

Waupaca County Courthouse  
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**Vision:** "A thriving, well-known and sought-ought educational resource that reflects the rich diversity of the the state."

**The purpose to which we commit...** "We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities in Waupaca County."

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## UWEX Welcomes Sherry Weise to Office



Sherry Weise,  
Program Assistant

I am very excited to be part of the team at the Waupaca County UW-Extension Office! My childhood was spent growing up on a farm in Oconto County. I attended UW-Oshkosh and earned my Bachelors Degree. I was then able to experience the east coast life style for a time as I lived in Maine and New Hampshire. My husband (Duane) and I moved to Waupaca approximately 20 years ago and have three wonderful children.

Duane owns and operates a small business which specializes in trailer maintenance, towing packages and RV service. Our oldest son, Alex, graduated from MSOE last year and is employed as a mechanical engineer. Ryan (second child) just started his freshman year at MSOE and hopes to become a software engineer. Our youngest is Nikky, who is a senior in high school, and she hopes to go into some type of engineering also. Last, but not least, we have our beautiful white German Shepard, Schanae. My favorite things? Family, friends, animals - all kinds, smiles, and kindness.

~Sherry

## Update on Connie Abert

Connie Abert continues to make progress at Craig Rehabilitation Hospital near Denver following her car accident at the end of May. Please keep her and her family in your thoughts. We enjoyed seeing many of you signing the card for her at the Waupaca County Fair. Thank you to Sue Abrahamson for recording well-wishes from fair goers. It was appreciated by Connie and her family.

If you wish to stay updated on her progress you can go to: <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/connieabert>.

Our office would like to thank so many of you for your patience and support as we learn new things and try to support the continuation of great work!

Con- Jessica and try to support the continuation of great work!  
Con- Connie's Penny Christi  
Con- Annette  
Con- Sandy Alana  
Con- Greg



## Extension Impact: Education Makes a Difference

### Blonde Develops Mobile App for Farming

Each year, an estimated 2.5 million acres of hay and haylage are harvested throughout WI. Baled hay alone accounts for \$80 to \$100 million in direct sales across this state. In Waupaca County, approximately one-third of all cropland is used for hay or haylage. As farms have and continue to grow in size, buying and selling standing hay occurs more often today than ever before between rural land owners and neighboring farms.

However, what most people don't realize, there's no established commodity market for harvested hay like there is for corn or soybeans. Finding reliable hay market information can be a challenge, and needless to say, trying to price standing hay in the field is even more difficult.



So, to help farmers, landowners and even fellow Extension Agents identify hay prices or negotiate the sale or purchase of standing hay, Waupaca County UW-Extension agriculture agent Greg Blonde helped produce a free mobile app that can quickly find hay price information. Users can also enter their own yield, cutting schedule and harvest cost information to calculate a standing value per acre. The app is free and available for Android smart phones and tablets (search for "Hay Pricing" on the Google Play Store).

"This new mobile tool will help farmers, rural landowners and even Extension Agents access the latest hay market information on the go, plus give them a simple tool to help estimate field value when buying or selling standing hay," said Blonde. The app can also be helpful to feed and crop consultants, lenders, rural appraisers and even real estate professionals. Since it was published in May, over 500 users have downloaded the app from the Google Play Store.

This is the second mobile app developed by Blonde through Smart mAPPS LLC. Last fall their first free app for pricing wet corn was released to help buyers and sellers better manage the immature corn crop. That app features a link to current local elevator bid prices, a comparative value for wet corn vs. the current dry shell corn price, as well as an adjustment for drying cost, and can also be downloaded free on the Google Play Store.



~Greg

Greg Blonde field testing his new mobile "app" for pricing hay.

- Connie Abert  
4-H Youth Development
- Jessica Beckendorf  
Community Development
- Christi Beilfuss  
WNEP Coordinator
- Greg Blonde  
Agriculture
- Sandy Liang  
Family Living
- Penny Tank  
4-H Youth Development

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## Waupaca County WNEP Expanding Their Program

Waupaca Counties Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) is currently in the process of expanding their program. The USDA Food and Nutrition Services SNAP-ED Program funding will be allocated based on the number of Food Share Participants in each county starting in Fiscal Year 2016. For Waupaca County, this means an increased budget compared to past years. Not every county in Wisconsin will be receiving a budget increase, so it is an opportunity for Waupaca County to take advantage of and be grateful for. A part-time WNEP Nutrition Educator position is in the process of being filled in Waupaca County which will allow for Waupaca County to grow and expand their program.

In 2008 when Waupaca County’s Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) was established the program was made up of one individual who had a dual role of Coordinator and Educator. Since then there has only been one person representing WNEP in Waupaca County, limiting the number of teaching events and overall learners reached. Adding a part-time educator to the WNEP team in Waupaca County will nearly double the number of learner contacts within the first year alone.



~Christi

## Local Research on Community Needs

During her first year with Extension, in an effort to develop relationships in Waupaca County, understand community assets and needs, and develop an appropriate educational response, Community Development Educator Jessica Beckendorf designed a research process that could be modified to obtain input via interviews and/or other means. The process included key informant interviews, consisting of three questions, as well as input from meeting and event participants. The key informant interviews included a question about community assets and a question which asked for the interviewee to recommend other people in the community to interview. The input received in writing and via discussion at meetings/ events generally included one question regarding community needs. Overall, over 100 people answered the following question: “What issues are facing our communities?”

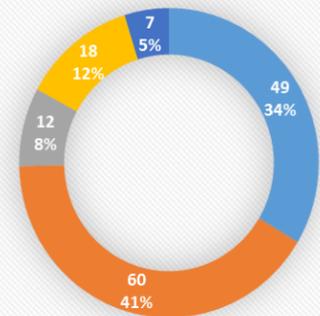
The answers were analyzed and grouped into five categories: community development, economic development, government, health, and natural resources. These initial results point to issues of community development as being the top concern among those responding to the question, with issues of economic

development as the next highest concern. Issues of government, health, and natural resources follow, respectively. The five highest scoring specific issues were drug & alcohol issues, workforce development, community partnership & collaboration, living wage job opportunities/ financial resilience, and workforce attraction.

This is an ongoing process – it will initially be continued through the rest of 2015, and the results will be used to help shape educational program focus areas.

~Jessica

What are the issues facing our communities?



■ Economic Development ■ Community Development ■ Health ■ Government ■ Natural Resources

## Building Bridges Across Communities

Waupaca County’s Latino population has increased significantly over the past decade and is continuing to grow. According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey, 19% of Latinos live in poverty. Yet, language barriers and lack of trust or knowledge of community services may mean that resources are being underutilized by Latino families. Furthermore, there are few opportunities for celebrating diversity and culture in the county.

In response, the Family Living Educator obtained a grant to begin a project called “Building Bridges Across Communities”, using best practices to drive the direction of the project. Research suggests that involvement from Latino families is linked to their personal values, emphasis on informal learning opportunities and social networks. Goals of the project involve establishing trust, finding leaders within the Latino/Hispanic community, and on leveraging the talent and expertise of existing groups/events to host family-centered events. This may mean future bilingual play groups, education at the family resource center, etc. The purpose of these events are two-fold: 1) celebrating the richness of diversity and culture and 2) to use this opportunity to connect Latino/Hispanic families to available resources in Waupaca County.

The Family Living Educator has been working with CAP Services and Child Care Resource & Referral to begin Phase I. This phase includes focus groups, informal networking and formation of a county workgroup to have a better understanding of needs, strengthen connections and increase potential impact of this project. Phase II involves program implementation and Phase III focuses on evaluation and next steps.

~Sandy

## Waupaca County 4-H Sponsors County Fair Themed Day Camp

Day Camp was held on July 18<sup>th</sup> at the Waupaca County Fairgrounds. Twenty -six youth grades K-4 attended and eleven older youth volunteered to serve as counselors (last year we had only three counselors). Eight additional youth and adults led sessions and helped throughout the day. For the older youth, this is a great leadership opportunity and preparation for being a summer camp counselor in future years. The theme this year revolved around things that are a part of the County Fair. Some 4-H Ambassadors brought their 4-H project animals to talk about - including a calf, lamb, goat, rabbits, and cat. They explained to the campers how they take care of their animals and what to do to prepare for judging at the fair. Two youth led a scavenger hunt around the fairgrounds. Jean Oberstadt, Americorps Farm to School member, taught a vegetable session with help from 4-H Ambassador Emily Bauer. They talked about how to pick vegetables to bring to the fair, what the judges are looking for, and the campers then designed animals out of various vegetables. For the craft project this year, the campers made cement stepping stones. A highlight for many was the “carnival” games manned by the youth counselors. Campers played games such as a bean bag toss, milk can toss, spin the wheel for a prize, ring the cones, and more and they earned tickets for prizes. The youth did an excellent job as counselors and session leaders and Day Camp went extremely well!

~Penny

