

## Monthly Highlights

November 2020

### Agriculture



**Lyssa Seefeldt**

Agriculture Educator

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The Heart of the Farm coffee chat series, a program that targets women in agriculture, kicked off November 9. Opening speaker Jerry Apps talked about the history of Wisconsin farm women and women in agriculture. I was part of the team that recorded the meeting, making sure it was being properly transcribed for accessibility for future viewing on YouTube.

The Badger Dairy Insight program, our dairy winter series, will be starting in December 2020 and continuing through April of 2021. This program will be offered on Tuesdays from 1 - 2:30 pm. The first session on the safe operation of skid steer will be December 8. We have teamed up with other Extension agriculture professionals that intend to host winter programming to 1) not overlap when we are offering programming; 2) make registration easy to find; 3) find other programs that may be of interest to our farmers. A winter beef series and a small ruminant series will round out the livestock program offerings. More information on the upcoming winter programs can be found on the [Farm Ready Research](#) page.

This month we also started internal professional development learning circles around a selected county demographic that we would like to serve better. I'm looking forward to diving into this more. In addition to the learning circles, I participated in the UW-Madison Diversity Forum, learning about racial inequities and social justice topics. These professional development sessions help build a better understanding of current issues and foster common ground to help our communities grow and strive for more equitable futures.



**Margaret Murphy**

Horticulture Agent

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Our Master Gardener online prep class is finishing up in a couple of weeks and has been going very well. This class is not a certification class but instead a prep course for those interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer. It will prepare individuals to enroll in the newly required online onboarding class, which will be available this winter.

I will be working with Eau Claire County Area Master Gardener Volunteers to implement a mentorship program for new volunteers to keep them connected to the local programs after being trained online. We can extend this mentoring to existing volunteers who may have become withdrawn during the transition to virtual programming.

I am also working with area Master Gardeners to transition their spring gardening seminars from in-person events to a virtual event. Since this project will be virtual, we are taking a regional approach and, currently, have 7 counties involved. We are planning a series of presentations over a 4-week period.

Garden diagnostic questions continue to come in. I also continue to serve on the CVTC Horticulture Advisory Committee. We met virtually in October for the first time since spring. The advisory committee largely consists of members from the green industry. CVTC offers a broad-based Landscape, Plant & Turf Management program focused in landscape management, golf course and athletic field management, greenhouse operation and management, vegetable and fruit production, and interior landscaping.

## Health & Well-Being



**Sandy Tarter**  
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**Joy Weisner**  
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FoodWise partner agreements are returning with interest in virtual programming. We will continue to outreach and provide virtual support for partner families. This month FoodWise and Dunn ADRC hosted UW Stout Dietetic Intern Kaitlyn Niebur. This collaboration offers interns experience in working with community nutrition education.

Strong Bodies (SB): Our Tuesday/Thursday series participation has grown to over 300 registrants statewide, 125-130 attendees daily, and 22 from Eau Claire County. Pamela, Joy, and Sandy are all teaching and leading the Strong Bodies program. Kaitlyn joined our SB nutrition chats and led conversations on food safety and labels. We also invited our Mayo partner to speak on stroke prevention this month with our SB participants.

Sandy worked with Catherine Emmanuelle and Jeanne Walsh to launch our Area 6 Expanding Access Learning Circles. This will be a space for personal growth and understanding on race, ethnicity, and gender equity. Two groups (Asian/Asian American and Hispanic/Latinx) are convening for the next couple of months.

Our Market Match team has had multiple meetings to discuss the 2020 season with increased Match demands. Our donations of \$10,000 ran out and the EC Downtown Farmers Market Board thankfully stepped in to cover the deficit. We are working out a plan to reach out to more corporate and private donors for the next season. More to come on participant survey results.

Pamela and Joy have set up virtual nutrition lessons with Lakeshore 1st grade classrooms for Fridays in December. They will be using Microsoft Teams as their platform.

## Human Development & Relationships



**Yia Lor**  
Human Development & Relationships Educator  
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In October I wrapped up the “Highlights of Taking Care of You” program for individuals in Eau Claire County and all across the state. This November, I am co-facilitating another series with the HDR educator in Chippewa County, Jeanne Walsh, for men in recovery. So far, we’ve had great conversations around stress, what it does to our bodies, and mindfulness as a tool.

The Vulnerable Populations Group through the Health Department has grown significantly as we connect with more community partners to look for ways to improve access to COVID-19 testing. We continue to meet regularly to identify and address barriers to care, especially with the rising number of cases in our state. Testing sites for Eau Claire County can be found [here](#).

I continue to participate in ongoing training for Triple P and work with the Eau Claire team on virtual offerings of seminars. The Leadership Team is working on our media campaign so keep an eye out for billboards, bus advertisements, and more! Information on all of our offerings can be found on the Family Resource Center’s website [here](#).

A new initiative I’m supporting is called Youth Forward Wisconsin, which gives communities the tools to create a universal child savings account program. Our hope is this initiative will address educational disparities while supporting family stability and resiliency.

At the end of October I joined over 5,000 colleagues and students for the UW-Madison Diversity Forum where we listened to authors Robin DiAngelo and Austin Channing Brown, along with several others, address racial equity and social justice. Recordings for many sessions are [here](#). I appreciated the time to learn, connect, and reflect with those across the state and in Eau Claire, and I look forward to continuing these important conversations.

## Positive Youth Development



**Rachel Hart-Brinson**  
4-H Program Educator  
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I have been working with Luisa Gerasimo and Heidi Benson (Vanderloop) to hold our Discover 4-H Box virtual programming. Our last project night was November 12 and we held a virtual celebration on November 15. There were many wonderful pictures and lots of positive testimonials regarding the program. We will work on holding something similar in the spring.

Speaking of celebrations, we held our virtual banquet watch party via zoom. The banquet committee put together a slideshow and trivia questions. We had about 40 families in attendance. It certainly wasn't the same, but it was a celebration of the year and a recognition of lots of volunteer time and hours.

Fall Forum is a state-wide event that brings adults and youth leaders together to share ideas, activities and theory of best practices. It was held virtually this year and I helped provide tech support for several sessions. It was really fun to see the engagement and participation even though we weren't in person. And, it was wonderful that there were many more people who attended this year than would have been able to attend in person.

I am working with Luisa Gerasimo to hold a club officers training at the beginning of December. I look forward to offering this for the first time in Eau Claire County since my start.

## Community Development

Community Development

The Community Development Educator position is currently vacant. Updates shared at the 2021 budget discussions with the committee. Please contact Catherine Emmanuelle with any questions [catherine.emmanuelle@wisc.edu](mailto:catherine.emmanuelle@wisc.edu) 715-450-0823. For information on Extension's Community Development efforts see [here](#), and how Extension is responding to COVID-related work supported by Community Development Educators, see [here](#).

## Support Staff



**Kristi Peterson**  
Office Coordinator  
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My time is spent at home mostly, and I can truly say, this weather has been amazing. It is so nice to have the sun shining in my window.

County staff continue to take one furlough day each month through the end of the year.

I have spent a lot of time analyzing the Extension budget in order to provide estimates for the current fiscal year end.

I continue to aid educators in a variety of ways which is great to keep us all connected. I look forward to one day we can congregate again for a relaxed social lunch.



**Andy Heren**  
Administrative Specialist  
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November is the time for the Annual 4-H Awards Banquet. Unfortunately, like so many other things, this year's banquet is virtual. However, I have been busy getting the certificates printed and awards ordered for those who have earned them this year.

4HOnline, our registration website, has launched version 2.0 this year. As I am "Approving" people into 4-H, I am also learning the new format. There's always something new to learn!

I have embarked on a new adventure this fall. In October I started filling in as Administrative Specialist for Parks & Forest. Their position is vacant, and I am lending a hand until a new assistant is hired. It's fun learning about a different department in Eau Claire County and how it works. What I have learned most is how much I have been missing out by not enjoying the many wonderful county parks in Eau Claire County! I'll be getting a 2021 Park Pass as soon as they are available!

## Area Extension Director



**Catherine Emmanuelle**  
Area 6 Extension Director  
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We begin our last few months of the year, which, believe it or not, includes planning already for next year. Extension employees continue to primarily work from home due to Covid-related safety precautions, and primarily do virtual programming. UW-Madison announced additional furloughs for employees between January 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021, depending on salary, employees will take between 3-5 days off during that time period. Our leadership is working really hard to mitigate the unknown financial challenges, retain employees, and continue to program in partnership with our local partners, like Eau Claire County, during these challenging times. The last two years we've had an in-person all-program conference, which can't happen this year. Instead, we are transitioning to 3 virtual conference meeting dates in December. Like everyone, Extension continues to innovate and adapt to our current world.