



EXTENSION FOCUS

SAUK COUNTY

SEPTEMBER 2020

Community Development

Designed and coordinated a panel discussion with representatives from the Root River Towns Trail system in Minnesota for local government officials along the proposed trail from Middleton to Reedsburg. The purpose of the meeting was to share insights on how to best develop and promote a trail system in order to foster community and economic development.

Facilitated one of seven community conversations on the book *White Fragility: Why It is So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* by Robin DiAngelo. Also developed an evaluation designed to measure the outcomes and impacts of having these types of difficult community conversations. Continued discussions with the Sauk County Institute of Leadership (SCIL) board and local chambers of commerce on alternative leadership development programming during COVID.

Agriculture & Horticulture

Alana's August has been filled with many questions coming into the office on identification of pests and diseases on various crops, drainage tile, plant breeding, and rental rates. In addition, she has taken the opportunity to partner with the Sauk County Land Resources and Environment (LRE) staff to work with a farmer on a Soil Health Evaluation. This soil health evaluation will be used to help assist the farmer in applying for a grant with the Sauk Soil and Water Improvement Group for a project with cover crops and seeding rates. This is an exciting project to collaborate with LRE to help gain additional information on what types of cover crops work well in Sauk County soils to help increase crop yield and soil health.



Human Development & Relationships

The Story Walk Project came to completion in both Reedsburg (Webb Park) and at Sauk County's White Mound County Park by the end of August. There was a great deal of success at White Mound Park, where we saw the bulk of the goodie bags distributed to campers, hikers, beach goers, and park visitors. Overall, the project was a success in getting youth to engage in reading and think about saving while out enjoying nature. Amanda is busy planning virtual learning for families and community partners this fall and winter, but hopes to find more ways to engage the community through project work yet before year is out.



FoodWise

Although transitioning in-person nutrition education to virtual learning has had its challenges, Melissa is happy to report that Sauk County schools are excited and ready to have their nutrition lessons this school year! After working with area principals, FoodWise is to better able to plan for fall programming with classrooms and teachers. Melissa and her FoodWise state colleagues have been reviewing the Choose Health Curriculum, which has been used for after/summer school programming in the past. This small work group has been making additions to the curriculum to make it ready for an elementary classroom setting that delivers nutrition lessons suitable to these changes times and virtual needs. Well done FoodWise and our very own Melissa Beernick!



Positive Youth Development

Sauk County 4-H congratulates the 30 graduates of our 2020 Wisconsin Farm Safety and Tractor Certification Class! Classes are typically completed in February-March. This year we had a 5 month pause in the class, due to COVID. We are extremely thankful to our volunteer leaders, community partner presenters and sponsors who help make this program possible!



Sauk County 4-H classes include hands-on learning opportunities to learn important Farm Safety and Tractor driving skills. Youth get experience using a chain saw (thanks to McFarlanes) and a fire extinguisher (thanks to Loganville Fire Department); are certified in First Aid and CPR (thanks to Chris Anderson and Anderson Chiropractic); learn about electrical and gas energy (thanks to Alliant Energy); and learn the rules of the road, with a focus on semi-trailer trucks (thanks to Skinner Transport). The Sauk County Sheriff's Department shares information on road safety. Youth also participate in a Tractor Driving test (thanks to tractors donated by Mid-States Equipment).

It truly takes a village - to keep our futures safe!

A virtual movie screening of "**The Silo**" is coming on October 4. This event is hosted by the Dane County Farm Bureau. (Check out their FB page) Based on the trailer this movie demonstrates why Farm Safety and Tractor Certification classes are so important!



Community Collaboration Efforts

Sauk County Food Distribution Coalition As the economic benefits of the pandemic changed starting in August, many food distribution sites began gearing up in preparation for a change in the need for families needing access to free and readily accessible food sources. The coalition scaled back on its meeting times to accommodate these efforts and will be working with the distribution sites to put out its survey to determine how Sauk County residents are making use of the food sites moving forward. A small work group continues its efforts in looking at food security and homelessness.

The Farmer Angel Network The FAN successfully completed all of its ice cream social events. The group had two guest speakers in August present to their monthly meeting. In September they will be planning their fall/ winter community activities and education events.