



A newly published children's book is available now.

Extension Connection

Monthly Highlights – September 2014

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Find Out Who the *Badger State Buddies* Are!

There is a special opportunity during this Wisconsin 4-H Centennial year to market 4-H in a unique manner. 4-H clubs across the state are invited to use the newly published *Badger State Buddies* children's book and get it into the hands of children and their parents in every community. 4-H clubs will be donating a copy to schools and public libraries in their county. Clubs who visit schools or do a promotional display will find the "Buddies" are an easy way to tell the 4-H story. Additionally, October is "Wisconsin 4-H Reads" month. 4-H members will see themselves in the adventures of *Badger State Buddies* as the characters plan a community presentation, help out during a flood, welcome new members, and work on various projects.

Digging Deeper questions at the back of the book fit with the experiential learning model. After members read the book, they reflect with their club or family members what they learned.

Highlights of the publication

- Features communities around the state – i.e. Fond du Lac, LaCrosse, Baraboo, Wausau and more
- Characters represent diversity of race/ethnicity, gender, language, and interests
- Wisconsin history is highlighted in stories from grandparents, lessons at the children's school, and during road trips
- Visit <http://fonddulac.uwex.edu/bsb/> for club activity plans, posters, Wisconsin 4-H Reads month, other tools and an order form
- 80 pages, illustrated, paperback, 3rd & 4th grade reading level
- Cost: \$6.00; \$1 from each book supports the Wisconsin 4-H Foundation, no charge for shipping

Written by Noreen O'Brien, Fond du Lac resident; Resources developed by O'Brien and Denise Retzleff, 4-H Youth Development Educator; Funding provided through University of Wisconsin-Extension East-Metro Region Resource Management Grant

Creating Jobs through Entrepreneurship

In this post-recession economy, local people creating local jobs are increasingly important to the economy. According to the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and author Richard Florida, during the first year of the recovery nationally the "largest employers shed over 1 million more jobs [while the] smallest employers created 6.8 million jobs..." Building an entrepreneurial culture is also key to retaining young people. The Center for Rural Entrepreneurship surveys show that 40-60% of rural young people would like to live a rural lifestyle, but many do not think it will be possible with their interests and job prospects. Communities which inspire start-ups are able to retain and attract people of all ages and keep their communities thriving.

To strengthen the entrepreneurship culture locally, UW-Extension has joined the Fond du Lac County Economic Development Corporation (FCEDC), ADVOCAP, and other business development partners in the following actions:

- Formalize collaboration through the IGNITE! entrepreneurship services network (launching September 17). Entrepreneurs and existing business owners will now have access to more resources and more coordination to get them what they need, faster.
- Teach the *Going Solo* workshop series, an introduction to starting a business for anyone who has considered it. During the 4-5 weeks of the class, participants play a risk-free simulation game which recreates real life scenarios and competition. Participants also meet business development professionals from IGNITE! and learn what their next steps are to launching their own venture.
- Initiate a needs assessment process to learn more about the area's African-American, Asian, Latino, Native American, and immigrant entrepreneurs. UW-Extension will interview willing business owners in the fall of 2014 to discover the keys to their success and if there's anything IGNITE! partners can do to help them grow further.
- Inform area residents about the possibilities for entrepreneurship in the area by inviting successful business owners to share their experiences and offering incentives for aspiring entrepreneurs to continue their process through a grant received from UW-Extension regional funds.

If you have an idea for a business or would like feedback on your plans so far, feel free to contact UW-Extension.

Maturity Concerns at the Forefront of Fall Harvest

A late spring planting, persistent June rains, and a cooler than normal growing season have culminated into very late-maturing corn and soybean crops in Fond du Lac County. Maturity concerns have been addressed both in writing and throughout the summer at Extension educational events. A twilight meeting was held in late-July for the Dodge-Fondy Corn Growers where management concerns for a slow maturing crop were discussed along with some of the crop diseases of special significance. The annual Agronomy Field Day was attended by over 100 farmers in late-August and three different educational sessions (seven speakers) were held to further talk about maturity issues along with other crop management and marketing topics.

For four consecutive Tuesdays in September whole plant corn samples are being processed and tested for moisture to help farmers determine optimum harvest dates. This process didn't begin until September 9th, one of the latest starts we've ever had.

As a side note, it has been a good alfalfa year. This was needed following two horrific growing seasons for alfalfa. Four county fields that are being monitored for yield have done very well (4.5 to 6.3 tons per acre).

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