

Message from the District Director



MSU Extension is a catalyst for creating a lasting impact that ripples across the Upper Peninsula, the state, and beyond. Our programs reach all audiences and age groups—from youth learning essential life skills and farmers exploring ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness, to older adults accessing healthier foods and local communities discovering ways to boost economic impact. The possibilities for making an impact with Extension are endless.

Through partnerships, we can create exponential ripples that change the lives of our neighbors, family, and friends. For over 100 years, MSU Extension’s goal has been to “bring knowledge to life.” By connecting with organizations and agencies across the U.P., we bring the knowledge and research from Michigan State University to our communities and empower them to improve their lives. Alone, we can cast a small stone to create ripples; together, our stone grows to produce a larger impact than any one organization could create on its own.

I have been with MSU Extension for ten years, serving as a district director in the Western and Central Upper Peninsula. As I continue in this role, I look forward to exploring new ways to collaborate with our partners to create ripples of impact across Ontonagon County and beyond.

Paul Putnam  
District 1 Director

Ontonagon County Staff

Frank Wardynski, Ruminant Educator  
Kathy Bauer, Community Nutrition Instructor  
Paula Maloney, 4-H Program Coordinator  
Brenda Farley, Secretary

Contact Information

725 Greenland Road, Ontonagon, MI 49953  
Email: msue.ontonagon@county.msu.edu  
Phone: 906-884-4386  
www.msue.msu.edu/ontonagon

89

EXTENSION PROGRAMS INCLUDED ONTONAGON COUNTY RESIDENTS

696

ONTONAGON COUNTY RESIDENTS ATTENDED EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Program Highlight

**Senior Project FRESH (SPF)**, which is part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Bill, is a program designed to help older adults incorporate more fresh fruit and vegetables in their diet. Senior Project FRESH was created to assist older adults living on a limited income with a secondary benefit of supporting Michigan farmers.

Community Nutrition Instructor Kathy Bauer delivered educational programming at **four locations in Ontonagon County** in July to **54** senior participants.

37

Extension programs held in the county

559

people attended programs held in the county



REPORTING

25

Extension educators, specialists and program staff reported data for Ontonagon County

10

county direct one-to-one education contacts

4-H visits HeadStart

HeadStart invited 4-H Program Coordinator Paula Maloney into their room for reading, movement and a craft project. The little ones made lions and a rocket ship. They were delighted. As the children enter kindergarten, they will have some connection and memory of 4-H. Often it is the little ones that enroll in the 4-H program. This event reached **16** participants. And Paula has been invited back.

43

Youth enrolled in county 4-H

608

Youth participants





## Staff Success Stories



**Kathy Bauer,**  
**Community**  
**Nutrition Instructor**  
preissk@msu.edu

### No thank you, I don't like that!

*"In the Ontonagon Area School 4th grade class, students learned about each of the food groups using the Show Me Nutrition curriculum. Each week, students had the opportunity to taste test foods according to the weekly lesson.*

*"One of the students was a picky eater. Every week, he wouldn't try the foods and would just say 'no, thank you.' We were tasting and learning about vegetables during one of the lessons and he finally said, 'YES!! I want to try it.' He was super excited along with his friends because they knew he was picky too.*

*"He took a plate of broccoli; red, yellow and orange peppers, just like the other students, and he tried them and said, 'I love these so much! I am going to have my mom buy them.'*

*"After a few weeks, I ran into him and he told me how he is eating more vegetables now and how proud his mom was that he was trying new foods thanks to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)!"*

### Program Highlight:

Kathy Bauer held a series at a local Day Care. During one lesson, the 3-year-olds learned how to wash their hands. We read a book about the importance of handwashing, used the glo germ machine and then washed our hands. One 3-year old was by the sink and he told his grandpa that he had to wash his hands. He took the soap and told him this is how you wash. You have to wash the back side, in between and the wrist. **"Ms. Kathy told me how to do it Grandpa!"**

---

### Breeding Soundness Exam (BSE) a western UP spring event

Arranged for a veterinarian from Ashland, WI, to come to the western U.P. to test bulls. Tested 25 bulls at two locations for 12 producers. 20 bulls passed the BSE.



**Frank Wardynski,**  
**Ruminant Educator**  
wardynsk@msu.edu

### Breeding Soundness Exam (BSE) Western UP (Fall event)

Arranged for the owner of an Illinois Bull Stud to come test bulls in Ontonagon for fall breeding. All 11 bulls, belonging to three producers, passed.



## 4-H Highlights



**Paula Maloney,**  
**4-H Program**  
**Coordinator**  
malone77@msu.edu

### Birding at the Porcupine Mountains

*“4-H has been attending programs each summer at the Porcupine Mtn. ranger site. This year was a birding event. Katie Urban, a park naturalist, presented some very interesting facts to the youth. We learned that birds have a call and a song which are different ways of communicating. We learned about their prey, some specifics on what different birds eat and their nesting habits. We learned to be environmentally conscious because what we do impacts birds and their environment.*”

*“There was a group of energetic youth that were focused especially on big birds and how they lived and survived. Katie kept them engaged and active with games that provided movement and learning facts. A scavenger hunt was one of the ways the youth were engaged.*”

*“On the way home to Ontonagon, one little boy came to me and said,*

*‘I never knew that parks had people who taught fun stuff like birds, insects and the woods. I think I could do something like that someday. Thanks for taking us on this field trip. I wasn't sure that I wanted to go but my mom signed me up. Now I am glad that I came even though there are a lot of little kids here too.’*

*“It is the little seeds we plant with our programs that are effective. We never know when that seed will sprout and bloom. Maybe one day we will have another park naturalist among us with this boy. And even if that never happens, his mind was opened to new ideas, possibilities and careers.”*

### Christmas cookies and craft event



This 4-H SPIN club met at Ontonagon Area Schools and Ewen Trout Schools to make cookies and crafts.





## 4-H Highlights Continued...

**Summer Fun Day on August 17, 2023**

*“Twenty-five children participated in the Summer Fun Day annual event. Taking place at a cabin located on Lake Superior this has been a great spot to enjoy the day’s festivities. **Ontonagon Township Park** has graciously allowed us to use the building free of charge for several years.*

*“The theme this year was **Safari Animals**. The day included crafts, outdoor games, animal crackers and applesauce snacks. A parachute and an animal scavenger hunt were part of the outdoor learning experience. The youth enjoyed searching for hidden plastic animals among the trees and yard. Safari BINGO and a safari painting were part of the experience. The youth always enjoy this end of summer event. It is a time to get together before school starts and to engage youth in 4-H if they haven’t been to any of the other events.*

*“Many photos, laughs and fun happens at Summer Fun Day. The youth walk away with pride and accomplishment of their projects and the positive feeling of belonging to a group.*

**“One youth said, ‘It was the best day of the summer!’**

*“That summarizes what 4-H provides to youth in a small town. We don’t have a lot of social engagement for kids here and 4-H fills that gap. So, done again until next year’s Summer Fun Days! Smiles, a bag full of goodies and youth who have had a great experience, that is what 4-H offers locally.”*

*-Paula Maloney*



**According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, 4-H’ers are four times more likely to make contributions to their communities, twice as likely to be civically active, and twice as likely to make healthier choices.**