

*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*

- 4-H Ambassadors hosted a hands-on booth at the Portage County Safety Fair in Plover. This effort was designed to introduce families to 4-H and build connections with community members in Portage County. Creighton worked with the 4-H Ambassador Advisor and the Ambassadors to develop an educational hands-on activity and informational booth at the Portage County Safety Fair in May. Ambassadors used the Plinko game to ask questions and give out prizes' youth and adults.
- Creighton worked with 4-H teens and adult leaders to update the county's 4-H Permanent Record Form after which we planned and hosted two virtual 4-H record book workshops in May. Nine of the thirteen clubs were represented at the workshops. The two workshops' targeted leaders and families that need more information on the 4-H record books and are interested in learning why it's important to keep a record of your 4-H career. Participants learned that by recording activities they can set future goals, help them apply for scholarships, and apply for jobs.
- The Portage County 4-H Tech Changemakers (TCM) program has four youth 4-H leaders that developed and presented a program providing an in-depth look on different types of Social Media. After the program the teens worked with adults providing hands-on learning for their smart phones.
- The Portage County 4-H Program received a generous donation of over 330 pieces of unpainted ceramics. Creighton worked with the 4-H ceramics leader to host two ceramics workshops at Boston School Forest one on May 17th and the other on June 7th. A fantastic response was received with over 60 4-H members signing up for the workshops. Youth & their families had a great time learning and practicing different techniques for painting ceramics.



## Agriculture

*Ken Schroeder, Agriculture Agent*

- Nitrogen Optimization Project Update - Research plots planted into green cereal rye May 11 and cover crop biomass samples taken the same day to analyze for nutrient content and total fresh and dry biomass. Corn at V2 growth stage May 30th.



- On-Farm Youth Education Field Day May 24, 2023 - 23 first grade students learned about benefits of healthy soils, the importance of prairies and pollinator plantings, and macro-invertebrates.



A Producer-Led watershed protection project for Mill Creek Watershed farmers, students, and local residents where they learn about and adopt soil and water conservation practices to reduce the environmental impact of agriculture.



A Producer-Led watershed protection project for the Tomorrow/Waupaca River Watershed farmers, agribusiness professionals, and area residents where they learn about and adopt soil and water conservation practices to reduce nitrates entering the groundwater and the overall environmental impact of agriculture.



### **Additional Agriculture work being conducted in Portage County**

- A presentation (A Berry Good Time!), for the general public hosted by Mosinee School District Community Education, where participants learned raspberry cultivation techniques, including cultivar selection, planting and maintenance. This effort is designed to increase knowledge of resources to encourage home gardeners' success. - *Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator Wood & Marathon County Extension*



## Community, Natural Resources & Economic Development

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



A social indicator survey for producers in the 10-Mile and 14-Mile Watersheds where producers participate in one-on-one interviews to share perspectives on water quality, details of production systems, and implemented conservation practices. The goal of this effort is to gain information about awareness, attitudes, constraints, capacity, and behaviors that are expected to lead to water quality improvement and protection. - *Anna James, Natural Resources Educator, Wood County Extension*

- A facilitated conversation with nonprofit leaders in Northeast Wisconsin where participants learned how to incorporate storytelling into their promotions to increase participation, funding, and volunteerism for their organization's capacity to address community needs. - *Patrick Nehring, Brown County Community Development 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.

## FoodWise

*Mallory McGivern Nutrition Administrator; Penny Schmitt, FoodWise Nutrition Educator*

- A quarterly nutrition education series in Portage & Marathon County utilizing the Feeding for Healthy Eating curriculum for adults with young children as part of the Children's Wisconsin LEAP (Learning Essentials about Parenting) program where they learn about incorporating healthy eating habits into the family routine, including family meals and eating more fruits and vegetables. The goal of this effort is to encourage healthy eating behaviors at home.
- A 12-week series of strength training sessions (StrongBodies) in partnership with Portage County ADRC, where older adults also receive nutrition and health education. Participants engage in regular strength training exercises to improve muscle strength, balance, and flexibility so they can stay healthy and socially connected.
- A 5-week nutrition education series utilizing the Show Me Nutrition curriculum for first grade classrooms at McKinley Elementary School, where students learn about MyPlate, the



five food groups, and try new fruits and vegetables. The goal of the series is for students to learn about being physically active and help them make healthy choices in school and at home.

## Human Development and Relationships

*Sherry Daniels, Human Development and Relationships Educator*

- 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.
- 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 12-session virtual series (Aging Mastery Program) for seniors, where participants learn how to navigate longer lives through healthy eating, exercise, financial fitness, healthy relationships, medication management, and community engagement. The purpose of this program is to develop sustainable behaviors that lead to improved health, stronger economic security, enhanced well-being, and increased societal participation among seniors.
- Held a training session on Making Exercise Fun to give older adults ideas and suggestions on how to get more physical activities into their daily routines to help them stay active longer.