

Vernon County Agricultural and Extension Education Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes – September 9, 2010

Chairman Herb Cornell called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Present were: Cornell, McClelland, Larson, Easterday, Rehbein, Pulvermacher, Lenzendorf and Traastad.

The public meeting notice was sent to the Vernon County Broadcaster, County Clerk and Computer Department on August 28, 2010.

Larson moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the minutes as sent. Motion carried.

The next meeting date is October 11, 2010, at 9:30 a.m.

Larson moved, Easterday seconded, to approve the August Teen Court expenses of \$632.48. Motion carried.

McClelland moved, Larson seconded, to approve the August office expenses of \$2,122.88 and special accounts of \$414. Motion carried.

Lenzendorf reported on August activities: The fiscal year for WNEP is coming to an end in September, which means final reports are due. Since October is the beginning of the new year I have been spending some time scheduling my calendar with school and food pantry visits. I have added one food pantry this year, Bethel Butikk.

Since WNEP's audience is low income, I wanted to take a few minutes to talk about what this looks like here in Vernon County. A handout was distributed to all. Discussed the definition of food insecurity and that individuals fall somewhere on in the range from food secure to very low food security. In Vernon County the poverty rate as of 2008, was 14.2%, the percent of the population with income below 185% of poverty was 32.5%. Individuals with income below 185% qualify for food share. In 2008, the percent of the population that received food share was almost 9%. This shows that about 20% of the population that qualifies for food assistance do not take it. There are many reasons these people are not using these resources. I distributed brochures that list food resources and ask that everyone keep in mind that these resources are out there to help people in our county. Since food is sometimes the only variable figure in our budget it is the line item that we can cut back on. By using these resources individuals may find that it will free up other money for other bills that they may be struggling to make.

Rehbein reported on August activities: Assisted the Wisconsin Grape Growers Association (WGGA) in conducting the annual summer vineyard walk and Integrated Pest Management workshop. For the first time in 10 years the event was held outside of Vernon County. It was hosted by Danzinger Vineyards and Winery in Buffalo County. Over the past 7 years, Mel and David Danzinger have attended almost all of the grape events here in Vernon County so help was provide back to Buffalo County and the Extension Office there in hosting the event. Over 50 growers from all over Wisconsin and Minnesota attended. This was also the first year that the program was run under the flag of the WGGA. This allowed us to bring in a speaker from out of state, Bruce Bordelon the Purdue University Fruit Specialist. He talked about spray drift and grape vine vigor and led the group through the Danzinger grape vines. Because of the very hot and humid daytime and night time temperatures, a new grape disease called ripe rot showed up in many of the Minnesota varieties of grapes. This is normally a disease of the grapes in the Carolinas. Some grape growers lost all their crop and some only a percentage. It was too late in the season to implement any type of rescue fungicide

treatment. Given the work with the animal identification project and the meat animals at the county fair, a USDA listening session was attended in Madison on proposed changes to the national program. RFID tags will still be used and preferred, but the metal ear tags will be allowed again for ID. While the cost of the metal tag is minimal, the unknown will be when animals with the metal tag come through livestock channels, and tags have to be read and reported to the state, who will pay for that. A report on this same subject was given at the Monroe/La Crosse County Beef Cow/Calf summer meeting held in Rockland. Initiated a project on ag plastic recycling with Organic Valley and the Extension Offices in Crawford and Richland Counties. Keeping the plastic clean will be a challenge along with finding markets for the use of it. Conducted 3 phone consultations with folks interested in opening a winery in the near future. One prospect is for the Hillsboro area. The other two are outside of the county line. Attended the National Extension Viticulture and Enology Leadership Conference in Fresno, California. Also attending was Steve Jordan, a plant pathology specialist from UW-Madison. Tours were taken to table grape producers and processors and raisin growers and the Sunmaid Raisin Cooperative. Preparations were also started for the 2010 Vernon County Fair.

Pulvermacher reported on August activities: Activities held in August included the dairy tour (Central Sands and the robotic dairy near Melrose); canoeing, crocheting, state fair, Cloverbud Camp and a rabbit clinic. All were well attended and served youth of all ages and interests. Colleen was pleased to report that she received a \$715 grant from Epsilon Sigma Phi, an Extension organization which offers professional development grants. These funds will be used to offset the cost (\$1400) of attending the October National 4-H agent's conference in Phoenix. Colleen has worked hard to seek out grant funding from multiple sources, with the net cost to Vernon County of \$50.

Issues related to risk management have come up with the shooting sports project. Colleen called on the 4-H state shooting sports specialist who came to Vernon County and met with our shooting sports leaders. Many issues and concerns were addressed. Colleen felt the issues were resolved productively and that the shooting sports leaders were all cooperative in the process.

The 4-H project guide, which is the document 4-H families use to decide which 4-H projects to take, has been edited to coincide with our fair book. This is a big task and Colleen expressed appreciation to Cindy, along with subcommittee members, Debbie Primmer, Joanne Hornby and Amy Hardy, for their work on this important project. The 4-H Leader Parent Federation met recently and heard the recommendation of the project guide subcommittee to impose a late re-enrollment fee of \$5 for families who do not re-enroll by November 15th. The Federation approved this recommendation and this information will be made clear to all involved. One of the goals of the Federation this year has been to engage older youth. Youth these days have many more opportunities than in the past, so the 4-H program is working to keep youth 7th grade on up involved in activities beyond the club level. The 4-H foodstand was discussed at the 4-H Federation meeting last night and a decision was made to investigate enhancements to the foodstand, as long as the back walls need to be replaced to accommodate the meter. A foodstand committee was formed and will be working to explore options since the Federation has the funds to make upgrades.

Both of the interns have completed their positions here. Colleen admitted it was stressful managing two very different interns this summer and she has learned a great deal from the experience.

Colleen has been putting in extra time on weekends working on her portfolio. It is much easier to spread things out and write (and rewrite) the important documents that make up the tenure portfolio when the office is quiet. Colleen was pleased to say that the Federation members and 4-H leaders in general are very understanding of the need to focus on this important project.

Teen Court had two cases in August, both disorderly conduct charges. The Teen Court has two seniors that have come through the Teen Court system originally as offenders, and then stayed on as volunteer jurors for two years. Both of these young women are headed off to college and will be awarded \$250 scholarships in recognition of their role in Teen Court. The Wisconsin Bar Association will provide the scholarships. Crawford County UW-Extension has contacted Colleen about Teen Court, wanting to learn more as they explore the possibility of implementing a Teen Court. Colleen has provided them background information and has extended an invitation for them to attend a Teen Court Advisory Board meeting and a Teen Court session in October.

Colleen indicated that she has a mandatory district meeting next Thursday, Sept. 16th in Madison and will not be at the fair that day. Colleen has a family commitment on the Sunday of the fair.

Traastad reported on August activities:

Conducted four financial counseling sessions with individuals applying for Work Force Connections \$4,000 car loans to complete required budgets.

Completed the required UW-Extension 2010-2012 Plan of Work for Vernon County Family Living programs.

Continued the development of the 2011 department budget to be submitted to the clerk's office September 10, 2010.

Developed plans for new fall Strong Women classes in Viroqua and La Farge. From the beginning of the program in 2005, 517 women have attended to date with over half continuing with many classes. Jane Schmidt will be teaching this fall's classes.

Discussion held on the 2011 department budget. Larson moved, Easterday seconded, that in order to keep the purchase of a high-speed copier out of the 2011 UW-Extension department, to approve that the department apply for HoChunk funds for a replacement copier. Motion carried.

Easterday moved, Larson seconded to adjourn. Motion carried.