



**4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**  
EMPOWERING YOUTH TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL, LEARNING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CARING ADULTS..... 2



**AGRICULTURE/NATURAL RESOURCES & HORTICULTURE**  
PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND SUPPORTING A BEAUTIFUL AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT ..... 3



**FAMILY LIVING & NUTRITION**  
ENHANCING COMMUNITY EFFORTS & RELATIONSHIPS THAT PROMOTE FAMILY WELL-BEING..... 4

# UW Extension

14200 WASHINGTON AVENUE  
STURTEVANT, WI 53177  
PHONE: (262) 886-8460 TTY: RELAY 711  
FAX: (262) 886-8489  
<http://racine.uwex.edu>



**RACINE COUNTY  
2007 ANNUAL REPORT**

# Community focus

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF RACINE COUNTY FAMILIES AND PLANTING THE SEEDS FOR A SECURE FUTURE.

*Strong families are the roots of strong communities. In 2007, Racine County Cooperative Extension offered programming on affordable housing, nutrition, youth development, parenting and managing environmental resources.*

## Local voices define future programming

This past year, the Racine County Cooperative Extension educators and staff initiated focused discussions with citizens and community leaders, and sought feedback from program partners to learn what residents of Racine County identify as areas of need throughout our communities.

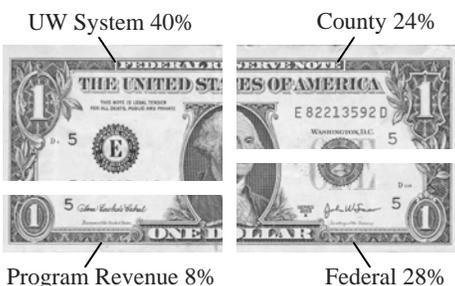
While much of what was learned has been used to plan our work for the next few years, it was rewarding to hear that the efforts and successes from 2007 were also valued.

2007 was the year of breaking through barriers and developing opportunities. Through cooperative programming and strengthening partnerships, UW-Extension expanded access to educational resources by removing barriers.

Whether it was by utilizing technology as a tool to effectively deliver information and

educational resources; or putting farmers in touch with local restaurants to broaden markets for agriculture; or partnering with community leaders to address juvenile delinquency or evaluate opportunities and barriers to youth programming -- Racine County Cooperative Extension educators worked to bring the knowledge and resources of the University of Wisconsin System to address needs of Racine County.

Cooperative partnerships are key to promoting economic, environmental and social advancement in this information rich, global society. And, it is Cooperative Extension's vision to promote additional collaborations in order to provide maximum access to research, resources and knowledge for those who live and work in Racine County.



## FUNDING EXTENSION EFFORTS

The shared investment between the University of Wisconsin System, the Federal Government and the County of Racine has established an infrastructure which brings university educators into contact with county residents where they live and work. This collaboration also leverages volunteers, grants, expertise from university specialists and additional funding for local initiatives. In addition to the core investment, **educators obtained direct funding valued at \$440,059 for local programs.** Of this amount, the Racine Kenosha Nutrition Education Program attracted \$268,359 in additional federal funds due to local partners providing in-kind match. Additional grants and donations totalled \$172,700.

## 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Tracy Strother  
4-H Youth Development Educator

Linda Lueder  
4-H Youth Development  
Program Assistant

7,685 Educational Contacts

### CLUBS

- Burlington Back 40, Burlington
- Burlington North Stars, Burlington
- Caldwell Busy Bees, Mukwonago
- Clever Clovers, Racine
- Clover View Waterford
- Country View, Waterford
- Kan-Do Kansasville
- Norway 4-H, Wind Lake
- Racine Restless Riders, Racine
- Raymond 4-H Raymond
- Raymond Trail Blazers, Franksville
- Rising Stars, Union Grove
- Sturtevant 4-H Sturtevant
- Sunnyside 4-H, Kansasville
- Tucker 4-H, Racine
- Yorkville 4-H, Yorkville
- 4H-4HIM, Franksville
- 4-H Faithful Finishers, Racine



*I pledge...*

*my **Head** to clearer thinking  
my **Heart** to greater loyalty  
my **Hands** to larger service  
and my **Health** to better living  
for my club, my community,  
my country and my world.*

## Helping youth prepare to become tomorrow's leaders

Belonging, Exploring, Learning and Leading are the stages a youth member goes through during the 4-H experience. Over **700 families** were involved in 4-H during 2007, with **300 adult volunteers** working with **967 youth**.

Through 4-H, youth acquire the experience and develop the skills to become effective leaders. The most visible 4-H group is the Racine County 4-H Ambassadors. This group of 16 youth represents Racine County 4-H and promote programs while serving as role models.

A highlight of 2007 was the Racine County Avian Quiz Bowl team, which took first place at the state competition, and represented Wisconsin at the National Competition in Louisville, Kentucky. The team finished second at the national level, and

brought home a wealth of knowledge to share with other poultry project members.

2007 also was the year the State Tractor Competition was held in Racine County. With the future of the state competition in question, Kirk Weese, a Racine County 4-H leader, accepted the challenge of organizing and hosting the competition for the state. Following its success, the state competition will return to the Racine County Fair Grounds in 2008.

The service that 4-H families provide to local communities cannot be overstated. For example: a number of clubs secured grant funding or donations for community service projects that reached over 1,500 individuals throughout the county.

## AFTERSCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

*4-H Afterschool offers safe, healthy, enriching environments that enhance social, emotional, physical, and academic success.*



The 4-H Youth Development Educator spent a significant amount of time in 2007 evaluating opportunities and barriers for youth to be engaged in out-of-school-time activities. UW-Extension hosted trainings for afterschool providers and assumed a leadership role in the SE-Region of the Wisconsin Afterschool Network (WAN). Grant dollars funded advocacy training and the start to a local afterschool program provider network. The primary afterschool partnership is with Racine Unified's Lighted Schoolhouse, which introduced 4-H to over 400 youth. But, in the summer of 2007, a pilot program supported by an Americorp\*VISTA volunteer provided afterschool care and enrichment for 15 students enrolled in the Burlington Area School District summer school.

# Connecting Farmers & Chefs throughout Southeast Wisconsin

*To maintain a competitive edge, some farmers are choosing to direct market their products, including selling directly to restaurants.*

While it is true that marketing to restaurants can be a viable option for farmers looking for direct sales opportunities, there are some unique aspects of selling to chefs that farmers must be aware of.

SWFFN (Southeast Wisconsin Farm and Food Network), a collaboration of agencies including UW-Cooperative Extension, Slow Food Wisconsin Southeast and Town and Country RC&D have been working for several years on the issue of direct sales to institutions.

A North Central Risk Management grant, written by Agriculture Educator Rose Skora, provided for educational programming

in 2007 which was specifically aimed at farmers and chefs in a five county area (Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine, Walworth and Waukesha).

In addition to the direct connections made between farmers and local chefs, a series of educational programs were offered during the year. Approximately 60 people attended "Putting Your Farm on the Menu," which offered a panel of farmers and chefs and information on food safety. Interpreting services were provided to Hmong participants who attended this program.

Two additional on-farm programs titled "Back to the Land" were offered that focused on educating chefs about

farming practices as well as introducing participants to the different flavors of farm-fresh products.

The final program for 2007 was the Farmer/Chef Connection where local farmers who are working with local restaurants were showcased, and participants talked about how to buy and sell to each other.

This series of workshops exposed nearly 100 local farmers and chefs to the Southeast Wisconsin Farm and Food Network, and helped to broaden and strengthen local farm-to-restaurant markets. It also identified a number of barriers to be addressed before some businesses are able to buy directly from local farms.

## AGRICULTURE

Rose Skora,  
Agriculture Educator  
504 Educational Contacts



**79%** of the participants of the "Putting Your Farm on the Menu" workshop said that they **would begin marketing to restaurants**

**85%** stated that they had **identified changes they need to make in their farming operations** in order to successfully sell to restaurants.

**Connected 100** area farmers & chefs to growing farm-to-restaurant markets

# Master Gardeners partner with area youth, businesses to enhance Racine Zoological Gardens

*Every week from April through October, Master Gardener Volunteers meet to plan, prepare and maintain Zoo grounds and gardens*



Drawing over 100,000 visitors each year, the Racine Zoological Gardens bloom from the support received from the Master Gardener Volunteers. In 2007, 33 volunteers contributed 855 hours at the Zoo preparing 20 large beds. In addition to helping care for the Zoo grounds, Master Gardeners provide educational support and direction for youth groups and area business groups that visit the Zoo.



Racine-Kenosha Master Gardener Association members assumed responsibility for 32 educational and support activities in the two counties during 2007. Several new projects were started this year, including a day-long garden seminar called "Spring into Gardening," which attracted 140 participants.

Other projects supported this year include: a beautification project at the Racine County Visitors and Convention Bureau; Historical gardens at DeKoven Foundation; Green Works Horticulture Therapy; Youthful Friends; Hospice Meditation Garden and "No Mow Areas" in the Town of Norway to develop native planting areas that are also used for youth education.

The Racine-Kenosha Master Gardener Association had 143 active members in 2007, and 27 new interns completed their initial volunteer and certification requirements.

## HORTICULTURE

Patti Nagai  
Horticulture Educator  
5,683 Educational Contacts



In 2007 Racine-Kenosha Master Gardeners volunteered...

**826 hours** in youth horticulture education

**2,226 hours** in local community education

**5,649 hours** in direct support services

and participated in **4,092 hours** of continuing education

## FAMILY LIVING

Bev Baker,  
Family Living Educator/Dept. Head

Barbara Stoffel-Emde,  
Family & Community Educator

Tina Ginner,  
Early Care & Education  
Training Coordinator

Suzanne Dennik,  
Consumer & Housing  
Education Coordinator

*2,866 Educational Contacts*

Additional Programming

**Burlington ABC Project—  
“Apple Seeds”**

**Touchpoints Project—  
Early childhood social  
emotional development**

**Family Resource Directory**

**Money Conference**

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Tonya Evans  
Nutrition Education Administrator  
(7 Educators, 2 Program Assistants)

*12,353 Educational Contacts*

Number of Learners  
by type of contact

**365 Learn-while-you wait**

**4,410 Multi-Session Group**

**1,082 One-Time Group**

**1,563 Adult Learners**

**4,295 Youth Learners  
17-years of age or younger**

Partnerships include:

**School Districts, YMCA, Job  
Center, Afterschool Programs,  
Senior Meal Sites, Family  
Resource Centers, Head Start,  
Food Pantries, Sheltered  
Housing, Treatment Programs,  
Drop-In Center for  
Developmentally Challenged**

## Parenting newsletter available on-line

Which car seat is best for your newborn? How can your baby learn to sleep through the night? Is it all right to let your baby sleep with you at night?

Answers to these and many other questions facing new parents are part of the University of Wisconsin-Extension's month-by-month newsletter, *Parenting the First Year*, a guide to a baby's first 12 months of the child's life.



This free newsletter arrives each month, just in time to address new topics about baby's growth and parenting issues.

And, Racine County is the first county in Wisconsin to offer this newsletter via e-mail. Parents can opt to receive the newsletter electronically by registering on-line at [www.racineparentnews.org](http://www.racineparentnews.org).

In 2007, Barbara Stoffel-Emde led an Advisory Team that included partners from the City of Racine Health Department, Caledonia/Mt. Pleasant Health Department, Next Generation Now and Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare. The United Way of Racine County and Kiwanis Club-West Racine provided financial assistance to bring this vital information to Racine families at no cost.

The 12-part newsletter addresses issues such as: how to feed and wean your baby, how to prevent choking, and what differences to expect in premature infants. Each issue of the newsletter corresponds with a different month in a child's life, from infancy to the first birthday.

*Plans are underway to add the Spanish version along with “Parenting the Second and Third Year,” which follows a child's development through toddlerhood.*

## NUTRITION EDUCATION RESPONDS TO GROWING DIVERSITY IN COUNTY

The UW-Extension Racine/Kenosha Nutrition Education Program is a two-county collaborative effort coordinated out of Next Generation Now at Mound Avenue in Racine.

In 2007, nutrition educators reached a diverse audience, with Hispanic/Spanish-speaking learners accounting for 33 percent of the program participants; a growth from 27 percent in 2006. This increase in the percentage supports the need for bilingual educators to ensure programs are responsive to the growing Hispanic community.

Nutrition Education using MyPyramid was provided to 3,282 school age children 5 to 13 years of age during the school day. The school staff finds value in the information provided and many remarked that they consistently saw a change in the snacks that the children would bring to class after having nutrition education.

Meal sites throughout Racine County hosted programs. At one site, 24 seniors took part in a four-week program. At the conclusion of the session, seniors stated they changed the way they handle food at home. One participant said that she called her



daughter to ask her to stop thawing food in the sink all day.

At a child care center, women learned about reading food labels, adding more fruits and vegetables to daily menus, ways to stretch the food dollar, and planning ahead. As a result, participants increased consumption of whole grains and vegetables, increased exercise, improved food safety and began to read food labels. The women referred an additional 15 people into the program, and began meeting outside of the program to support each other in making better food choices.

# Connecting early care and education staff with families

*“Connecting with Families” provided tools to build relationships through effective communication.*

Most training for early care and education staff typically focuses on helping children to grow and learn. Too often, staff may concentrate their efforts almost exclusively on the child, as if children arrived at the center without a family, neighborhood, or culture.

The “Connecting with Families” 10-hour training, facilitated by Tina Ginner, Quad Counties Early Care and Education Training Coordinator, helped staff practiced strategies to help both children and their families thrive.

Staff members analyzed their room arrangements and identified ways to help families feel welcome in their children’s environment. Through relationship-building exercises, they discovered how to really get to know parents, which in turn made their work-life more rewarding. By strengthening communication skills, conversations around difficult issues became easier. The last session focuses on optimizing outcomes, both ethically and professionally.

In Racine County staff from 12

centers and 19 family home programs participated in the training, while 325 participants from the Quad Counties benefited from the sessions. Evaluations showed a 95% increase in knowledge of family connections programming as a result of the training. Seventy-three percent of participants reported a greater commitment to involving families in their programs.

One director of a center noted, *“My staff has really taken this training to heart! They are making changes in their classroom and I have heard them speaking differently to the families when the children are being picked up at night.”*

Another director said, *“We made our entrance more welcoming to the families. There are no more questions of where to go to find the director or the office. I didn’t realize how one little change could make such a difference!”*



Participants experience impact of disorganization on families.

## JUVENILE DELINQUENCY SEMINAR CONNECTS COMMUNITY

UW-Extension Family Living Educator/Department Head, Bev Baker, and Americorps\*VISTA Nicole Baker, along with the Racine County Human Services Department, convened a team to pilot a seminar about preventing juvenile delinquency by aligning practice with proven principles. Dr. Stephen Small and other UW-Extension/UW-Madison specialists chose Racine County as one of three pilots for the Office of Justice Assistance grant.

The local planning team included a Circuit Court Judge, a Deputy District Attorney, a County Board Supervisor, the Racine Truancy Committee chair, and staff from Racine Unified School District, United Way of Racine County, Professional Services Group, Heart-to-Heart Mentoring, and Mentor Kenosha Racine.

The three key goals identified by the planning team were communication, collaboration and prevention. The team localized the seminar by expanding to a full-day including a Juvenile Justice System panel, and afternoon break-out sessions linking the effective principles to existing collaboratives on mentoring, truancy, parenting, juvenile justice system, and out of school time programs.

Eighty Racine County youth and family-serving professionals and policymakers participated, and found the seminar useful to their work with youth and families, with a rating of 4.1 on a scale of 1-5. As a result of the seminar, the knowledge of evidence-based practices to prevent juvenile delinquency averaged 3.9 after

the seminar compared to 2.8 before the seminar on a 5 point scale. Each of the five break-out discussion groups identified next steps to address within their existing collaborative groups. Ninety-four percent would recommend the seminar to others. Participants responded that additional collaboration was needed among agencies and some participants indicated that they would evaluate their own program with the tools provided

and share the knowledge with others in their organization. Training cooperatives were discussed as a cost effective use of local training resources, while improving communication among organizations. Community resource knowledge of workers, youth, and families continued to be a need requiring more creative marketing strategies, beyond print materials, to increase participation in juvenile delinquency prevention programs.

*“The seminar provided a rare and wonderful opportunity for the various disciplines involved in juvenile delinquency issues to share ideas and coordinate efforts. The presenters and audience had much to share. It was a valuable seminar for everyone.”*

FAYE FLANCHER,  
RACINE COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

# Foreclosure problems addressed through outreach, education

The foreclosure crisis in Wisconsin is reflective of the national economy. Racine County experienced a rise in foreclosure rates from 2005 into the fall of 2007. The rise in foreclosures has been tied to the rise in exotic mortgage products that include “no documentation” loans and lax underwriting standards. These practices, coupled with declining housing values, have led to tragic results.

In November of 2006, Consumer and Housing Education Coordinator, Suzanne Dennik, was hired to provide foreclosure and predatory lending prevention education and outreach to Milwaukee and Racine Counties. This position is a part of a Quad Counties UW-Extension initiative. Dennik researched and directed programming efforts after assessing the needs of both Racine and Milwaukee counties to determine how best to deliver desperately needed educational programs and foreclosure resources through building partnerships and capacity within community organizations.

UW-Extension partnerships included the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago and WHEDA--which led to a two-day, statewide foreclosure conference in December, after a request by Dennik to the Federal Reserve to consider sponsorship for this topic in Wisconsin. Dennik also formed collaborations with Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee, Marquette

University, Legal Action of Wisconsin, Neighborworks America, HUD, Commerce, George Washington University, UW-Whitewater, NHS of Chicago, and the cities of Racine and Milwaukee to enlist their participation and expertise on the topic of foreclosure at the conference. These collaborations reaped the benefits of research, information and resources to aid the State of Wisconsin in developing strategies to address this crisis. In addition, Cooperative Extension produced a training video depicting the foreclosure process from a Wisconsin family perspective, which premiered at the conference and will be part of ongoing training. The Federal Reserve agreed to sponsor two additional conferences in 2008 to continue the strategic planning resulting from the 2007 conference.

As a result of partnerships, WHEDA agreed to a \$100,000 commitment to provide needed foreclosure counselor training for housing agents across the state in collaboration with Neighborworks America. Dennik reached 593 participants regarding foreclosure education and prevention. Program effectiveness evaluations consistently exceeded 4 points on a rating scale of 1-5. Dennik distributed over 5,000 foreclosure resource flyers, and 10,000 audience members received education via public radio. Partnerships were facilitated with over 50 agencies representing private industry, government and nonprofit sectors. Chase Bank and the Legal Aid Society committed to providing foreclosure training to conference participants free of charge in 2008.

## COUNTYWIDE LAND USE PLANNING

In 2006, the counties of Racine and Kenosha began a multi-jurisdictional comprehensive planning process to address countywide and local land use issues. Both counties face similar challenges related to growth, including: loss of farmland and natural resources, conflicts along the urban/rural interface, urban redevelopment, transportation issues, affordable housing concerns, and increasing pressure on infrastructure and community facilities. The Quad Counties UW-Extension team identified growth management as a cross-county need, and consequently worked with the Planning & Development Departments in both Racine and Kenosha counties to hire a Community Planning Educator to provide educational materials and opportunities for residents and stakeholders to participate throughout the comprehensive planning process.

In 2007, Kristen Lie worked closely with the Racine County Planning & Development Department, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), and the Multi-Jurisdictional Advisory Committees (MJAC), to develop educational materials, including: quarterly newsletters, summary fact sheets, reports on public planning events, public presentations, and websites. Press releases regarding comprehensive planning public participation efforts were also printed in the *Racine Journal Times*, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, and the Southern Lakes newspapers in western Racine County.

In addition to monthly advisory committee meetings in each county, four public informational meetings were conducted in Racine County. The Racine Comprehensive Planning Team also provided information to the public during the Racine County Fair, with help from MJAC volunteers.

A countywide public opinion survey was designed and mailed to a random sample of 4,000 people through a joint effort between UW-Extension, Planning & Development, SEWRPC and the MJAC, with assistance from UW-Parkside Center for Community Partnerships. Public participation helped identify issues perceived by community members, and input gathered through these efforts was essential in developing the overall goals and objectives, which provide the basic framework for the comprehensive plan. Check out the progress of the plan and public participation at: <http://racine.uwex.edu/cnred/SmartGrowth.html>

## SMART FINANCES

In 2007  
UW-Extension's  
Consumer and Housing  
Education Coordinator provided

**36 training sessions on foreclosure education and prevention which reached 593 participants.**

“There is an entire network of people in Wisconsin that UW-Extension is plugged into that when we have an event such as this, they are so valuable to us. Suzanne is extremely knowledgeable, and knows and cares about the issues.”

STEVE KUEHL,  
CONSUMER REGULATIONS  
DIRECTOR,  
FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF  
CHICAGO

## SMART GROWTH

“Kristen’s role in the Racine County Multi-jurisdictional Plan has been invaluable. She helped us adhere to the timeline for a massive planning effort by making the various plan elements available across all of Racine County, and other team-building exercises.”

JULIE ANDERSON, DIRECTOR,  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT,  
RACINE COUNTY

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Report edited by Tracy Strother