



# Epsilon Sigma Phi

ALPHA SIGMA CHAPTER, WISCONSIN  
NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, JANUARY AND  
FEBRUARY 2016/2017

<http://wiesp.org/>

## Your Key to Professional Excellence

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings ESP Members!

I hope this finds you all wrapping up summer activities and preparing for the fall and winter seasons. Your ESP Board of Directors met in August, the minutes from this meeting can be found on the ESP Website for your review. Following the meeting several Board members attended the annual ESP Retiree Picnic. It was a very enjoyable experience and an opportunity to meet several of the "legends" of UW-Extension.



A quick update on our current membership; our Alpha Sigma Chapter is comprised of 128 Annual Members and 84 Life Members. Membership has been relatively static with a slight downward trend. There are probably many reasons for this – decreased disposable income, less time to participate in organizations or associations, or maybe just not feeling like there is value in their membership. It would be difficult for us to address the first two concerns; with that said the third concern lies solely on all of us – the current members of our Wisconsin ESP Chapter. It is our responsibility to attract members to our association (and the recently retired as Life Members) – those who joined one year and didn't renew, those who are new to UWEX, and those who have been around for several or many years but never joined ESP.

Why did we join ESP and why should others join? The networking and collegiality, professional development opportunities, scholarships and awards are just a few things I value and gain from my ESP membership. You each could probably add many more reasons to this list. We are experiencing some of the same financial challenges that other organizations within UWEX. The Board is making adjustments to the number of attendees to National Conferences in an effort to save dollars as well preparing to have a discussion on implementing an increase to state membership dues. As this conversation unfolds, we will keep you all posted.

### IN THIS ISSUE

President's Letter.....	1
WI ESP President Elect.....	2
Retiree Committee .....	3
Retiree Committee (cont.).....	4
Retirement Funds Update.....	5
Membership Committee.....	6
In Memoriam.....	7
Grants Committee .....	8
ESP Members attend NEAFCS .....	9
Pictures from ESP Picnic .....	10
2015-16 ESP Board of Directors.....	11

*(Continued on page 2)*



## **PRESIDENT'S LETTER (CONTINUED)**

Mark Hagedorn, ESP President

So, in closing, my challenge to us as current ESP members is this: Let's work hard to keep our current members interested and active. Let's attract new members – both annual and life members. And let's make sure that our chapter activities reflect the diversity and interests of all of our varied members. Thanks to all in advance for your good work and have safe and enjoyable holiday season.

Mark Hagedorn, ESP President  
Wisconsin Alpha Sigma Chapter  
mark.hagedorn@ces.uwex.edu



### **Wisconsin ESP President Elect**

Katie Gellings

I am looking forward to attending my first ESP National Conference in beautiful Cape May, New Jersey, from October 24 – October 27. This year's theme is Turning the Tide with Epsilon Sigma Phi. The keynote speakers will be focusing on "a lasting legacy" and "overcoming the odds," which I anticipate will have some great key points for us as we move through our reorganization.

I plan to attend the following concurrent sessions: 25 Terrific Technology Tools for Extension Educators; Leadership 101 For ESP Chapter Officers and Potential Chapter Leaders; Turn Your Team to Successful Social

Media Programming; and Cooperative Extension and Health Literacy: A National Focus. I am especially looking forward to attending the Leadership 101 session that provides an introductory overview of the history, mission, and vision of ESP. This session will provide the opportunity to learn about the structure of the ESP organization and the progression of leadership within ESP, which is of high importance to me as a fairly new ESP member.

I will surely bring back a great deal of information and resources to share with all of you. Stay tuned!

Be well,

Katie Gellings  
ESP President-Elect



## RETIREE COMMITTEE

Paul Roback, Committee Chair

The Retiree Committee continues to serve as your link between Cooperative Extension and retirement. If you are not receiving e-mail communications from Paul Roback, please send him an e-mail at [paul.roback@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:paul.roback@ces.uwex.edu) and he will add you to our e-mail distribution list.

In this month's newsletter, Chris Kniep interviewed Ginny Hall. Most remember Ginny from her work in Walworth County, however that is just the tip of her Extension work. Active in faculty governance, administration and more, Ginny is known for her incredible energy and positive spirit.



## RETIREE HIGHLIGHT: GINNY HALL

Chris Kniep



### How did you transition into retirement?

It worked quite easily. I planned to do some traveling to see friends in other states, and I continued to attend my national professional organizations to keep up those friendships. I thought that I would miss contact with community groups, but they continued to request programs from me.

### How have you contributed to UW-Extension and/or the community since retirement?

I have talked to many groups about our county's history and the Walworth County Arts Council, of which I am a *Board Member*. I have volunteered at the Walworth, Delevan, and Lake Geneva libraries. I wrote the histories of the Delevan and Lake Geneva libraries and set up an obituary file for the Walworth Memorial Library and organized some of their donated historical information. I've been a volunteer at the Lake Geneva Public Library since 1990. I'm a *Volunteer Docent* at Black Point, a state historical site. I help with the Art for Children project for the Arts Council and am a *Co-Chairman* of one of the Farm Technology committees. I serve as a *Eucharistic Minister* and a *Lector* at St. Benedict's Church. I also write the weekend petitions and served for 6 years as *Volunteer Sacristan* at my church. I was on both the state and our county 4-H Centennial committees. I reviewed the four old, handwritten, early county board minutes books and wrote a booklet with the more pertinent information. This was distributed to all of the county libraries. I had to wear white gloves to do the later job. I wrote a history of the Walworth County Fair, reviewing their board minutes and premium books. At one time, I helped with the ESP history. I taught an Elder Hostel class for two years at George Williams College and later helped with organizing their historical information. I am currently working with the Delavan Historical Society to help organize a vast quantity of their donated materials.

(continued on page 4)



## RETIREE HIGHLIGHT: GINNY HALL

Chris Kniep

### How do you connect with UW-Extension or former colleagues?

I try to attend the ESP picnics as my schedule allows, and I enjoy the twice a year get-together of the Family Living retirees. When I was working, Jan Kohls and I would meet to do program planning. We continued after my retirement and gradually added Jan Floeter, Mary Heisler, and Phyllis Northway to this gathering. We would meet about 4-6 times a year at the Germantown Community Library. Mary's husband used to say, "The 'Big Five' are meeting again."

### How did you identify and/or tap into a passion during retirement?

On a trip to Omaha, a friend and I took a mini tour around a town on an overnight stay. I came back to the Lake Geneva Public Library and spoke with the director about doing something similar for our county. I planned to do four Auto Tour Guide Books, but it eventually grew to twelve. That led to ten Walking Tour Guide Books for various county communities and five Guides for the Geneva Lake Shore Path. All of these booklets are sold by the Friends of the Lake Geneva Public Library and add to their income. That led to a newspaper column on the history of buildings, sites, and farms for the weekly countryside newspapers. I've done over 700 columns and developed a spreadsheet to avoid duplication. I've led county bus tours for several groups over the years.

### Do you have any advice for those about to retire?

Think about what kinds of things interest you. Ask questions. If you see someone doing something you think you'd like to do, ask them how they got started. Keep your eyes, ears, and minds open! Stay active, and stay involved! Enjoy life!

## JCEP 2017 ANNOUNCEMENTS

### JCEP --- ESP Silent Auction

Mark your calendars for the annual silent auction sponsored by ESP to be held at the JCEP conference in Eau Claire April 25-26<sup>th</sup>. Start to think about possible donations as you do your Christmas shopping or look at the next project you will be working on to de-stress in your down time! Please consider donating to the silent auction!!

**Save the Date!**  
**2017 JCEP**  
**Conference**  
**April 25-26**  
**Eau Claire, WI**



## **YOUR WISCONSIN RETIREMENT FUNDS IN ACTION**

Brian Holmes, ESP Representative to the Coalition of Annuitants

The State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB) Core Trust Fund preliminary return for the calendar year ending August 31, 2016 was +7.6% vs its benchmark of +7.6%. The Variable Trust Fund preliminary return for the year to date was +7.2% vs its benchmark of +7.1%. The target return for the SWIB Core Trust Fund is 7.2%.

The stock markets have been down and up with year to date (through August 31, 2016) returns of:

Dow Jones Industrial Average	+ 5.6%
S & P 500	+ 6.2%
NASDAQ	+ 4.1%

The oil price is in the mid to upper \$40/barrel range. Gasoline prices that had declined in response to increasing inventory have begun to rise.

A GDP of about 1% for the first half of 2016 is the worst in 5 years. A decline in inventories have contributed by about 1.4% to the GDP decline. Household outlays surged this spring at their strongest pace in a year and a half, but business investment declined for the third straight quarter. The result was a modest revised 1.1% annualized economic growth rate in the second quarter. Some economists forecast economic growth to accelerate in the second half of the year.

On September 1, labor costs were revised sharply higher as weekly unemployment claims rose less than expected. The monthly nonfarm payroll report showed 151,000 new jobs were created and the unemployment rate remained at 4.9 percent. Unemployment claims remain near historic lows.

Private sector wages are up 2.5%, the highest rate since 2008.

The SWIB has submitted its budget of \$398 million to its board of directors. This is less than its budget submittal of \$401 million last year. SWIB does not receive any state funding, therefore it does not need to submit its budget through the state funding process. The Employee Trust Fund (ETF) is funded by the state and has been asked, as have other state agencies, to submit a budget with a 5% reduction. The ETF is developing a new system for employees to have personal interviews with ETF staff by Go To Meeting software. This will facilitate meetings in a more timely manner and without having to drive great distances.

The due date for insurance companies to submit their proposals for the state's proposed self-insurance program is during the week of September 19. The Group Insurance Board (GIB) will be reviewing the proposals and having discussions at its November meeting. Any recommendations that come from the GIB will have to be reviewed by the Legislative Joint Finance Committee.



## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Dan Marzu, Committee Chair



### The Value of your ESP Membership: A Two-way Street?

*Submitted by: Peggy Compton  
Chair, National ESP Membership Recruitment  
and Retention Committee  
Co-Chair, Wisconsin ESP Membership Committee*

After two years of chairing the National ESP Membership Recruitment and Retention Committee and many years of involvement in our Wisconsin ESP membership activities, I believe even more strongly that the key to successful recruitment and retention of members is promoting the value that an ESP membership provides. BUT, I also believe that finding value in an ESP membership is a two-way street! First we (the leaders in state chapters and the national organization) need to offer and make accessible programs, activities and resources of value to you, AND you, our members, need to be engaged in the organization and seek out those resources and opportunities that are there for you.

### Wisconsin and the National ESP organizations provide:



- A top-notch National Conference which is full of professional development opportunities and nationally known presenters on wide-ranging topics of interest.
- Webinars accessible from your office without any need to travel, covering topics that cross disciplines and are important to all extension educators and our extension profession –such as the diversity webinar series that was presented earlier this year.
- Opportunities for bridge-building/networking across geography and program areas.  
Abundant resources to help you get where you want to go (literally and figuratively) through scholarships and grants and recognition (awards) when you get there.

But to fully realize the value of your ESP membership, YOU must come down the street and take advantage of those resources provided. How? Join a WI ESP Committee or the Board of Directors, join a National ESP Committee, present at or attend the National ESP Conference, attend the WI ESP annual meeting (during the WI JCEP Conference), apply for a scholarship or grant (\$1,000s of dollars are available for travel, professional development, continuing education), nominate yourself or others for awards.

I hope to see you soon on the ESP street to membership value.



## IN MEMORIAM

JoAnn Gruber-Hagen, Volunteer



**IN MEMORIAM** -- We are saddened to share that we received information of losing 4 friends and colleagues since our last newsletter.

**James A. Everts**, age 85, passed away November 21, 2015. Jim earned his B.S. degree in agriculture from UW-Madison in 1952. He served active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1952-1954 and then in the Marine Corps Reserve until his honorable discharge in 1961 as a Captain. Jim began his UW-Extension career in 1954 as a 4-H Agent in Rock County. In 1960 He joined the UW Meat and Animal Science Department in 1960 and earned a Master's degree and Ph.D. from the UW-Madison. He served as the Cooperative Extension Western District Director from 1969-1982. In 1982, he returned to Madison where he finished his career as State 4-H Program Leader retiring in 1987. Jim received distinguished service awards from UW-Extension, Epsilon Sigma Phi, and 4-H. In 2014 he was inducted into the Wisconsin 4-H Hall of Fame. In September 2015, he took the Badger Honor Flight to Washington, D.C., with his oldest son, Chris.

**Eugene "Gene" C. Savage**, age 87, of Black River Falls, Wisconsin, passed away Tuesday, July 12, 2016. Eugene received a degree in Agricultural Science from UW-River Falls and began work in a program that helped returning WWII veterans with successful farming. Gene worked in agriculture and farm services in Madison, Whitewater, Plover, before taking a teaching position at Birchwood High School. After one year at Birchwood, Eugene was hired at the University Extension Agent for Jackson County in Black River Falls. In the 1970's, he was accepted to the position of Chairman for the State Board of Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Madison. Then in the 1980's, Eugene worked with the EPA, as the University Extension Liaison to six land grant universities. He retired in 1985. The family has established a fund to support a paid summer intern at the Black River Falls Agricultural Education Land lab to develop the program to become self-sustaining. [Donations in memory of Gene to support this project](#) can be sent to Laureen Savage, N6160 Savage Rd, Black River Falls, WI 54615-5651.

**Kenneth I. Johnson**, age 82, of Prairie du Chien, passed away Tuesday, July 26, 2016, at the Crossing Rivers Hospital. Ken graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a degree in Agriculture Education. He devoted his career to youth and families as a 4-H and Youth Agent in Waushara County in Wautoma, Wis., for 13 years and later in Crawford County at Prairie du Chien for 20 years. The family suggested memorials to the United Methodist Church, the University of Wisconsin 4-H Foundation or the charity of your choice.

**Robert Anthony "Bob" Stodola**, age 90, of West Bend died Tuesday, August 23. After high school, Bob joined the army and served in post-war Germany for two years. He earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and, in 1965, he earned a master's degree in Youth Development. As Washington County's 4-H and Youth Development Educator for 34 years, he worked with both club leaders and members, overseeing programs and county fairs and introducing innovations in 4-H practice. Bob was grateful for a very healthy and active life for 89 years. Leader, organizer, educator, and loyal worker describe Bob's volunteerism with Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners, Lac Lawrann Nature Conservancy, the Ice Age Trail Alliance, Kiwanis, and other community organizations. His family remembers his ready smile, his love of puns and jokes, his patient manner and his helpfulness.

### Help Us Recognize Colleagues Who Have Passed On

As a service to our ESP membership, we try to share information of deaths of colleagues. You can help if you would forward information you become aware of to JoAnn Gruber-Hagen. She will prepare announcements for ESP newsletters as well as for ESP gatherings. If you have an ESP event coming up and would like to be able to recognize colleagues who have passed, please contact JoAnn and she will be sure you have the most recent information. You can contact JoAnn at W4048 Kammes Drive, Belleville, WI 53508 or [joann.gruberhagen@gmail.com](mailto:joann.gruberhagen@gmail.com).



## GRANTS COMMITTEE

Pattie Carroll & Chris Kniep, Committee Co-Chairs



## ESP Professional Development Grant Report

*Submitted by Renee Koenig  
Family Living Educator, Kewaunee County*

Thank you for awarding me an ESP Professional Development Grant that allowed me to attend the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) Annual Conference held in Big Sky, Montana. It was a cherished opportunity to meet Extension professionals from across the nation in a beautiful place. As a first time attendee at the NEAFCS Conference, I learned how NEAFCS professionals improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. It was an educational event with informative sessions on food safety and nutrition, financial management, healthy lifestyles, home safety, relationships and parenting skills. I returned home with several new ideas for programs!

I also enjoyed networking with colleagues who share the same passion I have for helping families and communities. A very entertaining speaker named Karen McNenny gave a lighthearted presentation about connecting with one another in meaningful ways in order to transform our workplaces and communities into thriving places. I am looking forward to sharing the presenter's key points with my workplace and community.

The most memorable thing about attending the NEAFCS Conference is it was my first time presenting at a national event. I was honored to be selected along with my teammates to teach our colleagues about our digital transformation of the Home Alone program. Because of ESP, I was able to share my work and help more families across the nation learn the Home Alone safety lessons and acquire life skills.

Thank you for this exceptional opportunity!



Renee Koenig, Kewaunee County, pictured above in Big Sky, Montana during the NEAFCS Conference.



## ESP Members at NEAFCS 2016

Paula Hella, Renee Koenig and Teri Zuege-Halversen



Pictured above: ESP members Paula Hella (Calumet County), Renee Koenig (Kewaunee County), and Teri Zuege-Halvorsen (previously Manitowoc County)

*Submitted by Paula Hella, Calumet County*

“Going Digital: The 1980’s Home Alone Program Becomes Virtual” was selected for presentation at the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) Annual Session in Big Sky, Montana, held September 13th -15th, 2016. Conference proposals were reviewed by five Family and Consumer Science colleagues across the United States. 32% of the conference proposals were accepted for presentation. The “Going Digital” program, presented by UW Extension Family Living colleagues Paula Hella (Calumet County),

Renee Koenig (Kewaunee County) and Teri Zuege-Halvorsen (Manitowoc County) addressed two conference program tracks: Parent Education and Lifespan development/Child Development, while also focusing on the emerging need for programming to be accessible via digital technology. The main content focus was on converting a face to face class to a digital offering while maintaining the integrity of the original program. The conversion of the Home Alone program was prompted by community demand of a program that was accessible and fit the schedules and needs of families today. Home Alone online can be found at: <http://fyi.uwex.edu/homealone/>

There’s a reason they call Montana “The Big Sky” state! Pictured on the right: Paula Hella



National Extension Association  
of Family & Consumer Sciences



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ESP PICNIC - JULY 2016

Photo Credit: Dr. Clarence Olson, Retired Dairy Extension Specialist



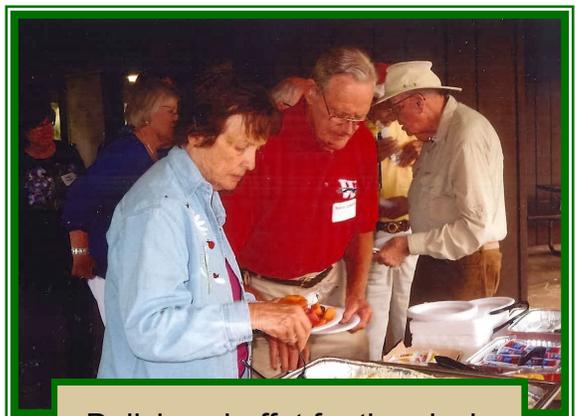
Rick Klemme discussing the nEXT Gen changes coming to UW-Extension at the ESP picnic



Great turn out for the ESP picnic in July!



Engaged listeners



Delicious buffet for the picnic

### Mission of Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP)

Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) is dedicated to fostering standards of excellence in the Extension System and developing the Extension profession and professional.

### Vision of Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP)

Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) leads the Extension System in providing and facilitating professional development that focuses on the Extension organization and the Extension professional.



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