them improve their finances, manage stress, enhance their health and wellbeing, and make end-of-life decisions that ease the transition for their loved ones.  
– Nancy Vance, Clark County, Human Development and Relationships Educator



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- A series of sessions for social workers, home visitors and community agency staff where they learn about financial competency skills. The goal of this effort is to build their knowledge and confidence when engaging clients in financial conversations. – *Jackie Carattini, Wood County, Human Development & Relationships Educator*
- A 6- session wellness series (WeCOPE) for adults where participants learned different strategies that support awareness of mind-body connection. The goal of this effort is to offer skills to decrease stress and increase positive emotions of participants. – *Jackie Carattini, Wood County, Human Development & Relationships Educator*