

UW EXTENSION'S CONNECTION WITH WYOMING CONNECT

2015



Master Gardeners are the first line of defense against the inclement weather and pests Mother Nature tosses at Wyoming gardeners and horticulturists. Master Gardeners Michelle Pierce, left, and Sandra Hunter of Gillette look for the right spot to prune a grapevine in a hands-on session at the Sheridan Research and Extension Center during the state Master Gardener conference. See page 4.



WE'RE EXCITED FOR OUR SECOND CENTURY OF SERVICE TO WYOMING

UW Extension's 101st year has been one of celebration and reflection acknowledging the contributions of generations of extension educators and specialists and celebrating the 100 years of success and impact on the state they and we have had.

The year started at the 2013 Wyoming state fair by highlighting the positive effects of Wyoming 4-H and concluded by celebrating the whole of extension at the 2014 state fair (see page 23). In between, local events recognized extension's 100 years of engagement with Wyoming communities and people.

Our Focus

Our centennial brought into focus our place in the fabric of the communities and the culture of this great state. Particularly gratifying is having others recognize us for the work we so love doing.

A capstone to our celebration was surprise recognition by the Wyoming Heritage Foundation and Wyoming Business Alliance as one of seven organizations honored for long-standing contributions in philanthropy, business, culture, and the arts to better Wyoming.

This honor recognized the contributions of current extension folks and the generations of dedicated extension workers who comprise the 100 years of service to Wyoming's people.

Innovative Gift

UW Extension's efforts to review and renew in order to increase impacts of our educational programs received a big lift last year from a significant endowed gift from the John P. Ellbogen Foundation. The *John P. Ellbogen Foundation Wyoming Communities, Agriculture and Rural Living Project Fund* endowment will provide funding to develop new and innovative extension programs at the grassroots level in Wyoming communities. This provides an opportunity to build on the legacy of the past 100 years to greater service, relevance, and impact.

One can't contemplate the past without looking to the future. Although our legacy places us near the center of Wyoming communities, constant assessment, review, and renewal is necessary to keep

pace and build the effects of our programs. The formula that built extension's legacy is still as relevant as ever:

- *Reliable, research-based information and education* is the standard that sets UW Extension apart from many others offering information and education.
- *Learner-driven engagement* has always been the fundamental approach to effective extension education. Engagement has been alternately defined as "outreach starts with an answer – engagement starts with a question," or "co-learning – learning together, educator and client," or "the engaged educator listens more than they talk."
- *Local* – Extension was created as a partnership – USDA/university/county – with county government providing the connection and incentive to ensure state and federal extension efforts are grounded at the grassroots level in our communities.

Extension Connects

I hope you enjoy this issue of *CONNECT*. UW Extension programs highlighted here are each based on the legacy-building formula of reliable, research-based information, learner-driven engagement, and local. We are proud of the work described here but are also proud of the greater body of extension work unable to be featured. Highlighting all is impossible because of its breadth and depth.

Engagement is about a conversation so please, if you have questions or suggestions, contact me at glen@uwyo.edu or 307-766-5124 or your local extension educator. We would love hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Glen Whipple
Associate Dean and Director
University of Wyoming Extension



Master Gardeners 4



Girls School 10



Beehive Building 13



IS A PICTURE WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS? THEN, HOW ABOUT A VIDEO?

Videos, and the interactive 2015 CONNECT edition, which has videos, slide shows, and audio, will be available at www.uwyo.edu/uwe/connect2015

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CONNECT

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1 • Download and install the free Aurasma app from Play Store or iTunes Store to your phone or tablet.

2 • Click on Aurasma icon.

3 • Click the magnifying glass at bottom of your screen and type "UWAG" in the Search box at the top of the screen. Click on UWAG, then choose Follow.

4 • Click on the open square symbol at the bottom of the screen. Point your phone or tablet at the image that has the Aura icon  and watch what happens! Double-clicking enlarges the video to full screen and enables watching the video away from the Aura image.



THE FEW, THE STR

A little melodramatic? Probably. But a small volunteer band of Wyoming citizens wrestle all Mother Nature can toss at us during the growing season – and beyond

Wyoming Master Gardeners and big screen superheroes use different tools in combat, but they share a common goal: better the lives of others.

Yes, when facing Wyoming's brutal winters, droughts, short growing seasons, pests, and scouring winds, these volunteers with green thumbs engage Mother Nature in hand-to-hand battles.

"Gardening in Wyoming is completely different than anywhere else," says Chris Hilgert, state Master Gardener coordinator. "Living up to the Master Gardener title is a challenge when you are facing an unforgiving growing environment. This program is important because we teach gardeners in Wyoming how to overcome the wind, dry conditions, and lack of rain."

Stretch the Growing Season

Hilgert explained the use of greenhouses, high tunnels, and other techniques are often recommended and taught by Master Gardeners to extend



Master Gardener state coordinator Chris Hilgert says Master Gardeners meeting with farmers market association members pools resources.

Wyoming's short growing season and evade its harsh conditions.

The Wyoming Master Gardener program originated in 1984 from Natrona County horticulture educator Rod Davis. The Master Gardeners connect UW Extension resources and residents interested in rural and urban horticulture. In 2013, there were 534 Master Gardeners in 14 counties in Wyoming. They reported 10,904 volunteer hours and 2,216 educational hours.

Washington State started the first Master Gardener program in 1973 when extension educators received numerous questions about horticulture. They decided to recruit gardeners and horticultural experts willing to volunteer at local extension offices in exchange for formal, research-based horticultural training.

Passion for Plants

Volunteers are required to complete a 40-hour educational training program that teaches botany, soils, flowers,

ONG, THE TALENTED

trees, shrubs, lawns, vegetables, fruits, entomology, pesticide safety, and diagnosing plant problems.

"The common link between all Master Gardeners is that they have a passion for gardening," Hilgert notes. "They have an interest in learning more about horticulture and becoming better gardeners themselves."

A Master Gardener from Natrona County became the "Bug Lady" to help answer questions related to entomology, a branch of zoology concerned with the study of insects. Judy Logue became well-versed in the subject by taking classes outside of the Master Gardeners program.

"Judy did so many things for the Master Gardeners program, but most importantly she studied a topic not a lot of people wanted to study," Natrona County extension horticulturalist Donna Hoffman says. "Not long after she started, she became capable answering questions related to identifying insects and teaching other Master Gardeners about the topic."

High School'ers to
80 year olds

Master Gardeners are from a wide range of demographics, from high school to 80 years old. The program



focuses on topics directly applicable to the state, promoting locally grown food, and supporting our local economy.

"The best part about this program is when you put together the desire to improve your community with something you love to do, it is a winning combination," Hilgert

says. "Master Gardeners do it for the love of horticulture and their communities. Ultimately, they are doing this for the right reasons, and that is what keeps this program running."

Learn more about this program by contacting any local extension office or <http://bit.ly/wyomastergardener>



Master Gardeners learn the art of cutting and displaying fresh flowers from Natrona County extension horticulture specialist Donna Hoffman during a session at Sheridan College.



Master Gardener sisters Bev, left, of Casper, and Becky Mathisen of Cheyenne. Their mother was one of the first Wyoming Master Gardeners.

GREEN THUMBS CAN BE GENERATIONAL

Member of first Natrona County Master Gardener class has daughters who inherited habits

Wyoming was just being Wyoming when the heavens opened and hail pelted Laramie County Master Gardeners that July day during their Garden Walk in Cheyenne.

They had two hours to enjoy the sites before being pestered – then used the storm to see how

some Cheyenne residents used hailbusters (various techniques to soften the blows and even divert hailstones) to thwart Mother Nature as best they could.

Wyoming Master Gardeners have learned to duck and weave through the state’s moody climate

and help others learn to do the same.

That can be generational in the state. At least one Wyoming Master Gardener raised the next generation of garden gurus. Virginia Mathisen, died in 2012 and was a member of the first Master Gardener class in Natrona County.

One daughter – Beverly in Casper – recently left the program, and Becky in Cheyenne is still a member.

“Virginia was a dear lady,” says Donna Hoffman, UW Extension horticulturist in Natrona County. “She always brought gladiolus flowers into the office in the summer months and

was always willing to share cuttings from her grape vines with anyone who wanted to start growing those."

Growing Up Gardening

The daughters (including Peggy, now of Blackfoot, Idaho) were grown and out of the house when Virginia began her official MG duties, but they had grown up gardening.

"She was always interested in botany," says Becky. "She told us as a young girl in Worland she and her sister had a greenhouse. They must have been junior high age."

Becky included a greenhouse as part of her house in Cheyenne.

Virginia's father was a stonecutter, and the family had lived on the East Coast, then Kansas, Florida, West Virginia, Rawlins, Worland, then Casper.

He cut stones for the Lincoln Monument east of Laramie and for many buildings on the UW campus, says Becky.

Virginia, who dropped out of the MG program in about 2008, obtained her botany degree from Kansas University and then put a career on hold to raise the family. She would

later return to school to become a teacher but had to quit within a half-year of receiving her degree.

Frequent Fresh Vegetables

Growing up, the daughters were inducted into gardening and greenery.

"I realized as I get older how fortunate I was to have a mother who wanted to raise a lot of our own food and feed us a lot of vegetables and not so much meat," says Becky.

"At every meal, we had a choice of two or three vegetables and fruit. She was always interested in nutrition with her gardening and entomology. She was the perfect 4-H leader and Master Gardener."

Beverly says they were just following along in their mother's footsteps.

"Mom had a big yard. She was always buying new and different plants each year. She was a better gardener than any of us three daughters. Our family had to eat out of the yard. We didn't have a lot of money," says Beverly. "She did the best she could with the soil she had."

Making Do with Poor Soil

That was on Casper's climate-tough westside on

the way to the airport. "She was an organic gardener before there was a term for it," Beverly says. "She'd amend the soil and never sprayed anything. We dug weeds."

Beverly and Becky were paid a penny for every dandelion pulled. "She was a very organic gardener even before I heard of the phrase," says Becky. "And she composted everything except the dandelion heads. We called her the original conservationist."

Almost everything went to the top of the compost pile, says Beverly. "She never turned it. She covered it with branches then dug out from under it. Gardening was in her blood. My dad didn't know a weed from a flower. And my brothers didn't grow up with gardening. They just mowed the lawn. They didn't get the garden bug like us girls."

And speaking of bugs, Virginia loved them.

"She would bring home the strangest insects," says Becky. "Usually, it's the kids who bring home the bug, but in our home it was the mom."

"She was an organic gardener before there was a term for it. She'd amend the soil and never sprayed anything. We dug weeds."

Beverly Mathisen





Master Gardeners Ernie and Reina Hamlet of Newcastle check to find the best place to separate a grape vine cutting during Sadanand Dhekney's grape/vineyard presentation at the Sheridan Research and Extension Center.

Weston County Master Gardener group carries on after leader leaves

Master Gardeners planted a seed that sprouted in Newcastle.

Ernie and Reina Hamlet were part of the class of 24 during the summer of 2013 with Hannah Hopp as instructor. But she left, and the group was left in limbo.

Not for long. "Our Master Gardener group got together and decided all seven of us (from Newcastle) would stay as a

group," says Ernie. "Instead of being under any appointed leader, we decided to call ourselves an association since we are not actually underneath the county."

The couple had gardened before but say the Master Gardener program bolstered their knowledge.

"It was hit and miss before," says Ernie. "It makes a world of difference being able to spot problems.

One of the big things we decided was no more weed killer. We've gone to totally organic gardening."

Same with insects.

"There are so many natural ways to deal with insects," he says. "We have to study that to use those methods instead of trying to spray."

They "absolutely" recommend the Master Gardener program.

"If you can interest the younger school-age people that would be great," says Ernie. "I think they would love to do that. My grandson is in high school, but he comes up every summer and helps me with the garden. He's a football jock, but he likes to come up and do that."

MASTER GARDENERS, FARMERS MARKETING ASSOCIATION POOL RESOURCES

Wyoming Master Gardeners joined Wyoming Farmers Marketing Association members for their state conference in Sheridan late last spring.

The combination pooled their resources, says Chris Hilgert, state Master Gardener coordinator.

“We believed that together we would be able to offer the best conference possible,” he says.

Presentations over two days included soil maintenance, bees/pollinators, grapes/vineyards, poultry/greenhouse, herbs, arranging cut flowers, food presentation, fruit tree grafting, and tomato grafting.

Master Gardeners were recognized for their hours of volunteer labor in their communities. Carol Morrison and Jerry Simonsen, both of Goshen County, logged the most with 835 hours and 505 hours respectively last year.

Hilgert says the conference provides timely, relevant, and applicable education to Wyoming gardeners, ag producers, and farmers markets.

“Both groups are working toward the same mission – supporting local producers, home gardeners, and farmers markets through education,” Hilgert says. “We all bring something valuable to the table and bringing it all together helps us do a better job.”



Park County Master Gardener Bob Prchal, left, and Scott Johnson of Laramie check the schedule during opening day.



Sharon Murphee gets salt from extension nutrition and food safety educator Kentz Willis to add to the cabbage she just chopped. Kentz presented ways to preserve vegetables.



Vicki Hayman, nutrition and food safety educator, taught how to can food using a pressure cooker. Sheridan Mayor Dave Kinskey was among those participating.



Kaylee Covell, left, and Lizzy Kemp prepare vegetables for stir fry on a Friday night.

KITCHEN CONFIDENCE

There's no telling what a little kitchen cuisine can do. Since 1925, young girls gripped by substance abuse and addiction, behavioral extremes, arrests, and loneliness pass through locked glass doors to Wyoming Girls School buildings on Sheridan's southern outskirts.

The facilities:

- **The Verda James Dormitory** – Serves younger girls who have had limited exposure to the juvenile justice system.
- **The Morton Dormitory** – Girls pursue independent living, college, or a program toward discharge and address behaviors that limited success in their communities.
- **The Mountain View Dormitory** – Girls have a history with the juvenile justice system and authority figures, been in other out-of-home situations, and whose thinking is crowded with criminal patterns.

They're here on district court orders and immersed in intensive substance abuse therapy sessions, 12-step groups, anger management and victim awareness sessions, and social skills training. But also, the girls engage in high school equivalency classes, credit recovery, hockey, drama, horticulture, college and career planning, scholarship applications, and life skills practice.

Food Safety First, Then the Meal

Sandra Koltiska usually arrives on campus well before starting her contribution to the girls. Her Cent\$ible Nutrition Program (CNP) class starts at 4 on Fridays and ends after the girls learn food safety tips and cook that evening's meal for their dorm.

"This is an amazing place," says Koltiska of the girls school, and who has delivered classes at the school for almost seven years.

She took over after her CNP predecessor left.

"Most of these young ladies will go out of here and probably at some time will be on food stamps and probably be moms at the same time," she says. "We are trying to teach them to feed their kids and themselves more nutritiously and save money doing it."

This night's menu wasn't EXACTLY chicken soup for the soul, but in preparing this particular Friday night's chicken stir fry, social skills, cooperation, learning how to cook, responsibility, and self-confidence are being served.

Koltiska doesn't EXACTLY serve chicken soup for the soul – but don't discount the value of preparing a meal.



Breanna Roemmich, left, and Cent\$ible Nutrition Program educator Sandy Koltiska

The girls have the run of the kitchen - with supervision - to correctly prepare a meal for their dorm. Stir fry was on the menu this evening.



"The girls do show growth in development while they are here because of the experiences we allow them to have."

Jim Lyon

Food Rules

The girls – seven this evening and always accompanied by staff members – arrived and sat at two end-to-end tables while Koltiska, helped occasionally at the white board by a volunteer from the group, taught food safety – clean, separate, cook, and chill.

Jim Lyon is the school's residential manager, and responsible for all aspects of dorm programming, case management, independent living, and substance abuse and mental health therapy. He's been at the school almost nine years. A veteran of 30 years of working with at-risk teenagers, his career includes stints in Florida and Nebraska before coming to Wyoming.

The CNP classes provide skills the girls could use

when they return to their communities. It teaches responsibility around hot stoves, knives, and mixers.

"The girls do show growth in development while they are here because of the experiences we allow them to have," he says. "Not only in this program but the other opportunities, too."

There's ice hockey, which culminates playing a Sheridan all-star women's team. Outdoor education includes bicycling and fishing. They learn to tie a fly, how to string a fly rod – and of course, how to fish.

"It's fun to see girls who had never caught a fish before catch one," says Lyon. "There are opportunities to experience different things in life to help them grow and to learn."

Eight Lessons over Eight Weeks

This was the fifth of eight lessons over eight weeks for Koltiska. She always begins the series with the basics.

"Some of them really can cook and measure," she says. "My first class, I talk about dry measure versus liquid measure, a tablespoon versus a teaspoon. Some really have no clue. They haven't been taught to cook."

After the sessions, Koltiska says she never knows what the girls learn that will serve them.

"They don't even know what their life is going to be like when they leave here," she says, "but I make great relationships while here. The hugs, cooking, that it's OK, I'm a safe person and (let's) be just friends. "

A giant bee really isn't being motioned to wait by Clarisse Harris. She had plenty of help from son KC while making a beehive during a hands-on workshop at Fort Washakie.



BE A HONEY HERO

Enjoying honey, making beeswax and candles, promoting pollination for plants begins by building better beehives

If you had been standing in front of the Wind River Trading Co. at about 3:30 that afternoon, a noisy, but brief, thunderstorm was snarling its way northeast to probably bother the folks in Riverton – if it lasted that long.

Left in its wake was freshened air and, glancing east across US 287 at rain-soaked white wood laying here and there in stacks south of the Frank B. Wise Business Plaza, an onlooker might have thought work was over for that day.



"It is an agricultural venture that can be done in an urban as well as rural setting that requires less effort than other small-scale agricultural projects like raising chickens or goats. It's fun, people really enjoy the bees, and many like the idea of putting pollinators back into the ecosystem."

Justina Russell

Hardly. Those making Langstroth beehives during extension educator Tina Russell's workshop came back outside after a little while and didn't miss a beat. Busy as proverbial bees.

Bees build honeycombs down from a horizontal strip of wood in the Langstroth beehive. The Reverend Lorenzo Lorraine Langstroth designed the hive in 1851 and received a U.S. patent in 1852. The frame design prevents bees from attaching honeycombs to another honeycomb or to the walls of a hive. The honeycombs can be removed somewhat like slices of bread in a toaster.

They're used around the world because of the inexpensive cost to build and ease in removing honeycombs.

If a hopeful beehive maker comes across a copy of Building Beehives for Dummies, she would read the Langstroth hive is considered the "granddaddy" of honey producers and the most widely offered beehive in the world in terms of sales.

One Thing Led to Another

Russell learned beekeeping and taught about it during her time in the Peace Corps in The Gambia, West Africa, in 2004-2006. Fort Washakie locals wanted to know more

about beekeeping when they learned of her experiences. Russell started an introduction to beekeeping program and, from those workshops, she began receiving requests for a program on beehive products.

"People wanted to know more about what else they could do with the byproducts of their hives besides honey," says Russell, who has been the Wind River Reservation extension educator since 2008. "So I developed hands-on workshops where participants learn to make Chapstick, lotions, and candles."

Her new program is pollinators and pollinations, spurred by the interest in Colony Collapse Disorder and the decline of pollinators.

Seems that led to an increased interest in promoting pollinators in people's own backyards.

Living Healthy Lifestyles

Clarisse and Pat Harris of Ethete, just down the road from Fort Washakie, have been trying to eat more natural foods the last two years. They've built a greenhouse, which had just recently withstood high winds, and they usually have a big garden.

"We started eating honey to eliminate some of the sugar and corn syrup from our diets and are looking at bees for the honey," says Clarisse.

The diet change is for a reason. "I'm a diabetic," says Pat, 66, who was diagnosed 16



Materials for beehives behind the Frank B. Wise Business Plaza at Fort Washakie.

years ago. “The way we’ve been eating the last few years have really helped me lose weight. I used to be 250 pounds, and now I’m at 175.”

They need to be healthy and energized – they’re raising three young boys.

Home-grown Agricultural Adventures

Russell sees an increasing number of people wanting their own beehives.

“It is an agricultural venture that can be done in an

urban as well as rural setting that requires less effort than other small-scale agricultural projects like raising chickens or goats,” she says. “It’s fun, people really enjoy the bees, and many like the idea of putting pollinators back into the ecosystem.”

That’s a sweet idea – and Russell cautions most of the hives are for honey and home consumption and not commercial production.

“Beekeeping for most people is a hobby,” she says. “There are a lot of risks when starting your own hive, and many people experience dieback of their hives in the winter due to a variety of reasons. For most people, beekeeping is not a money-making endeavor. It’s more for the enjoyment.”



Jared Dorothy, left, helps Tim Thomas trim wood to the correct size. The trim wood will be used as starter strips in the beehive.



Master Gardener Kathleen Thomas, left, and Rhonda Bowers, office associate for the Wind River Reservation extension office.

EDEN

Extension Disaster Education Network connects Wyoming citizens with expert resources

Casper
agrosecurity
training
only one
brick in the
information
foundation of
what to do if
a disaster is
racing toward
you, your
loved ones.

Exension Disaster Education Network's (EDEN) "Strengthening Community AgroSecurity Preparedness" (S-CAP) reached Wyoming for the first time last September, bringing producers, emergency managers, and a number of state, local, and federal agencies together in Casper.

Twenty-six community representatives attended a two-day workshop spearheaded by national S-CAP trainer and UW Extension area educator Scott Cotton.

The program, full of interactive group activities, opened with broad concepts and closed with examples and discussions involving the counties and communities of the attendees.

"The whole goal is strengthening community agro-security," says Cotton. "So we start with the generic overview – the federal 10,000-foot level. We bring it down to 3,000 foot at the state, then we go to the county and then next thing you know we're

right into that community where they can see how it affects their operation and why they should make input to the county authorities on how things should be done."

Agricultural Production, Economies

Agro-security is a topic of special consideration, more specific than other emergency preparedness planning. S-CAP offers a chance to address an array of issues capable of affecting agricultural production and economies. Examples of these threats span from natural disasters, such as fires and snowstorms, to bioterrorism and livestock-borne diseases and illnesses.

"This is where we bring everybody together to help develop an improved plan for counties on what they're going to do if there's a disaster that impacts ag-related communities or agriculture," notes Cotton. "Most programs like this are a bigger turn out if we have a teachable moment – which is the normal educational process. The downside to this

kind of coursework is that teachable moments are right after a disaster.”

Cotton will be relying on word of mouth to help the program grow in Wyoming. Based on the previous 19 states that have already adopted S-CAP, he thinks the curriculum

coupled with the networking opportunities for emergency managers, agency representatives, and local producers has the ability to sell itself.

“The benefit to it is that the county emergency managers really quickly realize, ‘Wow, here is not

only additional resources but additional contacts that I didn’t even know were available that have their finger on the pulse of the community around me,’” explains Cotton. “It’s a win-win in the long run because the producers get the ear of the



Natrona County Public Health Preparedness manager Audrey Gray reviews her group’s work with extension educator Scott Cotton, upper left.

emergency managers and they can tell them what they can do to help and what *should* be done to help.”

Train the Trainer

Two UW Extension educators (see story page 19) and one specialist attended as part of the train-the-trainer program. Cotton explains they will be certified with EDEN and the Department of Homeland Security as S-CAP state trainers.

“Invariably when we start up efforts in a state, it’s usually national trainers,” he says. “The nice part is, for instance with Wyoming, I’m a national trainer but if I have three state trainers who can work with me, we have a lot more horsepower to make this happen easier across the state.”

He said EDEN has a pool of 400-500 researchers and professionals spanning an immense amount of knowledge across the United States, and that “it’s the extension way” to help each other and bring in research-based information to best deal with crucial issues.

Cotton also said S-CAP’s success is found in coupling EDEN’s resources with another powerful group prevalent in farming and ranching communities.

“Agricultural producers by nature are very independent, but they have a long history of helping their neighbors if something happens. We’re really just trying to drag that in where the county emergency system is connected to it.”



Lander-based Jim Summers, DVM, listens to S-CAP presenters discuss agricultural emergency preparedness.

WYOMING PART OF NATIONAL NETWORK OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

Wyoming Extension joined the National EDEN organization about 15 years ago notes UW Extension educator Ron Cunningham.

Cunningham, along with fellow extension educators Scott Cotton and Kellie Chichester, provide emergency preparedness programs throughout the state. He says all members of the Wyoming community can benefit from preparedness training.

Through the network's Web page and community education presentations and workshops, EDEN tackles topics that many face daily and many subjects not connected to disaster:

- **Heat/sun safety:** and the elderly, heat-related illness, work environments, skin cancer.
- **Human disease:** H1N1 virus, Swine flu, West Nile, Ebola, other infectious disease.
- **Family stress:** Talking to children about terrorism, armed conflict and violence, disaster mental health, managing stress, fear, and courage.
- **Food and family safety:** Food safety and prep during an emergency, drug residues and food safety, imported drywall, safe kitchen rules.



National S-CAP trainer and UW Extension area educator Scott Cotton helped coordinate the first workshop for the program in Wyoming. Perspective begins at the "10,000-foot level" and ends at the county and committee views.

- **Bio-security and animal health:** Brucellosis, bio-security guides and materials, water quality for Wyoming livestock and wildlife.
- **Natural disasters:** Drought, earthquakes, floods, heat waves, tornadoes, water issues, wildfires, wind damage.

These and other topics can be found at www.uwyo.edu/uwe/wyo-disaster/.

Extension partners with other agencies and professionals to present EDEN programming including Wyoming state veterinarian Jim Logan, the Department of Homeland Security, and various local governments.

Major programs in Wyoming are winter survival,

flooding, S-CAP, and the Animal Health Network.

For questions concerning EDEN programs or disaster-related information, contact any of the following UW Extension educators:

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Kellie Chichester
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(307) 721-2571
kelliec@uwyo.edu

Inquires may also be directed to "Ask an Expert" found at www.uwyo.edu.

NETWORKING, CONNEC

Sure. Those attending the Living and Working on the Land conference were immersed in information, but it's the face-to-face that grows impact

Sunshine splashed northern Wyoming the first week of September where a week later almost to the day several inches of snow served notice summer, if not screeched to a halt, was certainly fading.

But for September 2-4 in Sheridan, those traveling – some hundreds of miles – to the Living and Working on the Land (LWOTL) conference reveled in the waning growing season. They listened and observed three days of sessions and speakers, took tours to see how management skills were put into practice but most importantly, they connected.

Chris Korfanta of rural Ranchester is retired but wanted to know how to generate income from her and her husband's small acreage. Jim Britt of Gillette has apple trees and other

plants that need pollination. He and wife, Betty, listened to Cliff Reed of Dayton explain basic beekeeping. Kris Robertson of Hyattville was exploring ways to bolster her dairy cow share enterprise that's in addition to her and husband Gene's cow-calf operation.

"Networking and connecting resources," says Cole Ehmke, University of Wyoming Extension agriculture entrepreneurship specialist and one of the planners of all LWOTL conferences.

Third Such Conference

Conferences aren't every year. Others were 2007 in Riverton and 2010 in Torrington. Each hosted different session topics and keynote speakers. Those interested can dig deep into resources, including videos, sound bites, PowerPoint slides, and more from all the conferences at www.blocksofsuccess.org.

"Responses for the Living and Working on the Land conference have been extremely enthusiastic," says Ehmke.



Living & Working on the Land
THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF SUCCESS

TING

"The people who come love to be at the conference. It's a great place to meet other people interested in doing more with their acres, whether small or large, whether directly involved in agriculture or a little bit on the fringes."

Sure, Korfanta wanted to know how she might generate revenue from her acres, but she's also interested in herbs and medicinal plants. She attended the "Landscaping with Native Plants" presented by Jennifer Thompson with UW Extension.

"I love living in the mountains and learning about the wildflowers and the chemicals in them," she says. She grows vegetables but not flowers. Her next move is planting them. She wants to know about their drought resistance, pollination, and herbal properties.

Variety of Topics

Here's a sampling of the sessions this year:

Beginning beekeeping, health and safety requirements for direct sales, women on the ranch, growing berries, energy and

agriculture, Wyoming First/Wyoming MarketMaker, keeping a horse healthy, small-scale dairy, taking your project to the next level, getting started in agriculture, backyard chickens, strategies to transform agriculture to meet the future, and starting a boarding horse enterprise.

Keynote speakers were Ken Meter of the Crossroads Resource Center, who discussed strategies for strong connections in a local food economy, and Fred Kirschenmann, a long-time national and international leader in sustainable agriculture, who presented building agriculture systems that work.

Optional tours were Mountain Meadow Wool Mill in Buffalo, Holliday Family Farms near Dayton, and a

food preservation workshop at Sheridan College.

People-to-Resources

The range of topics covered is appealing, says Ehmke. The conference is excellent at connecting people to resources and other people interested in the same topics.

Britt wants to bolster plant pollination on his property. "At times, we haven't had a real good bee population, so we were thinking about getting a couple hives of bees," he notes. Presenter Cliff Reed operates Tongue River Apiaries in Dayton. "He's a commercial bee man," says Britt. "What he does and what a person with just one or two hives, or someone going to process all the honey for farmers markets, is totally different in how they operate."



UW Extension specialist and conference planner Cole Ehmke, left, visits with conference attendee Harold Johnson.

Former UW Extension educator Lindsay Wood runs a cow-calf operation near Spotted Horse. She and her husband had recently purchased land and a house adjacent to that ranch. She has a consulting business helping landowners with grazing plans and range monitoring. Wood presented a woman's view of being in agriculture.

"She's passionate about what she's doing," says Robertson, who was most interested in new types of electric fences. "We have some fiberglass posts and some plastic. I don't like any of them," she says.

The woman's touch was good. "Women are social, and when you are in agriculture and in rural situations, you don't get that," she notes.

Not Planned for 2015

A LWOTL conference isn't set for 2015. There isn't secure funding from year to year and schedule conflicts are also at play.

This year's sponsors were UW Extension, the Wyoming Business Council, Agribusiness Division, Audubon Rockies, and the USDA and USDA Risk Management Agency.

"Without the support of the USDA Risk Management Agency, the conference would not have happened," says Ehmke. "They are interested in helping those in agriculture manage the risk of getting involved in and starting in agriculture. They have funds to help with this. We wouldn't have had the event without their support."



Nutrition and food safety educator Kentz Willis gives food preservation suggestions during a hands-on, after-conference workshop at the Sheridan County extension office facilities.

Conference offers entrepreneurs marketing zing

Many conference participants were interested in home-scale products or services, but others were interested in commercial avenues.

The Wyoming Business Council offers entrepreneurs a hand in marketing their Wyoming products.

Terri Barr, Wyoming products program manager of the council's Agribusiness Division, talked about the programs available to

companies with products they'd like promoted in Wyoming and beyond its borders.

"We brainstorm with them on the different places they could possibly market their products like local stores, farmer markets, arts and craft fairs, florists shops," she says. "We try to get them as much information as we can and brainstorm the avenues that might work best for them."

That can also cut costs.

"It can be very expensive to promote your products," Barr says. "We give an inexpensive way to promote products such as the Wyoming First program, with which the members get their own informational websites such as the wyomingfirst.org Web page. We have a printed catalogue distributed at events like this and other local, state, and national events."

Wyoming First, agribusiness, and starting a business resources and other information are at www.wyomingbusiness.org/business.



Extension educator Scott Hininger, left, and John Buyok of Rocking Chair Farms



We're ready for the next 100 years

University of Wyoming President Dick McGinity, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Dean Frank Galey, and Glen Whipple, UW Extension director, were among those attending UW Extension's 100th anniversary reception at the Wyoming State Fair and Rodeo. The traveling exhibit capturing 100 years of extension in Wyoming was displayed all week. The displays featured, through photographs, touch-screen computers, and life-size boards, extension's engagement with citizens since 1913. The exhibit received the Outstanding Educational Exhibit Award in commercial exhibits on behalf of the F.A.I.R. Posse. The posse is a self-supporting, non-profit organization that promotes Wyoming State Fair Park activities.



Dean Frank Galey and UW President Dick McGinity share the knife to cut the cake to begin the 100th anniversary extension reception.



Peggy Hiser at the extension anniversary exhibit. Her husband, Dick, was a former extension educator.



Above, extension members posed for this 1914 photo on the UW campus at the start of the extension era. A hundred years later, and entering extension's second century, educators and specialists in front of the Marian H. Rochelle Gateway Center in Laramie.

