



Mason County

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

October Accomplishments, 2016

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Mission

Washington State University Mason County Extension connects the people of Mason County to the research and knowledge bases of the state's land grant research university providing solutions to local problems and stimulating local economies. Our county-based educators work with partners in your communities to provide educational programs and leverage the broad resources of a major university to resolve issues and create a positive future for the residents of Mason County.

Program Updates

Community & Economic Development

Staff: **Justin G. Smith, PhD.**, County Director & Assistant Professor
Greg Schundler, CED Program Coordinator & GIS Specialist

Mission: Serve as leader in assisting Washington communities achieve their economic, environmental and social goals.

Updates: Dr. Justin Smith was announced as the first National Extension/Global Open Data Initiative for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN) Research Fellow for 2016-2017. Dr. Smith will spend the next year investigating the application of artificial intelligence to improve knowledge access, and link that knowledge with the expertise needed to tackle food insecurity and adapt to climate change impacts. This work is anticipated to have broad impacts in the fields of crowdsourcing, computational linguistics, and data analytics. These technologies will be made available as free and open source. Counties and universities will be able to use these tools to map document and data archives, and improve data access and use for rural, natural resource dependent communities.

Access Public Announcement: <https://extension.org/2016/10/18/extension-names-2016-fellows/>

Noxious Weed Program

Staff: **Patricia Grover**, Coordinator
Kendall Carmen, Assistant
Keith Reitz, Assistant

Updates: Despite a rainy Oysterfest 2016 weekend, over 400 festival goers visited the Noxious Weed booth in its new location in the touch tank tent. With a bit of carnival flare, the Noxious Weed Wheel enticed over 88 participants to test their Noxious Weed



knowledge. All players received a small carabineer for their efforts courtesy of the Washington Invasive Species council. Two lucky players were selected to receive a Mason County Weed Warrior t-shirt.

Despite October's record setting rainfall, staff had the opportunity to continue grant funded knotweed survey work along Finch Creek and the shores of North Bay, surveying over 4 miles of shoreline.

Food Safety & Food Preservation Program

Staff: Lisa DeWall, Food Safety & Preservation Information Assistants

Mission: Provide resident's current up to date research based answers to their home canning questions to reduce risk of food borne illness.

Updates: Check pressure gauges on Monday's from 10-12. Answer questions regarding Food Safety & Preservation.

4-H Youth Development Program

Staff: Dan Teuteberg, Regional Specialist-Assistant Professor
Kathy Fuller, Program Coordinator

Mission: 4-H Youth Development empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning with caring adults.

Updates: October 1 marked the beginning of the new 4-H year and National 4-H Week. To begin the new 4-H year 4-H staff provided 15 training sessions for 4-H volunteers. These Club Kick-Off sessions provided volunteers tools to ensure a successful 4-H year. Topics covered included communication systems, State 4-H policies, club structure, financial management, planning successful meetings, and more. Contact was made with approximately forty certified 4-H volunteers. The Fall Paper Clover Fundraiser was held October 5-16 at the local Del's Feed and Farm Supply store. This semi-annual event is a major fundraiser for 4-H in Mason County. Although we do not have final results of the fall campaign, an average of \$617 is raised during the event.

Master Gardener Program

Staff: **Johanna Willingham**, Master Gardener Coordinator

Mission: To provide relevant university based research to meet the home and community horticultural needs of Mason County and to promote responsible environmental stewardship. Public education is the primary goal of Mason County WSU Master Gardener Program.

Updates: We ended the season harvesting and distributing just over 2100 pounds of produce to The Saint's Pantry Food Bank that was all grown at the Catalyst Garden. We had a beautiful fall day for the pumpkin sale and it must have gotten everyone in the



Halloween mood because we sold \$550 worth of pumpkins. We have learned from our anonymous donor that he or she will match the \$550 so we now have \$2600 to help us meet our goal of bringing electricity to Catalyst Park.

Bring your plant, insect, and weed samples and horticultural inquiries to the Master Gardener Clinic for identification on Monday's from 12-3 at the office or stop by the Master Gardener clinic at the Shelton Farmers Market through October

on Saturday's from 9-1.

Food Sense Nutrition

Staff: **Christine Ciacetta**, Interim Program Coordinator
Pamela Bish, Educator

Mission: Providing outreach to youth and adults via direct education, environmental supports, and policy work to reduce childhood obesity and stretch food dollars for SNAP recipients.

Updates: Mason County SNAP-Ed Program will be hiring two part-time educators to replace nutrition educator, Joshua Munro: Shelton resident and popular C Team Football Coach and Power Lifting Coach at Shelton High School. Josh's many achievements include teaching the entire Shelton HS 10th grade of 390 students to creating puppets for a 1st grade class nutrition series. The SNAP-Ed program plans to recruit from the local community and will make extra efforts to hire bilingual educators.

Water Resources Program

Staff: **Vacant** - Water Resources Associate

Mission: The Water Resources program helps members of our community make the best choices in caring for our local waters by providing research-based tools and information. We connect people with appropriate resources through collaboration with other extension programs, government agencies, businesses, schools, and other organizations.

Updates: The Water Resources Program continued implementation of the Hood Canal Pollution Identification and Correction Outreach and Education program, which will continue through the end of 2016.

Erica Bates, Water Resources Associate resigned her position on September 30th, to take a position with Department of Ecology. During the vacancy, a temporary employee will fill the void until the position is filled. Organizing septic education workshops in partnership with Mason County Health department is a priority.

Significant current partnerships include: Mason Conservation District, Mason County Public Health, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Puget Sound Partnership.

Small Farms Program

Staff: **Colin Stewart**, Small Farms Education and Outreach Specialist
Greg Schundler, Small Farms Research Assistant

Mission: Work to build a socio-ecologically sustainable agricultural community through education, outreach and conservation programs.

Updates: This October was one of the wettest on record! As the rains continue to fall, the Small Farms team has been working on how to maintain and capture on-farm nutrients, developing and funding agricultural systems that incorporate perennial crops, and is setting up trials with a native variety of clover called springbank clover.

Key Partnerships: Mason Conservation District, Mason County Public Health Department, Taylor Shellfish, Capital Land Trust, Shelton and Belfair Farmers' Market, KMAS News Radio, Mason PUD.

Cooperating agencies: Washington State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Washington counties. Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.