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Meet Chris Viau!  
*Chris Viau*

"The Extension story is about people- those who teach and those who learn...  
The People Came First, by Jerry Apps

Greetings, I am Chris Viau, the new Area Extension Director for Area 10, serving Extension-Waupaca County. As the Area Extension Director for Calumet, Outagamie, Waupaca, and Winnebago Counties, I support Extension staff to continue the story of learners and teachers through Extension programs. My role is to provide leadership and management of administrative and staff resources allowing Extension educators to focus on bringing educational programs to the citizens of our communities. I look forward to utilizing my 15+ years of experience as an Extension educator to support both the teachers and the learners.



You will notice that there some color and logo changes that have been made to align with our transition to our new administrative home at UW-Madison. While our colors have changed to cardinal red there is no change in our focus and educational mission. Our work in Extension is done by leveraging resources, building partnerships, and bringing the research of the university to the people of Waupaca County through our outreach education initiatives.

I look forward to continuing the great partnership that is here in Waupaca County. Feel free to connect with me in the Extension office, through email ([chris.viau@wisc.edu](mailto:chris.viau@wisc.edu)) or by phone 715-937-4381.

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- Jessica Beckendorf  
Community Development
- Greg Blonde  
Agriculture
- Christi Gabrilksa  
FoodWise
- Sandy Liang  
Human Development & Relationships
- Penny Tank  
4-H Youth Development
- Chris Viau  
Area Extension Director
- Support Staff:  
Dana Nelson & Annette Spieth
- Extension Committee:  
Darrell Handrich, Bob Ellis,  
Jim Nygaard, Bernie Ritchie,  
Dick Rohan

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Extension Impact:  
Education Makes a Difference

Close to 300 Attend 4-H Super Saturday Project Day  
*Penny Tank*

“Fun for the whole family,” is what one participant shared about Super Saturday held on February 23, 2019. Tank leads a committee of 15 youth and adult volunteers to coordinate this annual 4-H event. Super Saturday is the largest project training held throughout the 4-H year with over 40 classes offered and taught by both youth and adults. Three objectives for the event are for:

- Members, leaders, and parents to increase project knowledge or learn about an unknown area;
- Participants to share what they learn with their club or other project members;
- Youth and adults to work in partnership

Over 180 youth and adults registered for 3 classes each including animal areas, leathercraft, bread making, glass etching, nature tracks, fly tying, woodworking, crafts, and more. New volunteer training is also included in the class selection and Tank trained 13 individuals to be 4-H volunteers. In addition to the 180 registered participants are the teachers for the 40+ classes and over 90 parents indicating they would stay to assist and work with their children.

All evaluations indicated that the material was presented in a way that could be easily understood. Participants were also asked what they found most valuable about Super Saturday and a sampling of responses included:

- “Fun sample classes – new experiences not normally available”
- “Liked the hands-on experience of doing a project”
- “Seeing other kids from different clubs, seeing the smiles on our club’s kid’s faces”
- “Being included in a team, the opportunity to learn a new skill from someone who is knowledgeable in that area”
- “The older youth helped young youth with projects”
- “The opportunity to learn something new and create a fair project”



There is a small fee to participate in Super Saturday. Supply and snack costs are also supported by the Waupaca County 4-H Leaders’ Association, Waupaca County Dairy Promotion, and Thrivent. Included are photos from Super Saturday.





## Mindfulness Workshops Give Participants Tools to Improve Overall Health

*Sandy Liang*

This past winter, the mindfulness workshop series, “Taking Care of You: Body, Mind and Spirit” (TCY) took place at the newly opened Waupaca Recovery Center. The center is in downtown Waupaca and offers workshops for individuals and families. It is a place where people in recovery can go to develop various life skills and strengthen their support circle.

TYC is a research-based workshop that offers practical strategies and experiences to help people deal with stress and challenges in healthy ways, including mindfulness practices. The 4-week series featured a different topic each week, focused on healthy ways to cope with stress. Managing life’s challenges in healthy ways allows them to take better care of themselves and their overall health.



Evaluations comparing before and after awareness showed that all participants increased awareness of how stress affects their thoughts, the importance of living by their values, and how mind/body/spirit are connected. When asked about their stress management strategies before the workshops, many shared at least 1 behavioral change they planned to make because of the workshops:

*“Thank you for helping me realize how I miss the little joys in everyday life. I want to take more time each day to breathe and use my breath as my anchor like when driving.”*

*“I liked the body relaxation exercise. I have trouble relaxing when angry and want to work on this.”*

Due to positive feedback, plans are underway to explore other groups that may benefit from this curriculum.

## Putting a Focus on Personal & Community Leadership Development

*Jessica Beckendorf*



Across the county, you might know me as the person that runs Leadership Waupaca County (LWC). And you’d be right, although I don’t do it alone – I have tremendous support from a talented program assistant, and valuable input from the diverse group of community stakeholders that make up the LWC steering committee.

What you might not know is that I regularly get engaged in other leadership development opportunities. Some of these opportunities are related to personal leadership development and communication, such as when I facilitate Real Colors personality temperament workshops, VIA Character Strengths/Strengthsfinder workshops, conflict management workshops, or Emotional Intelligence workshops.

Some opportunities are related to Community Leadership development, such as facilitating difficult conversations, helping community groups come up with mission/vision/values/strategies, or consulting with organizations on board issues (i.e. burnout). Or opportunities like when I partnered with the Waupaca Public Library on hosting a series of discussions aimed at practicing civility.

The common thread through all of this work to encourage more open and inclusive engagement as citizen leaders in Waupaca County - because communities are most effective for the citizens when the citizens actively engage within their community – with local politics, with associations and charities, with volunteerism, with personal interests, and with each other.

**“Communities are most effective for the citizens when the citizens actively engage within their community.”**

## Cow College 2019

*Greg Blonde*

More than 60 farmers and Ag professionals attended the annual Cow College program in Clintonville (two classroom sessions) and dairy farm tour near Manawa. Classroom presentations featured UW-Madison dairy lactation specialist Dr. Laura Hernandez (The Mammary Gland During Transition); Dr. Phil Cordosa, Dairy Nutrition specialist from the University of Illinois (Impacts of Feeding on Dairy Cow Health, Performance, and Fertility during Transition), as well as Dairy Farm Employee Protocols by new Extension colleague Amber O’Brien (Calumet Co Agriculture educator).

In addition to a hands-on udder dissection demonstration in the classroom (see photo), a farm tour of two new dairy facilities near Manawa provided a real-world, first-hand experiential learning opportunity for the participants. Both farms features mechanical tunnel ventilation and new milking systems (one with six robots milking 360 cows). Dr. Dave Kammel, UW-Madison Ag Facilities Engineer, was the guest speaker following the farm tour with a discussion about current and future dairy cattle housing trends.

The Cow College program evaluations showed participants increased their knowledge or understanding about dairy farm employee management(+26%); mammary gland development from dry cow through early lactation (+40%), and different feeding strategies for both dry and early lactation cows to improve herd health maximize profit (+65%). Moreover, most participants (78%) indicated the Cow College information was relevant and useful as well.



*Dr. Laura Hernandez, UW-Madison Dairy Scientist (bottom) and her graduate student (top) dissect dairy cow udders to show how modern dairy cows are able to produce over 100 lbs/cow/day and what dairy farmers can do to improve and protect their main source of income*

## FoodWise Hires Healthy Communities Coordinator

*Christi Gabrielska*

Waupaca County FoodWise is among three FoodWise programs in the state to add a Healthy Communities Coordinator to their team. FoodWise is a federally funded program that aims to advance healthy eating habits, active lifestyles and healthy community environments for low-income families through nutrition education at the individual, community and systems levels.



Hannah Phillips began her role with FoodWise in January 2019. In addition to Waupaca County, Hannah serves Outagamie, Winnebago and Calumet Counties. Hannah is a Certified Health Education Specialist with a Bachelor's Degree in Community Health Education from UW-La Crosse. Before attending UW-La Crosse, Hannah studied anthropology at UW-Fox Valley. Hannah previously worked as a health educator at the Fond du Lac County Health Department and as the coordinator of the Healthiest Manitowoc County Substance Abuse Prevention coalition. Hannah’s work in Waupaca County will include supporting communities and organizations with changes to policies, systems, and environments that make healthy eating and active living easier for people with limited income in Waupaca County.

We are excited to have Hannah on board and look forward to expanding our outreach in Waupaca County.