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University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service

In this issue

Campbell County
4-H welding club

Cooperative range
monitoring

Wind River Indian
Reservation
educator comes full
circle

Money Talk
sessions via
videoconferencing

Including youths
with impairments
in 4-H

CES team wins
national award



From the director...

I will soon step into the role of chairman of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP).

It has kind of an academic sounding name but, in essence, ECOP is the national organization of state extension directors. The chairman is the leader of ECOP. The mission of ECOP is to initiate planning and identify nationwide issues that lead to program and budget priorities for the extension system.

Much of my spare time the next couple of years will be spent serving my extension colleagues and the national extension system in this leadership role.

This might be a good opportunity to talk about UW Cooperative Extension Service and its place in the universe. The cooperative extension system consists of state cooperative extension services associated with the land-grant university in each of the 50 states and most of the territories. Guam, for example, has an excellent extension organization.

Cooperative extension nationally and at the state level is a partnership of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the state through its land-grant university, and local governments.

In Wyoming, county government is an important partner in cooperative extension. Our funding is provided cooperatively by the three partners. The federal government provides nearly a third of our funding, including Cent\$ible Nutrition Program funds. County governments provide about a fourth, and UW provides more than 40 percent of the extension budget.

So, the extension organization exists at each of these levels – county extension, state extension, and national extension. We are accountable and actively organized at each level.

This next year will be my opportunity to shape the extension organization at the national level.

It should be interesting.

This issue of *Extension Connection* highlights a variety of unusual extension activities. Each is focused clearly on serving Wyoming's people. From the Iron Workers 4-H Club to the Medicare prescription education effort to voluntary cooperative range monitoring to Money Talk – they clearly target the needs of Wyoming people.

One of the real strengths of the extension system is its local organization. The agenda is driven from the ground up by the needs of people and communities. We are proud of what we can do and grateful for support of our funding partners enabling our service.

I hope you will enjoy reading about the work of these exceptional extension educators. If you have thoughts about the magazine or other aspects of UW CES, please e-mail me at glen@uwo.edu or call at (307) 766-5124.

Regards



Glen Whipple



Glen Whipple



Jake Ruff of Hettinger Welding of Gillette, who started the Iron Workers 4-H Club, explains safety and use of the oxygen/acetylene welder.

Campbell County welding club melds 4-Hers with community interests

By Steven L. Miller,
Senior Editor
Office of Communications
and Technology

A welding club seems to have forged city and business support into a program in which country and city 4-Hers are learning a trade.

The Iron Workers 4-H Club in Gillette started in 2004 with about eight members and now has about 21 ages 8 to 18.

The welding club sparked an interest with youths in a county driven by energy industries and a need to fill jobs with employees with the needed skills.

"Welding is something that, once they learn, is very empowering," says Rindy West, UW Cooperative Extension Service 4-H/youth educator serving Campbell County.

West says several 4-Hers in 2004 had been signing up for self-determined welding projects when talk began in the city about a need for another school to train college-age youths for the workforce.

"I thought, 'gosh, this is coincidental,'" says West. "I talked to a couple leaders, and they had the same idea to start a welding club. The 4-Hers would be picking up life skills through 4-H but also learning technical skills and safety."

That's when Jake Ruff stepped up. A co-owner of Hettinger Welding Inc. in Gillette, Ruff started the club with the help of his wife, Luana, and Janet Johnson, and offered business resources. Hettinger Welding employs more than 400.

"I have some of the best welders in the world," he proudly says. "I'll match them to anybody when welding pipe. These guys walk in, and I'll ask them to show the kids something. They enjoy the heck out of it. These guys are willing to pass their trade on. They love working with those kids."





"4-H teaches character, integrity, commitment, and civic responsibility."

Ruff says the vocational ag system in public schools doesn't have time to teach kids the basics of farm mechanics, and its direction has changed to more agriculture science.

"The quality of ag products going out is pretty rough," he says. "I thought what the heck. I'll try with lower-age kids to get more interest in ag mechanics and less in ag science."



Rindy West

His oldest son, Trevor, was the club's first president, and his second son, Nolan, is a member. Ruff has opened up his business twice a month to the 4-Hers for use of equipment and metal available at a lower price because of a discount the business receives.

"Sometimes I have two or three, and sometimes I have 21 kids," Ruff notes. "I run it pretty loose. They are not required to come to the 4-H meetings. When it stops being fun, it becomes a job, and I don't want them here."

Steve and Billie Jo Young have three sons in the club – Ethan, 17, Tyler, 14, and Bailey, 12. They've been club members since its beginning.

"They took an interest in welding, and we didn't have access to a welder," says Steve Young. "This was an opportunity to teach them a skill. They are learning some of the more difficult aspects. It's not as easy as it looks. The thing about 4-H I think is beneficial is it teaches responsibility."

West doesn't think the club leaders thought about forming the club for career preparation, but the community is discussing whether to put in a recreation center or build a facility to teach welding and other skills related to mining and energy.

Teaching life skills is providing a spin-off. Civic leaders have noticed the effect 4-H has on youths. The city has provided more

than \$40,000 to help pay for Clover Corrals, a facility in which non-rural youths can have 4-H projects. During 4-H fund-raising efforts, the city donated more than \$6,000.

"They'd rather fund 4-H to keep youths out of trouble than putting money into detention programs," says West. "They'd much rather have fore thinking – having kids start with positive values and life skills, getting them down the right track to begin with."

Gillette Mayor Duane Evenson says 4-H teaches character, integrity, commitment, and civic responsibility.

"It teaches them to be good citizens and about the importance of volunteerism and how to be part of a community," says Evenson. "That adds an awful lot of value to a community that has good leaders."

Evenson credits West for the program's strength and offers the Clover Corrals project as an example. The 4-Hers approached the council with an entire business program and plan and how they were going to raise money to build it and fund its operation, and how to pay off the debt.



A 4-Her welds lines that will be checked for quality by club leader Jake Ruff.

"It was impressive," he says. "I've watched 4-Hers from the time they were 8 or 9 and grow up and see that 4-H makes a difference. I think it's a tremendous program to help kids."

A North Dakota native, Evenson was never in 4-H. "I want to stress I see the value it brings to those children and the confidence it gives them in personal skills and the community skills so important to people today for success in the business world."



Ranchers who hold permits to graze livestock on public lands in western Wyoming learn how to perform a line transect to determine the densities of groundcovers including plants, rocks, and other materials. Bureau of Land Management Range Specialist Steve Laster, left, with clipboard, ensures the process is properly carried out.

Cooperative range monitoring fosters trust

Western Wyoming ranchers who hold permits to graze livestock on federal lands say their relationship with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has gone from contentious to cooperative.

They say this new sense of goodwill stems from a monitoring program spearheaded by the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service (UW CES). Livestock producers and personnel from the two federal agencies voluntarily participate.

"It all came about as a

result of friction between the grazing permittees and the USFS," says Eric Peterson, an area extension educator for Sublette, Teton, and Lincoln counties.

Peterson helped produce a new bulletin and DVD to help permittees and managers of public lands implement cooperative rangeland monitoring programs. More than 1,500 copies of the bulletin, *Implementing a Cooperative Permittee Monitoring Program*, and 600 DVDs have been distributed throughout the western United States.

Ranchers are learning more about the range resource and how to care for it. Subsequently, some permit holders have found they are able to keep their livestock on the federal allotments longer, and their cattle and sheep are in better shape when they return to winter pastures, according to ranchers.

"We get along better with the USFS since we started the cooperative permittee monitoring. We also have a lot more knowledge about the range resource and how to care for it," says Wayne Jensen, who

By Robert Waggener,
Editor
Office of Communications
and Technology

"This is a win-win situation for the agencies, the permittees, and



Filming takes place for a range-monitoring DVD produced by the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service. Being filmed are Joel Bousman, left, a grazing permittee who ranches near Boulder, Wyoming, and Steve Laster, a range specialist with the Bureau of Land Management.

raises cattle near Boulder, Wyoming. "That's allowing us to keep our cattle up there longer, and they are in better shape when they come out."

Another Boulder-area rancher, Joel Bousman, says, "Since we started the joint monitoring programs, our working relationship with the Forest Service and BLM improved dramatically."

Bousman, president of the Silver Creek Grazing Association, adds, "With the help of UW CES, we got out on the grazing allotments and started monitoring based on sound science using quantitative, long-term trend data, not someone's opinion."

Before joint monitoring started in 1996, federal land managers dictated the standards, and there was little communication with the ranchers. Agency folks agree this led to a contentious relationship, but that changed when the two sides accepted an offer from UW CES to sit down at one table.

"Before we got involved in this program, the USFS and BLM range specialists were the 'experts' on the grass and the resources. There was not a lot of cooperation with the ranchers," says Barb Franklin, a range specialist with the USFS in Pinedale, Wyoming.

"At the time, we had some very intelligent, well-educated people who knew about rangelands. The problem is they weren't communicating. Fortunately, we've all gotten a lot smarter in recent years. We recognize everyone has expertise and knowledge we need to share," Franklin says. "It's a matter of everyone looking at the same piece of real estate together and discussing resource concerns and ways to improve that resource together."

Concerning prior friction between grazing permittees and the USFS, Peterson says, "At the time, findings by the agency concerning the level of grazing were made without the involvement of the permittees, and a federal report expressing concern about stream sedimentation and erosion placed blame on livestock grazing."

When the permittees saw the report, it upset them because they didn't think the findings were accurate, says Peterson, who notes follow-up studies determined the problems outlined in the initial report were based on

issues beyond the control of the grazing permit holders.

The two sides agreed to launch a long-term volunteer program, and the success has encouraged other grazing associations in Wyoming and the West to follow suit, Peterson says. In Sublette County, Wyoming, there is now joint monitoring of 300,000-plus acres of federal lands involving nearly 15,000 cattle and 3,800 sheep.

"With the assistance of CES," Peterson says, "the grazing associations and agencies have gotten together to develop programs to monitor such things as cattle use and the trends in range and stream bank conditions. After 10 years, they have developed objectives for the rangeland, and they have evaluated the grazing strategies. It has resulted in documented stewardship of the rangelands."

Just as important, Peterson adds, "We've gone from a situation of contentiousness and animosity to one where we have a great working relationship between the parties. They are tied together by this volunteer program. They are working together to enhance the stewardship of the public lands."

Bousman says, "It's critical that the entire process be done jointly and voluntarily. That way everyone is on the same page, and they are all

the owners of the land – in this case the public.”

seeing the same thing at the same time. This builds trust, and trust goes a long way toward having a good, working relationship between federal agencies and the stakeholders of the land.”

Pinedale cattle rancher Albert Sommers agrees.

“Cooperative range monitoring with the USFS is a good way to resolve conflicts and look at problems together,” Sommers says.

“The agency folks previously dictated a certain standard, and you never went out together to do things like measure grass. This volunteer program fosters more trust.” Some might argue such a program leads to a situation of the fox (in this case the grazing permit holders) guarding the henhouse (the federal lands).

“All the monitoring is based on sound data provided by the ranchers, hydrologists, range and soil specialists, botanists, fisheries and wildlife biologists, and others,” Franklin says. “You can argue politics, but you can’t argue with scientific data.”

Peterson says range specialists are stretched too thin to monitor all of the public lands the way they would like.

“They have other pressing demands in addition to range monitoring work. When a rancher volunteers to be a partner in managing the rangeland, the



Area Extension Educator
Eric Peterson

members of the partnership define objectives for that rangeland,” Peterson says. “Permittees receive training from their agency specialists and others on rangeland monitoring methods, which measure the completion of those objectives.”

When objectives aren’t being met, the parties can sit down to address the situation, he says.

Since the livelihoods of many ranchers in the West depend on public lands, Peterson stresses, “I would argue the permit holders want to be good stewards of the rangelands, and the range specialists, in essence, now have volunteer range technicians working with them. This is a win-win situation for the agencies, the permittees, and the owners of the land – in this case the public.”

Peterson says members of the public, including environmental groups, are welcome to join the parties when they take to the field for monitoring sessions and workshops.

He adds one of the most important things the bulletin and DVD stresses is keeping management plans simple.

For example, Peterson says, “If you have an objective calling for less bare ground, then monitor for bare ground. Resist choosing a grand methodology that provides the frequency of a particular species of grass in your data collection.”

The bulletin is available at <http://www.uwyo.edu/CES/PUBS/B1169.pdf>.

Copies of B-1169 and/or the DVD can also be ordered free of charge from Peterson at (307) 367-4380 or eric@uwyo.edu.



Professor Mike Smith, a range management specialist with the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service, provides instruction on rangeland monitoring to grazing permittees, federal range specialists, and other CES personnel during a monitoring ride in western Wyoming’s Wind River Mountains.

Lisa Perry by the statue of Sacajawea on the Wind River Indian Reservation.



By Steven L. Miller,
Senior Editor
Office of Communications
and Technology

Walking in two worlds has led Lisa Perry to the place she most wants to be.

The trek of Perry, who graduated from the College of Agriculture last spring with a rangeland ecology and watershed management degree, went full circle to end at the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) office at Ethete on the Wind River Indian Reservation.

“I always thought it was important to get your education – education came first in my family,” she says. “I felt it would be right to get a degree, come back, and help my people.”

Perry learned how to bridge the “white” and “American Indian” worlds and says she wanted to be a

Educator's path leads

role model for the younger tribal members.

Getting an education and returning to the reservation to assist their tribal communities and people is very important, says Allison Sage, Northern Arapaho tribal liaison with Governor Dave Freudenthal's office.

“Just the fact a person has left the reservation and succeeded in obtaining an education is a major accomplishment,” he says. “It is a monumental accomplishment for students to do this and to serve as a positive role model for other students to follow.”

The nearly 2 million acres of land on the reservation captivated Perry as a youth. “I’ve spent a lot of time in the Wind River Range. I’ve always found the outdoors amazing and amusing (interesting) to me,” she says.

In high school, Perry found herself looking at a Russian knapweed infestation listening to Natural Resources Conservation Service workers explain how to control the weed. The trip was part of a career day at Lander Valley High School.

“I found it interesting, and one of them mentioned range management,” she

recalls. “I always knew I wanted to have a career doing something with natural resources.”

She researched the major on the UW Web site. “I knew that’s what I wanted to do. I never changed majors once. I never thought about it.”

Now putting her expertise to work, she says a focus is to have people know the CES has an office on the reservation. That hasn’t always been known. The office was moved from Fort Washakie to Ethete in 2004.

“A lot of people don’t know it’s here,” she says. “Then there are some people who do but don’t know where it is. Once it was moved to Ethete, many lost contact. Re-establishment with agricultural producers has been difficult but not impossible,” says Perry.

Sage agrees with Perry.

“I don’t really think too many people know what UW CES has to offer, and I don’t think it has done a very good job of getting the information out to the general public on the reservation,” he says.

An opportunity came last year during a 4-H program internship on the reservation. Perry worked with

full circle to Wind River Indian Reservation

CES Educator Milt Green, who had been the educator on the reservation but moved to Natrona County, to produce an agriculture summit on the reservation.

Having Perry as an intern was a gift, says Green.

"She was enthusiastic, she had knowledge of the tribal cultures and traditions, she had a good subject matter background, and she had a personality that just made everyone around her seem comfortable," he says.

Green was supervising Perry from Casper, more than 150 miles away, which meant Perry had to be self-starting. "She was, and the project was an enormous success," says Green.

Green notes Perry contacted producers individually and was able to gather a group of agriculture people willing to help develop a program needed for many years.

"Even though he was in Casper, Milt gave me a list of things to do and expected me to get them done," says Perry. "I was fortunate. Things went well that summer."

When the full-time CES educator position came open, Perry applied, was offered the job, "and I happily

accepted it," notes Perry.

She hopes to show producers there are opportunities for profit and ways to better care for the land. "The only reason they don't take advantage of programs available to them is because they don't know they are there," says Perry.

A 1999 graduate of Lander Valley High School, Perry also was hired as a summer assistant with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the land resource department and was able to gain additional range experience on the reservation.

She attended UW her freshman year but found the finances challenging. She attended Central Wyoming College in Riverton and finished her last two years at UW.

Perry's background gives insight into helping others on the reservation. "You grow up here, and you understand the ways. You understand why people do things the way they do. There is a lot of difference between the two worlds. We call it walking in two worlds," she says.

"I was in the 'white man' world at UW. When I came home, I was in the 'native' world. There is a big differ-

ence between the two, and the people who succeed are the individuals who manage the two world's the best."

That learning was in addition to the education at UW. "Our language is different. We use different words. When I would go back to UW, it was like I had to use a whole different vocabulary. On the reservation people use 'slang' words, words people of the white culture would not understand. So for me I had two sets of vocabulary – one for when I was away at school, and one for when I came home."

She also watched how she carried herself. "For me, I represented something bigger than just me. People see me and find out how I am and may think all

Indians are like me if they don't know Indians," she says. "I don't want people to judge my people just on my actions," she says.

Upon returning home, she wanted to be a positive role model for others, like her two older brothers who are, she says.

"They are working hard, have good jobs, and show that working hard does pay off," Perry says. "We all carry that same responsibility. We try to show young people on the reservation that, instead of getting into trouble, another way to satisfy what you want is to do good by going to school and working hard. You can never go wrong as long as you work hard and stay focused," Perry explains.





Money Talk sessions reached 16 Big Horn

By Steven L. Miller,
Senior Editor
Office of Communications
and Technology



Area Extension Educator
Rhonda Shipp

Money got in touch with its feminine side during Rhonda Shipp's first videoconferencing experience.

"Money Talk" was broadcast from six Big Horn Basin high schools to reach 16 communities January 30 through March 6. The series, developed by Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, targeted women because women on average live longer than men, earn less, and often have gaps in their employment history, says Shipp.

"This was an idea I brought up at one of my advisory council meetings, the notion of a series of classes," notes Shipp. "I showed them the Money Talk book and how it is focused toward a female audience. They found the information very timely, and a banker who is on the council said 'absolutely.'"

More than 80 signed up for the classes in the four counties, with about 40 percent saying they

increased their savings from \$10 a month to \$10,000 saved or invested since they had taken Money Talk.

Support was so enthusiastic from financial institutions a Thermopolis bank provided enough funds for five people from its community to take the course.

Reaching 16 communities was a lofty concept. Shipp first had to get it off the ground. Her answer came when the Park County Leadership Institute attended a Northwest College demonstration in Powell on the Wyoming Education Network (WEN) videoconferencing system that connected all high schools through Wyoming.

"I thought it would be easy, but it took time," Shipp reflects, and adds the experience would make the process much easier if done again.

"I thought it would save me from going to six different communities to teach, but it turned out to be just as much work," she says.

"It is that way with any new idea."

The WEN system would reach the four Big Horn Basin counties—Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, and Washakie—but high school students taking courses had first priority, which meant Money Talk could be bumped. With guidance from the WEN coordinator, Shipp explained the program to principals and superintendents at the six high schools.

She then needed money. Each school charged a small fee for the use of its facility, and each school provided a technician to run the equipment. Shipp approached the Soroptimists International of Cody to ask if the organization would help fund the series. The organization provided \$2,000, and a fee of \$20 was charged per person to pay for the workbook.

Six sites were chosen: Thermopolis, Worland, Greybull, Lovell, Powell, and Cody. Instructors taught from Cody except for Cole Ehmke, extension

Basin communities via videoconferencing

specialist, who taught from Laramie.

Sites were lost in Lovell and Worland before the first class. RT Communications Inc. of Worland worked with WEN to provide an alternative Worland site. Shipp says five financial institutions paid RT Communications for the use of the technology and technicians. No alternative site was found for Lovell.

Contacts made in communities resulted in six volunteers to be site facilitators. Shipp says the facilitator role was the absolute key to the success of the distance education idea.

"This was an experiment just to see how it would work," notes Shipp. "I did not have any experience with distance programming in what I offered. I wanted to see the value and success of using this technology."

Everyone learned during the first program.

"We were amazed at what we learned the first night," she says. "We thought we were ready to



Eleven participated in the Money Talk sessions at Thermopolis. A Thermopolis bank official was so enthused about the session the bank offered scholarships for five Thermopolis residents to attend.

go, but absolutely there was a steep learning curve the first night."

The instructor's long hair muffled the sound of her voice when she looked down, the size of the print shown on the visuals was too small, and she learned individual sites would have to be muted during breaks.

Handouts were prepared by instructors and mailed to site facilitators in advance of sessions. Questions were asked during the live classes, but students were also provided cards they could write

questions on and submit. Each instructor answered their questions and e-mailed to each student before the next class.

"I think this has huge potential because of the distances," says Shipp. "One of the things I was curious about was how the Cody people felt onsite with a live instructor there compared to those in other sites who didn't see the instructor except on screen. I was pleased there weren't huge differences. People at the outstanding sites were com-

fortable with the notion of receiving information via a screen with a live presenter."

One class member said the class was a good conversation starter with her husband. Another said, "This gives me a good idea of what I need to be looking at. I always just thought about 'next month or next year' stuff. I am providing information to my co-workers around the state quarterly through a newsletter format and giving them planning tools I received from this course."

Helping people financially was Shipp's hope. "Fundamentally that makes their home structure, their home environment, a place where they can enjoy the fruits of their labors," notes Shipp.

Shipp says WebEx, which provides Web conferencing, online meeting, and Web event services, also has potential for long-distance programming. "I am anxious to learn the tool and anxious to give that a try," she says.



Lisa Trujillo, right, with her sister, Agnes, at the Carbon County junior livestock sale in 2005.

“4-H has given her

to accept differences, accept others, and cooperate in groups, says Parker – all skills needed later in the work world. “I was astounded how easy it was for the youths with impairments to accept things and how well they did it,” she says.

The 1,000-pound steer was Lisa’s first project. Her next was a pig. Lisa is now 19 and involved with horses. “4-H really helped her self-esteem,” says her mother. “When she started 4-H, it was ‘will you do this for

Including youths with impairments —

By Steven L. Miller,
Senior Editor
Office of Communications
and Technology

Including 4-Hers with impairments in Carbon County programs have caused volunteers to put heads, hearts, hands, and health into action.

The tradition of the four H’s and inclusion has always been a part of Carbon County 4-H, says Janet Derrico, a leader of 11 years. “You don’t have to be anything special to be in 4-H,” she says. “4-H makes you special because it teaches you things.”

Lisa Trujillo, whose daughter, Lisa, is blind, learned this.

“I had parents ask me ‘aren’t you scared to have your daughter walk a 1,000-

pound steer?’” she says. “I said ‘No. It scares me more for her not to have that experience.’”

Including youths with disabilities requires no special effort in the county, says Susan Parker, CES educator for Albany and Carbon counties, who started in 2005.

“It was amazing to me it was ingrained in the people,” she notes. “It can be a lot of work for some people, but no one cared. No problem. They didn’t make a big deal out of it either way. They made the kids and their parents feel comfortable.”

Inclusion teaches kids

me?’ Now it’s ‘I can do this.’ I am one of those parents who believe I want my kids to get as much exposure as they can. Just because Lisa has a disability doesn’t slow that process down.”

Hannah Weatherd, 13, is a champion rabbit and poultry showman. She also cooks—and last year competed in Western Pleasure.

She’s also blind.

The daughter of Jill and Brad Weatherd of Saratoga, Hannah has partial vision in her right eye and can detect light and dark in her left eye. A 4-Her since she was old enough to be in 4-H, she completed all her

confidence and is something she can do well.” –*Jill Weatherd*

workbooks in Braille before she learned to type. Now, technology provides a device similar to a PDA (personal digital assistant) but with refreshable Braille – pins rise to form letters. She can connect the device to a telephone line or printer.

Jill Weatherd says people in 4-H have been supportive of Hannah and allow some provisions, such as using an actual saddle to point out parts instead of a photograph. Brad used a two-way radio in horse competition to let her know

she can compete at and do well, and she enjoys it,” notes Jill. “I know she’s learned a lot of poise. Early on, she had to perform demonstrations and speeches in front of groups. Sometimes she gets down on herself about other things, but she knows she is good at things in 4-H.”

Derrico’s daughters, Antenniell and Kylah, served as junior leaders and helped a 4-Her with blindness and a learning disability complete a hog project.

Including 4-Hers

learning disability to feed the pigs every day and show how to handle her pig. They spent hours working and began show ring practicing one week before fair started. The day of the show, the junior leader went in the ring with her. When the judge asked questions, the junior leader answered from what she observed of the 4-Her.

At age 15, the 4-Her had done something on her own without help from family or teachers – just someone who cared about her, says

Four H’s in Carbon County don’t include ‘how?’

to slow down or speed up. The judges knew in advance.

Otherwise, she’s expected to complete projects just like anyone else.

“One thing we appreciate is we always ask people not to give her a break for anything. She doesn’t need that. We have high expectations,” says her mother.

A middle school student at Saratoga, Hannah has played volleyball, but she will likely never be on varsity sports teams.

Jill says 4-H is her daughter’s sport.

“It has given her confidence and is something

with impairments takes dedication of volunteers and leaders, notes Parker. “Volunteer leaders and junior leaders have to plan and implement what they need to do to help incorporate someone with visual impairments or learning disabilities,” she says. “It takes a lot of planning and prep work. They do that.”

Junior 4-H leaders make including youths with impairments into 4-H very easy, agrees Derrico. “I want junior leaders to experience it,” she says. “It helps them grow in other ways.”

The junior leaders went with the 4-Her having the



Hannah Weatherd making a flower box at the Saratoga Make It and Take It activity. She also planted a flower in the box.

Derrico. “She just lit up,” she says. “It was awesome watching her grow. She can’t express what she learned, but you can observe what she learned.”

Lisa’s affection for animals melded with 4-H. Her steer weighed 400 pounds when she began the project. She had to feed him and understand the bond that comes from taking care of an animal every day, her mother says.

Lisa and David Trujillo taught their daughter how much to feed.

“As the steer grew, we had to add to that. She liked feeding him grain out of a bucket. That’s where a lot of the bonding came,” says Lisa. “Most people go to a gate and crawl over, and it’s an easy thing. For her, it’s difficult. She’s small and had to overcome that size difference. Animals understand, and they do fine.”



Area Extension Educator
Susan Parker



Hannah makes a tied blanket at the Make It and Take It in Saratoga.

Lisa’s hog project began when her pig was 6 or 7 weeks old. “The pig and her bonded,” her mother says. “At fair, after he had his bath and his pen was cleaned, Lisa would sit with him every night and scratch his belly. The animals seem to understand that something is a little different.”

Her older sister, Agnes, went into the show ring with Lisa to give verbal directions. Lisa didn’t need help knowing which one her hog was. “People with visual impairments have hearing you can’t believe,” says her mother.

4-Hers with impairments are not judged any differently, says Parker. Parker allowed Lisa’s sister to read the horse test to her and would allow Lisa to put a finger on a piece of equipment she was required to name.

“I sat there and proctored the test to make sure nothing was done to give her an unfair advantage but still allow her to take the written test even though she was blind and also not to give her the expectations people will be kind to her because she is blind.”

The 4-H experience

provides lessons 4-Hers need in life. “They learn how to manage difficulties, how to get along with other people who are not like them, to participate and help out in the community,” says Parker. “They need to learn not only how to accept others but contribute where they can.”

The 4-H projects changed the outlook of the Trujillos.

“If kids have handicaps, let them have these experiences,” says Lisa. “They may not have another opportunity. Nothing bad will come from it.”



Receiving the partnership award at the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) national meeting, with Sandy McLean, NEAFCS president, far left, are, from left, Phyllis Lewis, Stella McKinstry, Denise Smith, Ruth Wilson, Vicki Hayman, Patti Griffith, and Chris Pasley.

CES team wins national award, benefits Wyoming residents

By Tiffany Ann Schaffner
Agricultural Communications
Intern

A University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service team can be credited for saving some Wyoming residents thousands of dollars in prescription costs.

Campbell, Crook, and Weston counties extension educator Vicki Hayman and her team provided the Medicare-approved Prescription Drug Discount Card enrollment and education.

Hayman was team leader, and Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, and Washakie counties educator Phyllis Lewis, former educator Virginia Nina-Caron, and CES Associate Director Ruth Wilson were project directors.

One participant, JoAnne Knobel of Riverton who was paying about \$150 for a single prescription, now pays about \$10 as a member of this program. She explains most of her prescriptions cost around \$3 or \$5, and \$10 is the most she pays now which saves her an estimated \$300 to \$400 per month.

"It is well worth it, and I am very pleased with it," says Knobel.

More than 65 extension educators from Wyoming, Idaho, Nebraska, Nevada, and South Dakota partnered to provide Medicare-approved Prescription Drug Discount Card education and enrollment in 2005.

The partnership has helped approximately 1,849 members enroll in the program. Between November 1, 2004, and July 28, 2005, at least 46,571 Medicare recipients in the five states enrolled for Medicare-approved drug cards, resulting in a potential savings of at least \$1.5 million for enrollees.

"This was an exceptional opportunity for Wyoming to partner with these other agencies to provide tools and training to extension professionals to educate rural communities and underserved audiences about the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act through the cooperative extension system," says Hayman. She explains the states were chosen on the basis of Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services demographic and beneficiary data. Medicare beneficiaries and family caregivers who are rural or underserved, have limited resources, and/or are from minority population groups were targeted to receive information. Social service professionals working with these audiences were also targeted.

To implement the program in Wyoming, training was conducted for the nutrition and food safety exten-

sion educators. "We also held conference-call meetings and communicated by e-mail," says Hayman.

More than 283 civic groups and organizations partnered in educational programs related to the Medicare Drug Discount Card Outreach Campaign.

In Wyoming, 55,501 people are eligible for the Medicare prescription drug plan. As of July, 35,777 people enrolled – 64 percent of those eligible.

"Wyoming strategies leading to our success included a CES nutrition and food safety initiative team approach, credibility of CES, agency/organization partnerships, community education outreach, marketing, and working with volunteers," says Hayman.

The team received the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Community Partnership Award and the U.S.

Department of Agriculture's Priestester Award. The award honors extension programs that positively affect the health of people and provide leadership to expand extension's capacity to effectively implement health programs.

Hayman contributes the project's success to her team of Platte, Goshen, and Laramie counties educator Christine Pasley, Fremont County and Wind River educator Patti Griffith, Converse, Natrona, and Niobrara counties nutrition and food safety educator Denise Smith, and emerita senior extension educator Stella McKinstry.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services reported extension Medicare drug card education resulted in significant enrollment increases in several states.

"This grant project strengthened partnerships with other state agencies and organizations and showed the value of a state-wide response team," says Hayman.

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Senior Editor

Steven L. Miller

Editor

Robert Waggener

Layout and Design

Tana Stith

Send comments or suggestions to:

Glen Whipple

Dept. 3354

1000 E. University Ave.

Laramie, WY 82071

(307) 766-5124

glen@uwyo.edu

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University of Wyoming
Cooperative Extension Service
Dept. 3354
1000 E. University Ave.
Laramie, WY 82071

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