

## Oneida County UW-Extension Staff

**Lynn Feldman**

4-H Youth Development Educator  
County Department Head

Email: [lynn.feldman@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:lynn.feldman@ces.uwex.edu)

**Myles Alexander**

Community, Natural Resources and Economic  
Development Educator

Email: [myles.alexander@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:myles.alexander@ces.uwex.edu)

**Sara Richie**

Family Living Educator

Email: [sara.richie@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:sara.richie@ces.uwex.edu)

**Terri Lindner**

Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program

Email: [terri.lindner@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:terri.lindner@ces.uwex.edu)

**Ginger Zastrow**

Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program

Email: [ginger.zastrow@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:ginger.zastrow@ces.uwex.edu)

**Anne Williams**

Support Staff

Email: [anne.williams@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:anne.williams@ces.uwex.edu)

**Merry Lehner**

Support Staff

Email: [merry.lehner@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:merry.lehner@ces.uwex.edu)

### Office

3375 Airport Road #10  
Rhineland, WI 54501

Phone: 715-365-2750

Website: <http://oneida.uwex.edu>

### Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/OneidaCountyUWEX](http://www.facebook.com/OneidaCountyUWEX)

## Youth Development

# Youth take to the universe on Thursday afternoons

By Lynn Feldman

4-H Youth Development Educator  
UW-Extension Oneida County



On Thursday afternoons in October, 10 Three Lakes Junior High youth had the opportunity to participate in the Skynet

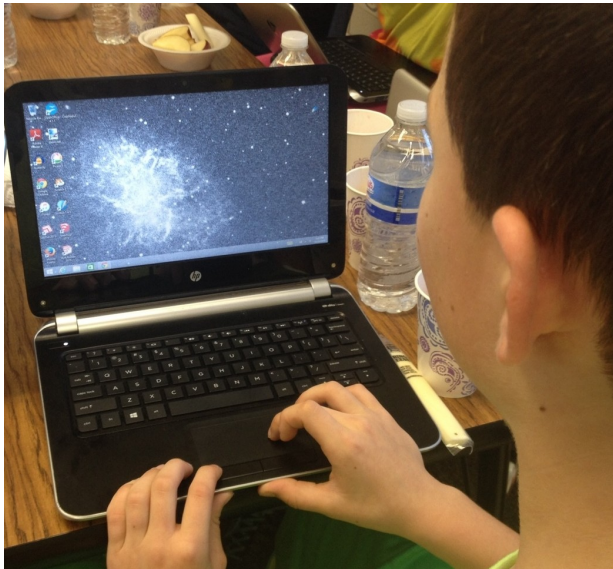
Junior Scholars online astronomy program. They were able to use research telescopes from around the world in an effort to take photos of objects in the night sky. Sponsored by the National Science Foundation, Skynet Junior Scholars is run usually as an afterschool activity by a trained facilitator. In Oneida County, the program is facilitated through University of Wisconsin-Extension 4-H Youth Development.

This is the second year this program has been offered in the Three Lakes School District, and this year twice as many students participated.

Held from 3:30-5 p.m., youth were able to take the "late bus" if necessary which then made the program accessible to all. Adult leaders included Lynn Feldman (UW-Extension staff), Ginger Zastrow (4-H volunteer), and Kirsten Margitan of the Three Lakes School system.

Telescopes involved in the Skynet program are located in various countries (Chili, Italy, Australia, and Canada) besides the United States. When there is downtime in the telescopes' research use, the photos that youth program in online are taken and sent back through the Skynet link. One particular telescope is located at the Yerkes Observatory in *Williams Bay*,

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Wisconsin where Edwin Hubble, of Hubble Telescope fame, studied while a student at the University of Chicago in the early 1900s. In the Skynet program, youth are taught to investigate photo exposure times and filters as they take pictures of objects of their choice.

Hands-on activities related to learning about light-years, mapping the universe, and planet sizes incorporate math skill development. More advanced projects include the use of an Astro Imaging Software program to highlight the colors related to an object's chemical make-up, an online photometer to measure object light quantity, and working on projects with adult astronomy researchers. All youth have the opportunity to keep records of their work, interact on a forum, and post pictures to a Skynet gallery.

As with any 4-H activity, the focus is mainly on life skill development. Youth set goals at the beginning and evaluate their progress toward these goals at the end. The Skynet program is used as a venue for more than Science and Technology learning. Last year's Three Lake's group, during an evaluation session at the end of the project, listed gains in creativity, critical thinking, cooperation and

communication skills, self-direction, respect of others, and problem-solving as benefits.

This was student David Kaufman's second year in the program, and he had been actively securing telescope time and taking pictures throughout the past year. As a result of his work, one of his pictures, shown here, was used in a "Live from Yerkes" presentation by the Skynet Junior Scholars Organization staff at the Science Museum in Tokyo.

***For more information on how to bring the Skynet Junior Scholars program in the future to an afterschool program, call Lynn at 715-365-2750 or email her at [lynn.feldman@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:lynn.feldman@ces.uwex.edu)***

## Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program

### Local WNEP educator reports on 2015 year

By Ginger Zastrow  
Wisconsin Nutrition Education  
Program Educator



The Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program educators concluded 4th Quarter, so "for the year" the educators successfully completed 407 of the 432 planned teaching events. This means the two WNEP educators completed 94 percent of the planned agency agreements for Fiscal Year 2015.

The total number of learners reached between Oct. 1, 2014, and Sept. 30, 2015, for Oneida County was 1,757, with 869 male and 888 females. The percentages by Ethnicity was 93.3% White, 3.9% Black/African American, 3.4% American Indian/Native American, 0.5% Asian/Asian American, 0.1% American Indian/Native American & White, 0.3% Black & White, 0.1% American Indian/Native American & Black, 0.1% All other combinations, 0.3% No race reported.

Similar results will be shared in the Civil Rights information.

## Community, Natural Resources and Economic Development

# Meet our new UW-Extension Educator: Myles Alexander



Hello!

It is good to be in Oneida County as your new Community, Natural Resource and Economic Development Extension educator. I will work in four areas:

1. Economic Development — to enhance local economic

health, business development, stable employment and quality of life.

2. Leadership and Organizational Development — to facilitate collaboration, local leadership development and community-based problem-solving.

3. Strengthen Local Governments — to offer educational resources for civic engagement and partnerships in local government decision-making.

4. Natural Resources—to deliver training and education on environmental resources, energy management and land use.

As I begin, my most important job is to get to know you.

My previous job was program coordinator at the Kansas State University Center for Engagement and Community Development and Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy. I worked with community members, faculty and staff to promote the programs and mission of CECD. I have a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Master of Architecture from the University of Minnesota. My Wisconsin connections began with a B.Sc. in Architecture from U. W. - Milwaukee. For many years I

volunteered with the Minnesota Design Team. The MDT helps communities envision and plan asset-based development. I also have a Master of Divinity. I served congregations in Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin as an intentional interim minister. That work guided congregations in transition from the previous ministry era to a new era of ministry and new clergy leadership.

I grew up in North Dakota and lived half my adult life in Minnesota. I know northern winters. I look forward to cross country skiing again and to try snow shoeing. It will be an adventure to learn the local trails. I enjoy canoeing and sail but - hint - do not own a canoe or sail boat. A couple times a week I play with ingredients to make a pail of dinner food. I enjoy travel to visit friends and family, and to gather with other shape note singers for days of a capella harmony singing (FFI [www.fasola.org](http://www.fasola.org) or youtube "Sacred Harp"). Bringing two kittens from a friend's ranch in western South Dakota into my home last Memorial Day has been an adventure.

## What is Community, Natural Resources & Economic Development?

Community, Natural Resource and Economic Development (CNRED) is a program within Cooperative Extension, a division of University of Wisconsin-Extension. CNRED is Wisconsin's educational network serving people and their communities in seeking positive change.

CNRED outreach programs, research and overall assistance involves people, communities, and organizations in educational experiences that teach them to apply appropriate knowledge and technology to the problems of the day.

CNRED programs deal with communities as well as the people and resources within them. Backed by University of Wisconsin research, CNRED educators work in partnership with people in county, state, federal, and tribal governments; community organizations; volunteers; business; and industry.



**Family Living**

# Making ends meet: What is the living wage here?

By Sara Richie  
 Family Living Educator  
 UW-Extension Oneida County



There has been a lot of chatter about increasing the minimum wage lately in Wisconsin. Minimum wage is currently set at \$7.25 per hour and whether you are single, a single parent or married, that is well below a living wage. A living wage is the hourly rate in which a person needs to earn, working full time hours, to support themselves or a family.

According to the Massachusetts Institute for Technology (MIT) Living wage calculator, a single person living alone should be making \$10.13 to make ends meet. The living wage calculator takes into account cost of food, medical bills, housing, transportation, child care and a little extra for other expenses. These prices are reflective of the area and comparable to the state’s prices, except for housing.

According to the MIT Living Wage calculator, housing costs are right around 15 percent of a person’s household income. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development suggests that families paying more than 30 percent of household income towards housing are considered to be “burdened.” This “30 percent” rule has become a standard for most rental and lending programs in the United States. In Oneida County more than half

of renters are paying 30 percent or more of their household income towards housing. This can be a heavy burden on families and does not leave much money left for food, childcare and other spending throughout the month.

A living wage for a single parent of two children is roughly \$60,000 per year, just under \$29 per hour. Average jobs in Oneida County are not comparable to that amount. From retail to construction laborers, the average annual wage for a full time worker is less than \$30,000 per year, half of what it takes to support a family. This can make it difficult for families to pay for childcare, housing and food. Families living under the poverty wage of \$9 per hour for one working adult may qualify to receive daycare assistance, food share and health care assistance. However, just above the poverty wage will disqualify a family for most, if not all assistance programs. This can be very stressful on families and in some cases, an individual may turn down a raise or have their hours reduced in order to continue receiving benefits.

Oneida County has several resources that can assist in easing the burden of monthly expenses for qualifying families. Resources are also available to assist families in creating a monthly budget to help them along the way.

**For more information contact Sara Richie, Family Living Educator at Oneida County UW-Extension at 715-365-2750 or email her at [sara.richie@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:sara.richie@ces.uwex.edu).**

Hourly Wages	1 Adult	1 Adult 1 Child	1 Adult 2 Children	1 Adult 3 Children	2 Adults (One Working)	2 Adults (One Working) 1 Child	2 Adults (One Working) 2 Children	2 Adults (One Working) 3 Children	2 Adults	2 Adults 1 Child	2 Adults 2 Children	2 Adults 3 Children
Living Wage	\$10.46	\$21.98	\$28.48	\$37.18	\$16.38	\$19.51	\$22.11	\$24.32	\$8.19	\$12.09	\$15.60	\$18.91
Poverty Wage	\$5.00	\$7.00	\$9.00	\$11.00	\$7.00	\$9.00	\$11.00	\$13.00	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00
Minimum Wage	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25	\$7.25

MIT Living Wage Calculations for Oneida County, WI. Retrieved from <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/55085>.

## Master Gardener Volunteers

# Master Gardeners Learn about Native Plants

By Merry Lehner

Support Staff, Master Gardener  
UW-Extension Oneida County



Our local Master Gardeners of the North Association meets once a month here in Oneida County and we often will have a guest speakers share garden tips with our group. This past month our guest speaker, Patrick Goggin, gave a presentation on gardening with native plants.

Goggin is a Lake Specialist with UW-Extension Lakes of the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership located in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. He works out of the Rhinelander Wisconsin DNR. He provides information and trains people interested in lake conservation and protection of lakes. One of his areas of interest is the native flora and fauna of Wisconsin lakeshores.

Goggin has a cabin in the Phelps area where he has created extensive gardens. We were able to see first-hand his passion for native flora through a slide show presented of his gardens. When he and his wife purchased the property, they started their gardens from scratch. His slide show gave a before and after perspective of how you can transform a space on your property. He gave an in-depth look at how you can design many different types of gardens that consist exclusively of native plants and others that incorporate native plants. He explained that various gardens can be created by habitat type. Beautiful gardens examples he shared were spring ephemerals, wildflower meadows, prairie flowers, wetland plants, and woodland plants.

There are several advantages of using native plant species. First of all, they are hardy perennials that are less susceptible to disease. These plants are designed to survive our tough

## GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS



Patrick  
Goggin

PATRICK GOGGIN, LAKE SPECIALIST WITH  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION LAKES TEAM  
SPONSORED BY MASTER GARDENERS OF THE NORTH



Wisconsin winters and quirky spring weather, so if conditions as less than perfect, they are hardy enough to survive.

Another helpful quality of native plants is how they assist pollinators. It makes sense that our local bees and butterflies will flourish with the plants they were designed to land upon. Goggin also shared how birds that migrate though our area will stop and visit areas that have plants, bushes and trees that will nourish them along their journey. It gives us the pleasure of being able to enjoy their brief visits. This holds true for local wildlife as well who will more likely frequent gardens and wild areas that promote good habitat.

Afterwards, Goggin provided answers to many questions about native plants and how to start gardens. There were many books, pamphlets and brochures available as well as on-line resources for all those who desired to learn more. All who attended enjoyed Goggin's good natured and sometimes humorous details on gardening in the Northwoods.

These programs are open to the public free of charge for any who are interested. One does not have to be a Master Gardener to become a member. For membership or more information, contact Tom Jerow by email at [tjerow@gmail.com](mailto:tjerow@gmail.com) or by phone at 715-369-6875. In our county, the Master Gardeners of the North meet once a month at 6 PM in the Oneida County Senior Center located near Trig's Supermarket.

**Merry can be reached at 715-365-2750.**