



Extension Connection

Monthly Highlights – July 2015

4-H Summer Camp

- [4-H Camp is Children Having Fun and so Much More](#)
- [Well Water User Survey Coming Soon](#)
- [Home Food Preservation](#)

4-H Camp is Children Having Fun and so Much More

When you wander into 4-H camp you see smiles, hear excited voices, watch children engaged in a variety of hands-on activities, and feel the energy of young people. In addition to the 65 enthusiastic campers there are 10 counselors. These are teens who have already put a great deal of time into camp before it even started.

Six months prior to camp those wanting to be camp counselors complete an application and are interviewed. We are looking for young people who will accept responsibility, work well with others, relate to younger children, and have a positive attitude. Those who are selected participate in a training where they learn about handling a variety of camp situations, safety, and working with children of different ages and abilities.

Then camp planning begins, menus are developed, craft projects are selected, schedules are determined, specific camp roles are delegated to counselors, supply lists are written, transportation is arranged, and promotion is carried out.

Finally it is camp time. Counselors are teaching activities, keeping track of schedules, paying attention to the needs of campers, leading games, organizing sports, and getting campers to meals and bed on time.

In a post-camp self-evaluation, counselors discussed skills they most improved upon because of serving as a counselor. They listed decision-making, positive attitude, role modeling, self-confidence, teaching, and dealing with a variety of situations. One counselor wrote, "I dealt with a lot of things I didn't have to before. I learned new ways to handle things." Another wrote they served as a role model and learned that when you set a good example, others will follow it.

Yes, 4-H camp is fun. It is also an opportunity to build long lasting skills in the teens who apply for, plan, and oversee the program.

Well Water User Survey Coming Soon

Do you have your own drinking water well? If so, you may receive a survey in the mail soon asking your thoughts on well water safety and the availability of information to help you manage it. We want to know what information is most useful and what additional resources or services would be beneficial. The results will be used to evaluate the County's educational programming for rural residential well owners.

The Fond du Lac County Health Department, Code Enforcement, Land Conservation, and UW-Extension departments have worked together for many years to educate county residents about well water safety and best practices for maintaining safe drinking water. We offer township-wide testing programs, fund well abandonment projects, monitor septic systems, operate the drinking water testing lab, respond to residents' questions, and do site visits as needed to monitor and sample after contamination events. This evaluation of our efforts is funded by a 2015-2016 grant from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.

The survey will be mailed to a random selection of addresses in the county as well as to all addresses in the Town of Bryon. The survey is being administered by the Survey Research Center at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls. It is four pages in length and will take 10 - 15 minutes to fill out. People who return the survey by the deadline will be entered into a drawing to win a free well water test. Results will be anonymous and reported only in summary form.

If you have questions about the survey, contact Diana Tscheschlok at 920/929-3173 or visit <http://fonddulac.uwex.edu>.

For questions about wells and water sampling, contact Gloria Smedema in the Fond du Lac County Health Department at 920/929-3085.

For questions about wells or septic systems, contact Wendy Giese in the Fond du Lac County Code Enforcement office, 920/929-3139, ext. 3.

For questions about well abandonment, contact Paul Tollard in the Land and Water Conservation Department, 920/923-3033, ext. 119.

Home Food Preservation

While there is a resurgence in home food preservation, there is also a growing awareness and concern about food safety. Improper canning methods, unsanitary food handling and/or untested recipes can result in food spoilage and the presence of bacteria, viruses, molds and parasites in shelf foods. Specifically, E. coli in high acid foods (fruits, tomatoes) and clostridium botulinum/botulism in low acid foods (vegetables, meats) are of greatest concern. These possibly life threatening food-borne illnesses are highly preventable. The role of UW-Extension is to provide the most current, research based knowledge in home food preservation and food safety. Amanda Miller, Family Living Educator, is currently offering canning demonstrations at the farmers market and hands-on canning classes at the UW-Extension office. In addition to class offerings, Miller also serves as a resource for anyone with canning questions, concerns or testing of dial gauge pressure canners. More than 50 canners in Fond du Lac County have already benefited from UW-Extension resources.

Extension Connection Contributors:

Denise Retzleff, 4-H Youth Development Educator

Diana Hammer Tscheschlok, Community Resource Development Educator

Amanda Miller, Family Living Educator/WNEP Coordinator

Fond du Lac County UW-Extension

400 University Drive, AE-227, Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Phone: (920) 929-3170; Fax: (920) 929-3181

Hearing Impaired Relay: 711

<http://fonddulac.uwex.edu>



An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA requirements.

