

**AGENDA**  
**Agriculture & Extension Education Committee Meeting**  
**810 Lincoln St, Kewaunee, WI**  
**Wednesday, May 8, 2019**  
**8:30 AM**

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Review/Approval of Minutes of April 10, 2019
5. Citizen Input
6. Informational: Awards and Recognitions Received by Kewaunee County Extension at the recent Joint Council of Extension Professionals conference. Snacks included.
7. Educators Reports – Written
8. Department Head/Area Director Report
  - a. Kewaunee County Committee Rules and Duties (attached) Review and consider for approval.
  - b. Madison merger/acquisition updates.
9. Travel requests (if any)
10. Review and Set Future Committee Meeting Dates.
11. Adjourn

The Committee welcomes all visitors to listen and observe, but only Committee members and those invited to speak will be permitted to do so. Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to attend or participate should contact the County Administrator's Office at (920) 388-7164 prior to the meeting so that accommodations may be arranged.

A majority of the members of the County Board of Supervisors or any of its committees including:

Finance & Public Property, Personnel, Advisory & Legislative, Health, Child Support, & Veterans Service, Human Services, Aging Services Unit Advisory, Extension Education, County Farm, & Zoning, Law Enforcement & Emergency Management, Land & Water Conservation, Highway & Solid Waste, Promotion & Recreation, and others may be present at this meeting to listen, observe, and participate. If a majority of any such committee is present, their presence constitutes a "meeting" under the Open Meeting Law as interpreted in State ex rel. Badke v. Greendale Village Board, 173 Wis. 2d 553 (1993), even though the visiting body will take no action at this meeting.

# UW-Extension Committee

**Purpose:** The UW-Extension Committee provides general oversight of the comprehensive range of services, and activities relating to UW-Extension services.

**Membership:** Four members appointed by the Board Chair and subject to confirmation by the Kewaunee County Board of Supervisors.

**Term:** The term is two years to correspond with the terms of office for Supervisors to the County Board. Membership on the committee is established at the organizational meeting held on or after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in April of even numbered years. Citizen members appointed to the Board of Health by the County Administrator shall serve three year terms.

**Meeting Date & Time:** To be determined by the Committee.

**Statutory Reference:** Extension Wis. Stat. §§59.56(3).

**County Departments Overseen:** UW-Extension

**Subcommittees/Boards/Commissions/Councils:**

## **Rules and Responsibilities:**

***Policy and General Oversight: (Policy and General Oversight is defined as all oversight afforded the Committee except where limited by the Wisconsin Constitution or Wisconsin State Statutes).***

Provide oversight and develop department policy for the UW-Extension office including oversight of all programs, ordinances and regulations.

determine broad outlines and principles governing the administration of the UW-Extension office including operating procedures that ensure compliance with federal and state requirements.

## ***Financial Oversight***

### ***Bills & Claims***

Audit all department bills and claims. Also, monitor department fund accounts and balances as needed.

### ***Additional Budget Authority***

Recommend requests, reports, or resolutions involving expenditures of county funds in excess of the budget and requiring an appropriation.

### ***Transfer Requests***

Recommend to the Finance Committee requests for transfer of funds from contingency account to budget accounts up to \$20,000. Also recommend to Finance Committee expenditures from the Capital Improvement Fund up to \$20,000.00. Recommend to Finance Committee and the County Board, all transfers from the General Fund and all transfers from Contingency and Capital Improvement Funds exceeding \$20,000.

### ***Maintenance, Repair & Improvements***

Approve recommendations for the maintenance, repairs, and capital improvements and sales of materials and equipment.

### ***County Budget***

Review and approve the annual budget recommendation to the County Administrator.

### ***Departmental Oversight***

Perform all other duties imposed by Law or the County Board.

**MINUTES**  
**Agriculture & Extension Education Committee Meeting**  
**810 Lincoln St, Kewaunee, WI**  
**Wednesday, April 10, 2019**  
**8:30 AM**

Minutes

1. **Meeting Called to order** at 8:30 pm by Chairman Romdenne
2. **Roll Call** - Committee members present: Tom Romdenne, Gary Paape, Mary-Ellen Dobbins, Chuck Wagner. Educators present: Aerica Bjurstrom, Renee Koenig, Jill Jorgensen. Also present: Rob Burke, Area Extension Director. Bob Weidner, County Board Chair present at 9:00 am.
3. **Motion by Dobbins , second by Wagner to approve the agenda and approve the minutes of March 11**, all aye. Motion carried.
4. **Citizen Input** - None
5. **Educators Reports** – Chuck commented in general about Legislative Days and how the youth delegates were good to have, they cause a positive reaction by legislators and staff. Dobbins also commented on the student’s effectiveness. Jill summarized the training and preparatory work she did with the students.
6. **Department Head/Area Director Report-**
  - a. FoodWise/County Agreement Letter. Brief review. Motion by Paape, second by Wagner to recommend County Administrator approve, motion carried.
  - b. Burke reported that one budget proposal for the state includes funding for additional agents, if passed and UW has flexibility with the funding Extension could field a small number of state/regional outreach programmers/specialists. Committee expressed agreement with a Water Quality resource educator in this region, and based in Kewaunee County. Will consider a resolution at the county board level expressing our willingness to place such a specialist here in Kewaunee County. Kewaunee is at the center of water quality solutions being developed, being used as a model/example. It makes sense for a water resources educator to be based here, with regional responsibilities.
  - c. On the merger of email systems Chuck inquired and Burke responded he is working with IT to ensure no cutting of email to county agents will occur abruptly.
7. **Travel Requests:** Jill Jorgensen request to travel to conferences to deliver two presentations. No county funding required, only her time. Motion by Garry second by Mary Ellen to approve, all aye, request granted.
8. **Review and Set Future Committee Meeting Dates.** May 8, 8:30 AM; June 12th, 8:30 AM
9. **Call to adjourn by Chuck, second by Dobins, all aye.** Meeting adjourned at 9:35 AM.

Respectfully submitted by:

*Rob Burke*

April 30, 2019

**Aerica Bjurstrom**  
Agriculture Agent  
Prepared for May 8, 2019

**4-H Dairy Tour** – Each spring I organize a 4-H dairy tour for dairy project members and their families. This year's tour was at the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center and Siemers Holsteins. Door County 4-H families are also invited to attend. This year 56 people attended the tour, and five were from Door County. The tour counts as a project educational meeting for youth and counts towards their outstanding exhibitor points. I am already working on site for the 2020 tour.



**Master Gardeners** – Master Gardeners training continues. The class is 13 weeks and we have completed eight classes so far. We've had guest speakers Annie Deutsch (entomology) and Suzi Sevcik (general gardening practices) so far. May will have guest speakers Tom Zenner (vegetables) and Master Composter Jan Tess. Two class dates in May will be off-site Hillside Apples and a soil pit hosted by Dr. Jamie Patton, UW-Madison Nutrient & Pest Management soil specialist.

**Program Planning** – I was busy in April planning Rural Safety Day, Conservation Tour, goat AI clinic, and the crops and soils field day. My role in Rural Safety Day planning consists of lining up speakers and resources such as a tractor for the tractor safety presenter, managing the budget, updating and maintaining displays for farmstead safety and tractor safety presentations, order shavings and supplies for the buildings, and ordering milk/ice cream/freezer trailer. Dairy Promotion is an in-kind sponsor of the milk and ice cream, I submit the request to that group in January or February. In addition, I am a speaker at the event and secure all funding, which includes a \$500 grant from the Center for Farm Safety and Health, and \$500 in matching funds from the Kewaunee County Farm Bureau. After the event is over, I provide a summary report/budget to the Center for Farm Safety and Health per the requirements of the grant, and I also submit a summary to the Kewaunee County Farm Bureau so they can see how their funds are used to support the event.

I spent time in April planning the 6<sup>th</sup> grade conservation tour. The tour consists of six sites/stops in Kewaunee County focusing on conservation in various parts of the county. I contact all schools in Kewaunee County in early January to save the date and follow up with them in April to get a list of participating schools and number of children. I also coordinate stops and provide a schedule to schools and speakers with details on where to meet and how to get to the site. This year just under 300 6<sup>th</sup> graders from Kewaunee County will be attending the tour.

Other events I spent time planning in April were the crops and forage field day on June 13 and the goat AI clinic on June 19/20. The crops and forage field day will be co-hosted with Door County Extension and held at the Forestville town hall. The goat AI clinic will be held in Fond du Lac this year due to its easy access to major highways and the Milwaukee airport. Our speaker/trainer flies in from Salmon, ID, so to keep costs manageable for participants, proximity to a major airport is important.

I also started planning summer projects such as the annual scissor clips project and the alfalfa persistency project. Another project I am starting to plan for May is population counts in alfalfa fields. With the very wet fall of 2018, late harvest of 4<sup>th</sup> crop, virtually no snow cover into late January, and bitter cold at the end of January, alfalfa crops may suffer from significant winter kill this year. Annie Deutsch and I will plan to do population counts in fields to determine approximately how much of the crop didn't survive the winter. Findings will be reported in media with recommendations as to how to re-establish or manage significant winter kill.

**Dairy Beef Program** – Co-hosted a Using beef sires on dairy cattle meeting with Lakeshore Dairy Services. Twenty-six people attended the meeting, the majority were local farmers. Lakeshore Dairy Services approached me with the idea of holding the meeting with topics addressing why to use beef sires on dairy cattle, how calves are being marketed, how to manage dairy heifer inventories, and basics of genetics. Many dairies are so efficient at reproduction on their farms, they have an overabundance of dairy replacement heifers. A way to manage heifer inventories is to breed low end cows to beef and sell the value-added calf. The beef cross calves are can bring two to three times the price of a straight-bred dairy calf. Some farmers are raising the animals to market weight at finding value in the animals by providing an extra income on the farm. I worked on writing two questionnaires in late 2018 (with Iowa State and Michigan State Universities) to survey farmers and AI representatives about how they are using beef sires on dairy farms. I presented survey data at the meeting and will continue to present that information as more meetings are developed to address the topic.

**Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP)** – Attended the JCEP conference in April. The conference is a professional development opportunity to learn from colleagues and guest speakers. I am a member of professional Extension associations Wisconsin Association of County Agriculture Agents (WACAA) and Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP), both of which met during JCEP. I attended the annual WACAA awards banquet and received a communications award for the dairy team Facebook page.

**Farm Technology Days** – Farm Technology Days continues to give back to the community. I worked with a couple members of the former publicity committee and the chair of the scholarship committee to organize the final steps of the first round of scholarships to six deserving students. I collaborated to develop a press release and collected photos of student winners. I sent the press release to media and followed up with students on where to send checks after they submit proof of enrollment. I will be writing cutting checks to students in May.

The Dana Farm Project is moving forward. The planning committee continues to work on details and costs as we aim for a late 2019 opening. The Dana Farm project will consist of minor restoration of the Ransom Moore Cabin and the construction of a warming building with restrooms open to public year-round. Once we have a solid budget and plan for the site, we plan to present it to the full county board to keep the group up to date on the project.

**Livestock Team Judging Team** – I have been working with the 4-H livestock judging team coach to plan on-farm workouts with the team. Livestock Judging consists of judging sheep, beef, meat goats, and hogs. I have been a Wisconsin county fairs judge for beef, sheep, swine, and carcass for more than 20 years, so I am happy to lend my experience to the team to help them prepare for the judging contest in June.

**Kewaunee County Agriculture & Extension Education Committee**  
**Renee Koenig**  
**Associate Professor, Family Living Educator**  
**University of Wisconsin-Extension**

**Report for May 2019**

**Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) Awards** – I received a 2019 JCEP Team Award for the work that I am doing as a certified Master Trainer of the research-based Taking Care of You program. My involvement including cross-collaborative work with Extension colleagues in every region of Wisconsin. I also applied for two awards on behalf of Erin Dahle and Erin received the award.

**Farm Family Stress** – On April 27<sup>th</sup>, I presented on at Collins Dairy on the topic of Coping with the Pressures of Farm Life and promoting positive mental health in the agriculture community. I have also worked on a statewide team that is developing web-based resources for Resilient Farms, Families and Businesses, check it out at <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/farmstress/>.

**May is Mental Health Month** – This year again for national May is Mental Health Month, I am promoting awareness and education in collaboration with the Live Algoma Emotional Well-being coalition. Our UW-Extension website has resources and information at <https://kewaunee.extension.wisc.edu/mental-health-awareness-and-education/farm-stress/>.

**Taking Care of You** – I am presenting on the topic of Taking Care of You at a statewide training event in Elkhart Lake for educators who teach inmates in the correctional settings such as jails. The educators who teach basic math, reading and life skills to incarcerated individuals often feel burn out and stress. Taking Care of You is a research-based program offering practical strategies for reducing stress; we can best assist others if we first take care of ourselves.

**Workforce Connection Resources** – I developed an employment resource for unemployed or workers facing a job loss due to farm self-employment ending, business closings or layoffs, or displaced homemakers. The resource list includes services available at nearby Job Centers and a phone directory for Kewaunee County resources such as where to call for housing assistance, food pantries, and other financial help. Please let me know if you would like a copy to share, such as at town hall bulletin boards.

**Money as You Grow and Money Smart Week** – I developed financial education programming for Money Smart Week, March 30-April 6, offered at the public libraries. I provided information for parents on the importance of introducing children to money concepts through books they read together.

## Dark Skies &amp; Silver Linings

## Suicide prevention needed in farming community

Part 2 of 2  
By Ed Byrne  
The Brillion News

Many dairy farmers are living on the financial edge, with emotional stress following financial stress.

That's why the University of Wisconsin-Extension is focusing on suicide prevention efforts in rural communities.

At the Green Bay forum "Supporting Farmers During Challenging Times," Kewaunee County Extension agent Renee Koenig explained that stress is not necessarily bad. Example: in the face of danger, stress gives rise to a fight or flight decision, and that can often be life-saving.

"We need that primitive instinct to help us survive," Koenig said.

But financial stress that is a constant or chronic presence – almost like background noise – can take its toll.

"We know that long-term stress can harm our health," she said.

Common stressors down on the farm include financial pressures, debt load, unpredictable weather, volatile markets, extreme outdoor work conditions, fatigue, lack of personal time, lack of reflective time, intergenerational differences, loss of valuable personal relationships, health and pain issues related to work.

Koenig said some people will turn to alcohol or other drugs to "self medicate." That doesn't solve the underlying problem, but only masks it.

And the substance use can become a problem of its own.

Koenig used a drawing of what's called the Iceberg of Health.

Other people usually see only the tip of the iceberg.

What they don't see are the four underlying factors: physical health, mental health, social health and spiritual health.

Physical health can be compromised by bad diet, smoking, lack of exercise, lack of sleep and substance



Renee Koenig

abuse.

Mental health includes the ability to do intellectual work, express emotions, cope with the world, and adapt to changes.

Social health includes building fulfilling relationships with others – family, friends and colleagues.

Spiritual health boils down to having some core values and beliefs, valuing yourself and others, and living with meaning and purpose.

Spiritual health is often the foundation of other health factors – it is that important.

The iceberg concept has a big lesson for everyone: We should not judge others because we see only what is at the tip of the iceberg; we do not see all of the underlying issues in a person's life.

Koenig said health is important not only for your own good, but to enable you to help others.

"Do not ignore the warning signs in your life," she said.

She said many people take care of themselves last. This seems to be especially true among farmers. They take care of their animals, crops and equipment first, and themselves last.

This includes social relationships, where a person becomes socially isolated and lonely – because there are

too many other things going on that demand attention.

"Are you getting enough sleep, eating well, exercising, avoiding tobacco and alcohol or other drugs?" Koenig asked. "Feeling lonely is as lethal as smoking 15 cigarettes a day ... I think about some small farms, where the farmers are out there all by themselves."

#### Help other farmers

Koenig encourages the farm community to watch for farmers who are under extreme and chronic stress.

Look for an increase in farm accidents, or stress with children.

Are people keeping to themselves more, missing meetings, not stopping for coffee any more? Changing routines? Is there a decline in the upkeep of the farm? Are livestock not being cared for well?

She said stress is a risk factor for depression and suicide.

"The good thing is we know depression is treatable, and 80 percent of people with severe stress can improve significantly, but if severe depression is not treated, it can result in suicide," Koenig said. "This is why we need to talk about suicide."

The number of suicides are rising significantly.

"Wisconsin rates are higher than the U.S. and ... our northeast Wisconsin counties have higher [suicide] rates than Wisconsin counties overall," Koenig said. "And we know rates increase for rural areas."

At greatest risk are males ages 45-64, who have rates double the general population.

Koenig said many more people attempt suicide or contemplate doing it.

She said farmers are at greater risk because so many things are out of their control – the weather, prices, regulations. A farmer's self reliance isolates him from others, too.

Koenig said that there is limited access to professional mental health

services overall, and it is even worse in rural communities.

Some farmers, facing financial problems, cut back on health insurance, and so lack mental health coverage.

"There is a reluctance to seek help, that stigma," Koenig said.

Farmers also have greater access to the means of committing suicide.

She said rural people need to talk about suicide. It reduces the stigma and makes it easier for people to reconsider thoughts of suicide.

Koenig said friends need to speak up about concerns with suicide.

Suicide is surrounded by several unfortunate myths:

1. "Suicide is unpredictable." Not true, there are almost always warning signs, but not everyone recognizes them. Most people who attempt suicide have talked about it with others.
2. "Asking someone about suicide will give them the idea." False. Asking directly about it will often take the burden off the person considering suicide and often deters an attempt. "They might get mad at you, but would you rather have a mad friend or a dead friend?" Koenig said.
3. "If their mind is made up, there is nothing I can do." Very wrong. Often the decision to take one's own life is a fleeting decision. "Most suicide victims just want to end the pain they're in, not their lives." Reducing access to the means to commit suicide saves lives.
4. "I'm not a professional, so there's nothing I can do." False. Often we know the person the best and will see the signs first and can respond in a way that stops the person from attempting suicide. Signs of imminent danger include saying things that show the person feels hopeless; actually expressing a death wish; accessing a gun or other weapon of suicide; putting their

affairs in final order; giving away prized possessions; a sudden interest or disinterest in religion; sudden anger or resignation; increase in alcohol or drug use; withdrawal from regular activities.

Dramatic changes in the person's life are often triggers for suicide: the loss or death of a loved one; a financial crisis; a separation or divorce; diagnosis of a major illness or disability.

If the suicide danger seems imminent, dial 9-1-1 and get help coming.

"Ask them directly, 'Are you thinking of killing yourself?' Keep them safe. Ask them how they plan to do it, then separate them from anything they could use to hurt themselves," Koenig said. "Be there, stay with them, listen with compassion and empathy, without dismissing [their plans or thoughts] or judging them. Tell them 'You matter to me.'"

If the crisis passes, help the person connect with helping resources.

Keep in touch with them over a long period of time.

"See how they're doing and let them know you care," she said.

Koenig said most distraught farmers are more likely to seek help from family members and friends than from any professionals.

"Be a friend," she said. "That's when the healing begins. It is a start."

Koenig recommends learning Q-P-R suicide prevention training, which teaches how to recognize someone who is considering suicide and how to help them. The parts of QPR training are: 1, Question people who may be suicidal about their intent; 2, Persuade them to get help; and 3, Refer them to appropriate resources.

To get help or learn about resources, visit [suicidepreventiononline.org](http://suicidepreventiononline.org) or call 1-800-273-8255. The Youth Suicide Hotline is 1-800-448-4663.

To reach Renee Koenig, e-mail her at [renee.koenig@wisc.edu](mailto:renee.koenig@wisc.edu).

## Family Farmer Relief Act may help farms facing bankruptcy

The Brillion News

WASHINGTON – Wisconsin U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, with a bipartisan group of senators

Recognizing the unique challenges that family farmers and fishers face, Congress established Chapter 12 of the U.S. bankruptcy code, which removes certain costly reorga-

of the federal bankruptcy law.

Research by debtwire.com showed that corn and dairy farms led in the number of Chapter 12 filings in 2018, with 16 percent each.

year. Debts held by farmers are nearing historic levels set in the 1980s, further financially extending farm operations.

The Family Farmer Relief Act of

option. Lifting the liability cap and giving more farmers an opportunity to qualify for Chapter 12 bankruptcy provides the restructuring and seasonal repayment flexibility that many