

Monroe County Natural Resource and Extension Committee
Regular Monthly Meeting – January 10, 2017
Monroe County Ag Service Center – 820 Industrial Dr., Sparta, WI

Committee Members present: J. Schroeder, D. Pierce, M. Halverson, D. Hall, and D. Olson

Absent: N. VanWychen

Also Present: B. Micheel (LC), C. Ziegler (Forestry), B. Richardson (LC), C. Mulder (LC), M. Komiskey(NRCS) J. Roll (Hist),M. Modjeski (DNR),C. Walroth(DNR), M. Mickelson(DNR), P. Peterson(Wildlife), E. Eggert (UW-EXT), J. Goede (UW-EXT), B. Halfman (UW-EXT)

The meeting notice was posted in compliance with the open meeting law.

Call to Order: Vice-Chairman Pierce called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Public Comment Period: There was no public comment.

Approve Minutes from the December 13th NR & Extension Meeting: The committee reviewed the minutes. *A motion was made to approve the minutes as presented by M. Halverson, seconded by D. Hall. Motion carried, 5-0-1.*

Deke Slayton/Bike Museum: No Report

Local History Room/Wegner Grotto- moved to end of meeting

Wildlife Damage Program:

1. **Approve 2016 Crop Price:** P. Peterson discussed the average crop price for corn and soybean. *J. Schroeder made a motion to approve the average price, second by D. Hall. Motion carried 5-0-1.*
2. **Set 90% harvest date:** *J. Schroeder made a motion to approve Dec 1 as the harvest date, second by D. Hall. Motion carried 5-0-1.*
3. **Approve 2016 Claims:** P. Peterson brought 3 Deer damage claims with a \$500 deductible to the Committee for approval. Will send a denial letter to Jeff Schneider.
 - A. Bob Sutton- claim for \$317.35. *Motion by J. Schroeder to approve, second by M. Halverson. Motion carried 5-0-1.*
 - B. Mark Drake- claim for \$2,322.70. *Motion by J. Schroeder to approve, second by D. Hall. Motion carried 5-0-1.*
 - C. Jeff Schneider- claim for \$645.33 for denial based on satisfying program requirements to fill harvest tags. *Motion by J. Schneider to approve denial, second by D. Hall. Motion carried 5-0-1.*

Land Conservation Department:

1. **Review December Expenditures:** B. Micheel reviewed expenditures, report attached.
2. **County Conservationist Report:** B. Micheel presented the departmental report to the committee (attached). Discussed the first meeting date for the Agricultural Advisory Team to be held January 26th from 1-3 p.m. Focus letter/ invitation to participants were mailed out today. Committee would like more information and cost for LCD Logo development.
3. **Soil & Water Conservationist Report:** C. Mulder discussed the CREP and Farmland Preservation Program activities this last month and mentioned working on designs and surveys for 2017 Conservation Practices. B. Richardson discussed his activities- noting construction completed. Discussed activities with the Nonmetallic Mining program.(Reports attached)
4. **Approve Cost Share Agreement:** None
5. **Poster Contest Judging:** B. Richardson set up posters received for judging after the meeting.

NRCS Report: M. Komiskey discussed CSP program signup with a Feb. 3rd deadline. Conservation Stewardship being revamped. Noted leadership changes within NRCS.

DNR Reports:

1. **Private Lands:** C. Walroth noted the supervisory alignment is a work in process.
2. **Warden:** M. Modjeski gave a brief update on the changes forthcoming as well.

Committee member D. Olson left meeting at 10 a.m.

Forestry & Parks:

1. **Forestry & Park Updates:** C. Ziegler presented his department report (attached).
2. **Review Resolution & Re-sign (minor corrections to the Fort McCoy Agreement /Resolution):** *J. Schroeder motion to accept changes, second by D. Hall. Motion carried 4-0-2.*
3. **Review Forestry & Parks Expenditures** C. Ziegler reviewed the December monthly expenditures.

The FSA representative D. Hall left meeting after his obligation was completed.

County Farm Education Funds – Discussion of potential projects - No discussion

Extension Office Business:

1. **Review of December Expenditures**
2. **4H & Youth Development Report (Goede)** – report attached
3. **Family Living Report (Eggert)** –report attached.
4. **Agriculture Report (Halfman)** –report attached. Bill handed out copy of a Land Lease example to help address questions on farm land rental agreements.

Motion made by J. Schroeder to accept Agent reports and review of expenditures, seconded by M. Halverson. Motion carried 3-0-2.

Local History Room/Wegner Grotto- J. Roll reviewed December expenditures and presented report to the committee (attached). Jarrod distributed copies of newspaper articles reporting the success of the Local History Room's Christmas Display (attached).

The next meeting will be held Monday, February 13th at 8:30 a.m. at the Monroe County Ag Services Center in Sparta.

Motion to adjourn: *was made at 11:00 a.m. by M. Halverson, second by J. Schroeder. Motion carried, 3-0-2.*

Recorder: Connie Holzl

January 10, 2017 LCD- Staff Reports

Bob Micheel- County Conservationist

LCD Business:

- City of Tomah & Sparta P-trading updates – Developing new projects for 2017.
- Tri-Creek Watershed Comm. working on resource inventories.
- Agricultural Advisory Comm. first meeting set.
- Attended Discovery Farm Conference
- Technical Assistance Funding available through TU.
- Position reviews on-going.
- LCD Logo?
- (1st) Tree Sales order forms available

Meeting Schedule:

- CWD meeting 7pm at Sparta City Hall – January 10th
- Lake Tomah Committee Meeting – January 12th
- Golden Sands RC&D – January 19th
- Agricultural Advisory Team meeting 1-3pm – January 26th
- Driftless Symposium – February 7, 8th
- Natural Resource & Extension Committee Meeting – February 14th

January 10, 2017 -- Soil & Water Conservationist's Report

Christina Mulder

- **Farmland Preservation Program**
 - A total of 4761 acres were enrolled in 2016
 - Gallis Schmitz and Peaceful Valley Dairy in the Wells Township has applied for FPP.
- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**
 - A total of 5.63 acres were enrolled into Perpetual Easements in 2016
 - A total of 15.69 acres were enrolled into 15-Year Agreements in 2016
 - Outreaching to landowners who's contracts are expiring in 2017 to re-enroll into another 15-year agreement or perpetual easement
- **Designs & Construction for Conservation Practices**
 - Working on designs and surveys for 2017

Bryce Richardson

- **Design of Conservation Practices**
 - Working on designs and surveys for 2017.
- **Nonmetallic Mining**
 - Annual reports and annual fee notices were mailed. Return deadline of January 31st.
 - Nonmetallic Roundtable Meeting in Wautoma on 1/11.
- **Poster Contest**
 - Posters were due Friday January 6th.

Forestry & Parks Report (January) – Ziegler

Forestry:

- Snowmobile Trails of Monroe County Meeting
- WCFA Quarterly Conference Call
- Final Oak Workshop meeting
- Timber Sale Close out
- Tri Creek Recon

Parks:

- Snow removal



Joshua L. Goede

Agents for Change

The Agents 4 Change presented a tobacco prevention lesson during the school day on January 9th to Cashton 4th Grade. The students were very excited to learn from the high school aged 4-Hers. Peer education on health issues is proven to have a higher impact on students. Hopefully these students think about what the high school peers showed them when they are offered tobacco or alcohol.

The Agent will also follow up with the Cashton School district and arrange a February date to present the Consequences of Alcohol lesson to 5th grade in Cashton in a similar format. The Agents 4 Change local 4-H alcohol prevention training will be on February 5th or 12th, depending on when the lesson is planned.

Reporting

The Agent is continuing to enter reports into the online systems. This month his focus has moved to the UW Extension requirements as he finished the 4-H specific reporting. There are many great programs and activities to report on this year. One bright spot the numbers of enrolled 4-H members rose from last year by 7 members.

Monroe County Safe Community Coalition

The Agent is working closely with this community organization to collect data and address health and substance Use issues on our area. The Agent has distributed the United Way COMPASS NOW Surveys. This survey seeks resident's opinions on community issues to see where projects could be developed and what needs should be addressed. There has been a strong response with over 40 surveys returned.

The Agent has also joined the Marijuana Work Group with the coalition and has attended two meeting looking at how Marijuana is perceived in the community. The Agent has been asked to bring a focus to youth perceptions. We will also survey the perceived risk/value of Marijuana use.

Advanced Space Academy

The Agent is 2 weeks away from embarking on 2017 WI 4-H Advanced Space Academy. We will travel the last week of January. The 13 WI 4-H members are excited to travel and meet all the people from the teleconference and that they have met online. Many logistics have snapped into place and all the paperwork is in.

Continuing Programs

- **Community Learning Centers**
 - Working in Jan. with a problem solving task. The youth put pictures in the correct order W/O talking or showing the images.
- **Jr. Leaders**
 - See above for Agent 4 Change
 - Planning Clover College for Jan 14th.
 - Meetings planned for March and May
 - Will Plan Clover Camp for June 17th
- **Youth Protection Program**
 - 9 Adults queued to take class on Jan. 11th or Feb. 11th.
 - Materials prepared for next 12 adults entering the system.

COMING SOON

- Agents 4 Change Presentation, Jan 9
- Clover College, Jan. 14
- Jr. Leader Lock-In, Jan 14-15
- Festival of Arts, March 4
- Fur, Fin, & Feather, April 1



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Sparta, WI 54656-0309

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Dial 711 for Wisconsin Relay
<http://monroe.uwex.edu/>

Erin Eggert
Family Living Agent

Family Living Update December 13 to January 10, 2016

- StrongWomen
 - Classes start next week for the winter session! Numbers are looking really good. The Sparta 8AM class is full, Sparta 10AM is almost full, Tomah 8AM is almost full, and Tomah 5:30PM is full! Great numbers and a lot of new participants! We have 7 men enrolled total across the 2 classes open to both Men & Women! I have been really busy getting things ready for the upcoming classes. A lot of paperwork and health history review of participants.
 - Senior Services had some extra funding (\$1788.00) that they needed to spend before the end of the year and they picked me to be able to spend this money for the StrongWomen program! I plan on adding a class in April in Cashton and I was able to purchase all of the equipment for that class, plus some extra supplies for the current classes with this funding. I am very thankful they made this generous donation!
 - I have two people signed up to for the March StrongWomen Instructor training course.
 - I have been working with another new instructor that will start her first next week to get her ready to teach too. Instructors go through the day-long training course but I like to work with them a little extra to help make sure they're confident in what they're teaching and they know how to make a modification to a move if a participant can't do it for some reason.
 - StrongWomen of Monroe County Results- Handout
- StrongWomen- Statewide
 - Still working on online advanced training. Will need to do more video footage and photo taking in Madison to add to the program. Plan on doing that in February.

Continuing Events

An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

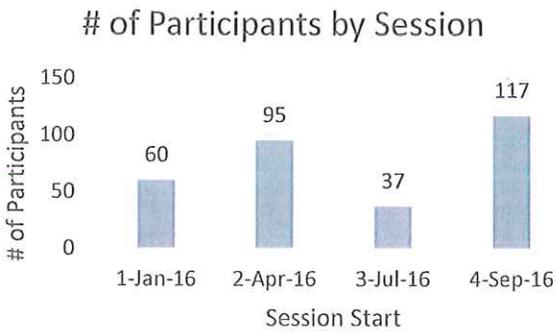
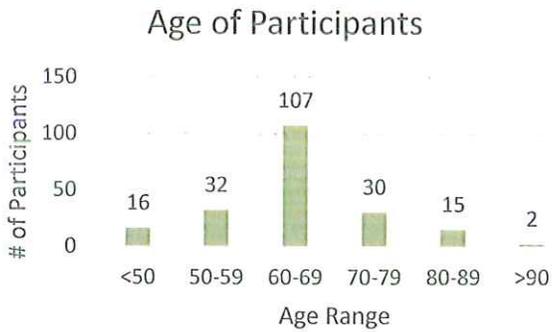
- Newspaper articles to Tomah and Sparta newspapers
- Continuing to post and promote the facebook site and Pinterest site

Upcoming Events

- Online course “Achieving the Extension Mission through Volunteers” starting in January and going through March.

2016 StrongWomen Monroe County Results

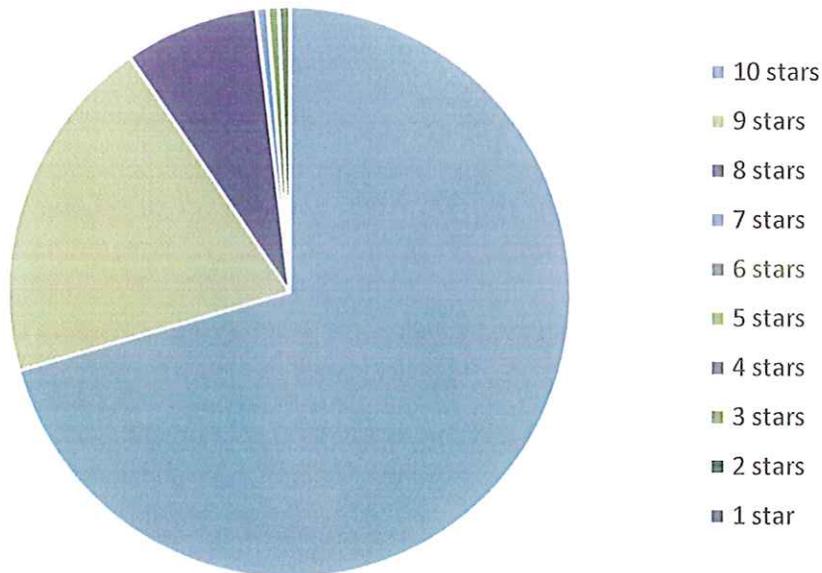
Total Number of Participants: 202 | Total Number of Repeat Participants: 107



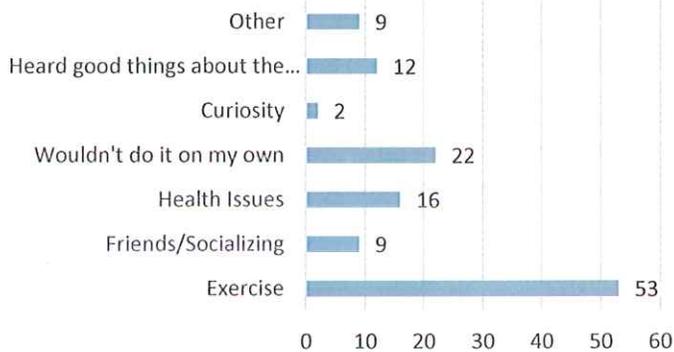
Race	# Participants
Caucasian	202
Black or African American	0
American Indian and Alaska Native	0
Asian	0
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0
Other	0
Two or More	0

End-Session Evaluation Survey

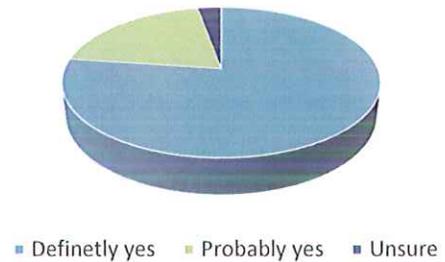
Please rate the program



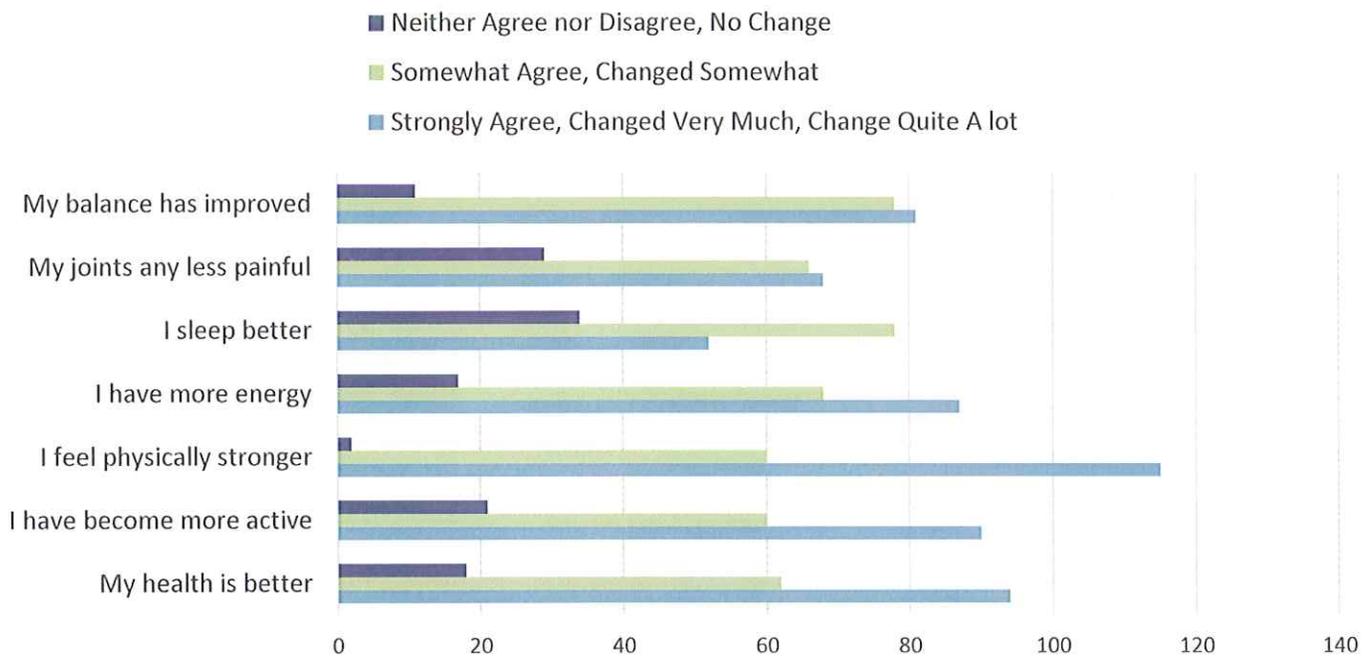
What prompted you to enroll in the class?



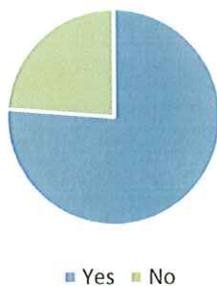
When you think about what prompted you to enroll in the class, do you feel you have improved in that area?



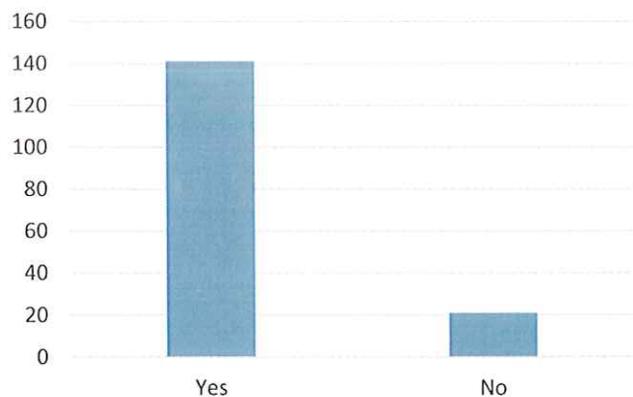
Please state how much you agree with the following:



Of those that had screenings done (such as cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose levels, or bone density), did the test show improvement?



Are you going to reenroll in the program?



Senior Fitness Test Results

Senior Fitness Test Results- County Averages

Participant Information

Name: Monroe County StrongWomen 2016

Pre-Date: Post-Date:

Age: 63.6 Height: Weight:

Participant Information

	Baseline (Pre-)	%ile	Pre-Test Comments	Most Recent (Post-)	%ile	Post-Test Comments	# Change	% Change
1. Chair Stand Test	16.07	62.92		19.73	84.25		3.66	21.33
2. Arm Curl Test	18.61	66.36		23.26	89.92		4.65	23.56
3. Two-Minute Step Test	96.12	57.50		110.45	74.99		14.33	17.49
4. Chair Sit-and-Reach Test	2.30	53.37		3.83	65.88		1.53	12.51
5. Back Scratch Test	-1.21	49.33		-0.61	56.42		0.61	7.09
6. Eight-Foot Up-and-Go Test	4.94	64.37		4.35	80.61		-0.59	16.24
7. Balance Standing Stork	47.09			63.92			16.83	

160 people completed pre-testing in Monroe County. 122 people completed post-testing in Monroe County. The data on this sheet displays the comparison for overall averages of pre-test to post-test. If participants were enrolled in more than one session we used their very first pre-test and their very last post-test for comparison.

Below Average
Normal Range
Above Average



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Bill Halfman, Agriculture Agent

Agriculture Extension Update December 12, 2016 through January 10, 2017

To help address questions on farm land rental agreements, the Ag Agents in Monroe and Buffalo County developed a fact sheet on considerations for land rental fact sheets.

There were 35 people in attendance at the VFD workshop for veterinarians and feed industry people. It met the primary objective of providing an opportunity to bring the people together to discuss among themselves how they will work together to meet the new regulations.

The Ag Agent met with representatives from the DNR, DATCP, and a farmer representative, to determine values for cattle to settle wolf depredation claims for 2016. The Ag Agent provided the yearly cattle price reports for the year and participated in the discussion on setting final prices.

The Ag Agent attended a workshop on foreclosure and bankruptcy processes and procedures with presentations from lawyers and bankers.

The Annual Agronomy Update for Agronomy professionals, the third and final annual update of the series was held in Sparta on January 6, 2017. There were twenty-five area agronomy professionals at the workshop. Topics addressed included updates from the 2016 variety trials, and results from trials conducted by the specialists investigating management practices.

Upcoming Events- more to be added as they get finalized

Jan 11-12 La Crosse Farm Show- booth
Jan 17- cow-calf workshop Provotin IA- in-service
Jan 18-19 Cranberry Growers Winter Conference
Jan 26 Western WI Beef Producers Annual Meeting
Jan 27, Feb 1,7,9 Private Applicator Testing
Feb 16 Winter Crops Update- Sparta
Feb 23 Cattle Feeders- Sparta
Feb 25 Hops Workshop
March 3 Bovine Well Being Conference- Stratford

Wisconsin Cash Farm Land Lease Example

Prepared by: Bill Halfman & Carl Duley

UW-Extension Agriculture Agents in Monroe, and Buffalo Counties

This fact sheet and example farm land rental agreement are intended to help landlords and renters assemble a written agreement specific to their situation. The fact sheet provides a list of considerations to help users reach a fair and equitable arrangement. The list of items to consider is not all encompassing, but provides common items that should be considered for inclusion in farm land rental contracts. Each of the items listed may not be necessary to include in the rental agreement, they are listed as examples.

It is critical that landlords and renters spend time addressing the terms of the rental agreement before finalizing the agreement to prevent problems over the duration of the contract. Maintaining positive working relationships between landlords and renters is vital for long-term success.

The approach taken with this fact sheet and example lease are to break it into seven sections to address the different parts of a land rental agreement, and keep it concise. Following are descriptions of each section and examples of items to consider in each section:

1. CONTRACTING PARTIES AND DATE:

This section of the contract should state the date when the contract begins, when it ends, and who the contract will be between. The Landlord will be the person or persons who own the land and the renter will be the person or persons who will rent the land. This section lays the foundation for making sure that it is clear from the beginning who will be involved in the leasing process and the time period it is in effect.

2. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

This section can be a detailed or a general description that clearly identifies the property. A legal description of the land could be entered here, a map of the property showing the actual rented acres, or a written description. It is important to list the actual number of acres that are being rented and where they are located. It may be necessary to identify specific usage of some acreage, for example tillable acres and pasture acres. *If participating in USDA farm programs, consider attaching the FSA maps to the lease agreement.*

3. GENERAL TERMS OF THE LEASE:

This section includes the length and/or time frame of the lease, and specific uses that the renter is granted or not granted by the lease. It may also include rights that the landlord reserves with respect to the property. Specific dates, years or growing seasons may be used. Other items may be added to this section. Note that under Wis. Stat. § 704.05(2), unless otherwise stated in the lease, the tenant has exclusive possession of the property with some limited exceptions. For example, with advance notice and at reasonable times, the landlord can inspect, repair, or show the property to prospective tenants or purchasers. Examples:

- Hunting rights on the property
- Snowmobiling, cross country skiing, ATV/UTV, horseback riding
- Grazing livestock on crop residue or removing crop residue

- Grazing livestock on permanent pasture or growing crops
- Water source- irrigation and or livestock housed as part of agreement
- Use of buildings or grain bins
- Others relevant to property
- Landlord's right to enter the property
- Proof of liability insurance coverage

4. **LAND USE:**

This section may include management practices that may or may not be used by the renter. Local NRCS and Land Conservation departments can be resources to help review and develop conservation plans for farms that may not have one.

Examples:

- Cropping and soil conservation practices
 - tillage practices
 - crop residue management
 - cover crops
 - rotation
 - conservation structures
- Fertilizer and manure application protocols or limitations
- Pesticide application protocols or limitations and setbacks (grapes, hops, etc.)
- Procedures for physical changes to property

5. **PAYMENTS AND DUE DATES:**

This section addresses when payment(s) is/are due and how much the payment(s) will be. Details can be added as needed. If the contract is a flexible lease or some form of a crop share agreement, then details of what each party is responsible for, and/or factors that trigger changes from the base lease, should be defined and stated here. If the landlord requires a deposit for potential damage repair, this should be included in this section.

Most rental contracts are based on tillable acres, and/or only the acreage used by the tenant. It may be necessary to identify different rental rates for specific parcels depending on usage, potential productivity or other factors agreed upon by both parties. Examples may include tillable vs. pasture, large yield potential differences, etc.

Federal Farm Program- most, but not all, farms have some program crop base acres enrolled in the federal farm program. Program crop acres generally have payments tied to those acres from the farm program. Many of the Federal Farm Program Payments are to be paid to the party assuming the production risk. If a landlord receives straight cash rent they are not assuming production risk.

6. **TERMINATION/ AMENDMENT OF AGREEMENT:**

This section should include reasons and/or procedures for early termination, and procedures for amending the contract. This section could also include procedures for renewal or nonrenewal of the contract, including date of notice, date by which agreement is reviewed to determine if it continues as is or with changes for the following year(s).

7. **SIGNATURES:**

This section seals the agreement with all parties' signatures. All parties listed in section one of the agreement should also be included with their signatures in this section for consistency.

Following is a list of criteria that may be considered when determining the rental rate.

- A. Potential crop returns- Knowing what your actual costs of production are and what yields to expect from a particular farm can help determine how much money will be available to pay rent. Farm operators need to know their own costs of production! Using average costs or costs derived from other sources can be a recipe for disaster. When calculating crop returns do not use historically high prices, but also do not use the historically lowest prices either. Use what you received as your annual average price for corn, beans, small grains or other cash crop for the past 5 to 10 years.
- B. Land quality- All fields do not have the same yield potential! It is important to know the soil types on a farm and the productive capability of that land. Past yields can be an indicator of potential land quality and capability.
- C. Slope and erosion potential or wetlands- This can have an effect on cropping practices, the amount of land that can actually be cropped in a parcel, and special treatment the land may require. Also big, open, easy-to-farm fields may bring more than small, odd-shaped parcels that are difficult to reach.
- D. Previous crops, herbicides and fertility- Cropping history and past herbicide usage can limit your crop options in the coming year. Soil fertility levels are often overlooked. Land with high phosphorus and potassium soil test levels will require considerably less fertilizer for crop production, and thus may have more rental value.
- E. Use of facilities and services provided- Use of grain drying and storage units, machinery storage and other facilities can add to the value the tenant receives from the cash rent, whereas snow removal for the landlord, mowing road ditches and other maintenance services could reduce the value the tenant receives from the cash rent. If you hear of a high rent in the coffee shop, you may want to find out if it includes use of buildings or storage structures.
- F. Previous history- The working relationship and previous experiences between landlord and tenant are often an important factor in determining final cash rental rates. If your tenant is taking care of the land as you would (keeping down weeds, keeping up the fertility, preventing erosion) and may be plowing snow from your driveway, this may be worth a few dollars less rent.
- G. Area Demand- Some neighborhoods or areas have many farm operators looking to rent more land while others have only one or maybe two choices. Competition, or the lack thereof, can sometimes have a significant impact on land rental rates.
- H. Having the rental income pay the property taxes- Some landowner's objective of land rent is to completely pay for their property taxes. There are some potentially serious flaws in this objective. In some cases this may work, primarily where there are a large enough number of tillable acres to spread the cost out and still have a reasonable rent payment by the renter. On parcels that have a high percentage of forest land or other land not useable by the renter or buildings that are of high value, and not used by the renter, it may be an unreasonable goal to have the tillable land carry the tax burden of the entire property.

Additional information can be found at: <http://aglease101.org/>

*Reviewed by: Ted Bay, Jerry Clark and Gary Hachfeld, UW-Extension Agriculture Agent Grant/
Lafayette County, UW-Extension Agriculture Agent Chippewa County and University of Minnesota
Extension Farm Business Management Educator*

Updated 12/16/16

UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA.

Following is an example of a cash rental agreement. It should be viewed as a guideline to follow, not as an absolute way a lease should be written. Landowners and renters should discuss the provisions they want to have in their lease and feel free to adapt this example lease to meet their situation.

1. CONTRACTING PARTIES AND DATE:

This lease begins on _____, 20____ and
ends on _____, 20_____.

Landlord(s) - _____ Renter(s) - _____

Address - _____ Address - _____

2. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

The landlord hereby leases to the renter the following described property:

_____ consisting of
approximately _____ tillable acres situated in _____ County. A map of the
property is attached to this lease identifying the rented land represented in this agreement.

3. GENERAL TERMS OF THE LEASE:

- A. Uses: This rental agreement is solely for growing agricultural crops.
- B. Time Period: This agreement will be in effect from _____ to _____
(and/or) this many years/growing seasons _____.
- C. Subleasing: The landlord does not convey to the renter the right to sublease any part
of the described property.
- D. Review of Lease: May be done at any time with written agreement and signed
consent of both the landlord and the renter.
- E. Partnership: Not intended or implied by this agreement (this is a cash lease only).
- F. Right of Entry: The landlord reserves the right to enter the property at any reasonable
time.
- G. Buildings: This lease does not include the use of any buildings on the property.

4. LAND USE:

- A. The renter agrees to follow a farm conservation plan, approved by NRCS and/or the
County Land Conservation Department.
- B. The renter cannot make physical changes to the property without written consent of
the owner, as required by Wis. Stat. § 704.05(3).
- C. The renter must maintain existing conservation practices. (Example: grass waterways)
- D. The renter is responsible for maintaining soil pH and fertility.
- E. Governmental payments will follow USDA Farm Service Agency and NRCS rules.

5. PAYMENTS AND DUE DATES:

A. The annual cash rent for the above described property paid by the renter to the landlord will be

_____ tillable acres @ \$ _____ per acre = \$ _____
_____ pasture acres @ \$ _____ per acre = \$ _____
_____ other acres @ \$ _____ per acre = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

B. Payments will be made directly to the landlord as follows:

- i. \$ _____ paid by _____
- ii. \$ _____ paid by _____

6. TERMINATION/AMENDMENT OF AGREEMENT:

This lease terminates on the ending date stated in paragraph 1 without any notice from either party.

The Landlord shall have the absolute right to terminate this lease by written notice in the event the Renter shall violate Section 2, 3, 4 or 5 of this agreement or if the Landlord sells this property, by giving the tenant written notice by September 1 that the lease would end at the completion of the current crop year, or current calendar year, whichever comes first. In the event the above occurs, the Renter would be allowed until the end of the current calendar year to complete the harvest of crops grown during the current year. In the event that the property is vacated by the Renter, mid-calendar year or crop year, the landowner, shall have exclusive right to occupy the property and take control of any crops remaining and profit thereof.

Either party may request a meeting to review and possibly amend the lease for the following years in the current contract by sending written notice to the other party by August 1st. Both parties must agree to any amendments. The lease will continue beyond the ending date stated in paragraph 1 only by mutual agreement.

7. SIGNATURES:

Landlord(s):

Renter(s):

_____ (Date)

_____ (Date)



*Bringing history to life
since 1976.*

County Historian/Director's Report, December 2016
Submitted by Jarrod Roll, Director / County Historian

Highlighted Projects and Activities

- Processed donations to the 2016 Annual Fund (entered donation amounts, generated receipts for each donor, sent thank you letters)
- Designed and mailed Annual Fund "reminder to give" post cards
- Promoted Christmas Village display (interviews with TV stations and Tomah newspaper; designed print ad for Sparta newspaper)
- Processed new artifact donations to LHR (assigned accession numbers and home locations; marked accession numbers on each)
- Attended financial software training to purchase items from Amazon.com using the county's system
- Generated four pages of content for the MCHS newsletter
- Continued promoting Winter Craft Day at the Museums and "A Visit with Santa at the Museums;" hosted both events; wrote and submitted article reporting on record attendance day at the museum
- Prepped for Winter Break Craft Day activities including planning activities, shopping for supplies, materials prep, set up and hosting.
- Hosted the Monroe County Economic Development Committee at the History Room; attended said meeting
- Regular tasks: provided research assistance to the public (via email, telephone, mail, and in person patrons); provided customer service to museum visitors; assigned storage locations, cataloged, and photographed artifacts removed from displays and those recently donated; balanced LHR financial books and draft monthly report; checked fire extinguishers; processed new donation offerings; conferred with Alli Karrells about museum issues and activities; attend Ag/Extension meeting

In addition to the projects listed above, I supervise the following volunteer and support staff:

- Agnes Jenkins: indexing newspapers
- Dennis Burek: photo scanning projects; data entry projects; assist with clerical duties
- Barb Reedich: research Monroe County in WWI; answer research requests; installed Christmas Village display
- Hannah Scholze (Museum Services Associate)
- John Lasko: represents and promotes LHR at public events
- Jane Schmidt: indexing newspapers
- Jim Ebert: indexing newspapers
- Sandy Walterman: creating a master index of Monroe County graduates
- Barb McGreevy: rehousing county court records; other duties as assigned

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Many of the visitors to the Monroe County Local History Room last week came to see Santa and the "Christmas Magic...In Miniature" display.



Local History Room breaks single-day attendance record

On Saturday, Dec 3, 189 area residents visited the Monroe County Local History Room in Sparta. That figure marks the greatest number of attendees of Monroe County's

history museum on a single day.

Several young guests came to see Santa during his afternoon appearance. Drawing others to the Local History Room is the "Christmas Magic...In Miniature" display featuring a collection of over 120 illuminated buildings.

From the reindeer stables to the various candy stores and elf workshops, this enchanting and whimsical display embodies the wonder and joy of Christmas for visitors young and old. The miniature Christmas Village will be on display through January 14.

Museum admission is free. The Local History Room is located at 200 W. Main Street in Sparta. Museum hours are Monday-Saturday, 9-4:30. For more information call 608-269-8680 or visit [Facebook.com/MCLHR](https://www.facebook.com/MCLHR).

MCLHR SH 12/08/2016

History Highlights from the Monroe County Local History Room



Ramona Schroeder of Norwalk opening her Christmas presents in 1955

Capturing Christmas: Collecting photos of Monroe County Christmases past

by Hannah Scholze
Museum Services Associate

Christmas is undoubtedly one of the most photographed holidays in the United States. Perhaps it's due to the smiling faces of children eager to sit on Santa's lap or the anticipation of using newly opened Christmas presents.

It could also be the beauty of all the colored lights and decorations amidst the white of a new fallen snow. Or maybe it's the feelings of joy, love, and togetherness of the holiday season that many of these photos try to evoke that make them so prolific.

Whatever the reason, Christmas photos are plentiful and often try to capture the excitement, childhood innocence, and spirit of the season within in a single shot.

The above photo of Ramona Schroeder of Norwalk opening her Christmas presents in 1955 was recently given to the Monroe County Local History Room. It certainly portrays the joy and wonder of Christmas morning and reminds me of all of the photos my family would take at Christmas time when I was growing up.

From the decorated Christmas tree to opening gifts and the various school and church Christmas pageants my brother and I were involved in, there was always a Christmas memory to try to preserve with the family camera.

While most of my family's photos show happy, giggling children opening presents or playing with other family members, one in particular comes to mind of me crying as I sat on Santa's lap. My Mom was the Youth Services Librarian for the La Crosse County Library at the time and had scheduled Santa to visit the library.

I was about three and for whatever reason was terrified of the jolly bearded guy wearing a big red suit. Somehow I was finally convinced to sit on his lap, but I was most definitely not happy about it—as the photo is evidence of.

Even though the fear of Santa was something I quickly grew out of before the following Christmas, the photo brings back a vivid memory of that day for both me and my Mom.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and Christmas photos are no exception to that. Whether or not the photo shows an excited child opening presents or a bawling toddler with Santa, Christmas photos depict family relationships and traditions and can help tell the story of past events.

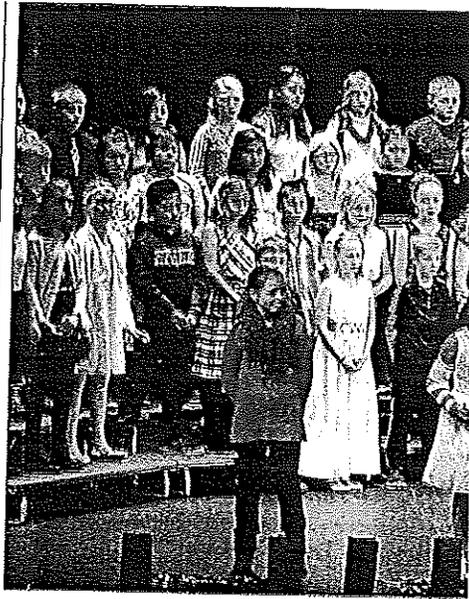
Although not often thought of, they also effectively document the clothing styles, toys and games, housing décor, and Christmas decorations used during a specific time period. They really are a window into the past that captures a particular moment—a particular memory—in time.

In conjunction with the "Christmas Magic... In Miniature" North Pole Village currently on exhibit at the Monroe County Local History Room, there is also a display of historic Christmas photos from the county. Accordingly, we are looking to add to the Local History Room's collection of Christmas photos and the stories that go along with them.

Do you have photos of Christmas scenes from the 1970s or older from Monroe County that you'd be willing to share? Pictures of kids with Santa, families in front of the Christmas tree, homes decorated for Christmas, and special holiday events are just what we're looking for.

Original photos can be scanned at the History Room and returned if desired. Please contact the Local History Room at 608-269-3680 or mcldr@centurytel.net for more information. We would love to help preserve your memories of past Monroe County Christmases.

The Local History Room is located at 200 W. Main Street in Sparta and is open Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.. The Christmas village display will be up thru January 14.



Holiday Traditions

Sparta fifth-graders Greta Anderson, Dulce Everson and Destiny... night. The auditorium was packed with proud parents, grandpar

**Tomah woman anxious for n
Born without arms, Laurel Burns is overcomi**

by BOB KLIEBENSTEIN
Regional Writer

Laurel Burns was hoping she could have set out cookies and milk for Santa Claus in a new home for Christmas.

But all the pieces did not fall into place for Burns and her two sons, Noah, 7, and Isaiah, 5. But a cement foundation on a Lakeview Street lot in Tomah is visual proof a holiday puzzle is one piece closer to reality.

With assistance and support from an extensive list of friends, family and businesses, Burns and her sons will be moving into a new home in early 2017. The home offers a dual dose of independence for the 31-year-old single mother.

Along with being a new homeowner, the home is being built to help Burns manage daily life without arms. Burns thinks her birth without arms may be connected to her mother's drug use during pregnancy. But life without arms has not hindered her independence.

Raised in Madison, Burns was determined to put a failed marriage behind her and start fresh. A friend who lived in Tomah suggested Burns consider a move to Monroe County. Leaving Madison was not her first choice.

"I love Madison and had no intention to move," Burns said.

That was three years ago. Burns moved to Tomah so her sons could be closer to their father and his family. And despite initial reluctance Burns has grown to appreciate Tomah. With her sons attending Tomah's Montessori School, Burns realizes she needs stability.

One condition of stability is home ownership. But the other part of the equation is a home designed to make life easier without arms. At first Burns said one of her son's Head Start teachers suggested she

Skyline Homes, Lancaster. anxious for its delivery.

Her list of business suppliers is extensive. At this time it includes Tomah Lumber, Western Technical College, Lynnx, Wettsteins, Bank, Flock's Heating and Conditioning, Top Dog Mart, American Family Insurance, Zingler Sign and Design, E&B Insulation, Sid's Concrete, Halverson Plumbing, Castle Home Sales, Bank of Mauston, Gerke Excavating, city of Tomah, T2 Contracting, River City Ready Mix and Dean's Refrigeration and Heating. The list will likely grow.

But as a single mother attending Western Technical College and caring for two sons Burns knew she had to set pride aside and seek community support. Tapping into social media, Burns shares her story on a Facebook page.

She created a web site, Lau and Go Fund Me page.

The house design is practical and financial support will go toward necessities special for Laurel needs. An attached garage will be built by the Tomah High School building trades class at some point. "It will be great when I have to scrape my car window in winter," she said.

Examples of other features include keyless and covered entry to access to the home; hardwood flooring to eliminate the need for vacuum so much, if ever; one level h





MEGHAN FLYNN, TOMAH NEWSPAPERS

Alli Karrels, executive director of the Deke Slayton Memorial Space and Bicycle Museum in Sparta, stands with the Christmas village on display at the Monroe County Local History Room. The village is part of her family's collection. Her father began collecting it over 30 years ago; this is the first time the entirety of the village has been on display.

All the little houses

Monroe County museum displays lighted, miniature Christmas village

MEGHAN FLYNN
meghan.flynn@lee.net

SPARTA—What do a reindeer spa, candy cane store and a Santa hat pub have in common?

All can be found at the Monroe County Local History Room, where a collection of 128 lighted, miniature houses is showcased in the "Christmas Magic ... In Miniature" display.

Jarrod Roll, history room director, said the idea for the display happened by chance after a string of bad luck. The idea was brought to him by Alli Karrels, executive director of the Deke Slayton Memorial Space and Bicycle Museum.

"This is our third year of doing a special Christmas display, and a few months ago (Karrels) approached me, she said, 'Jarrod what are you going to do this year?' I said, 'We keep on hitting dead ends with our ideas,'" he said. "Then (Karrels) said, 'Have you ever considered a Christmas village?'"

As it turns out Karrels family, her father in particular, has been collecting pieces of the Department 56 North Pole Village for over 30 years.



MEGHAN FLYNN, TOMAH NEWSPAPERS

One of the pieces in the Santa's Village Christmas Display at the Monroe County Local History Room is called Candy Cane Corner.

"She showed me some pictures of them and I said, 'This could be really cool,'" Roll said. "Boy was she able to sell the idea to me!"

Karrels was excited to be able to show off her family's display in full, something that they've never been able to do.

"It was really my dad's dream to

be able to display them all at once," she said. "So when I proposed this idea, he was totally on board, really happy to share the exhibit. ... The collection's big; we've never been able to display the entire thing before, so this is our first opportunity to do so."

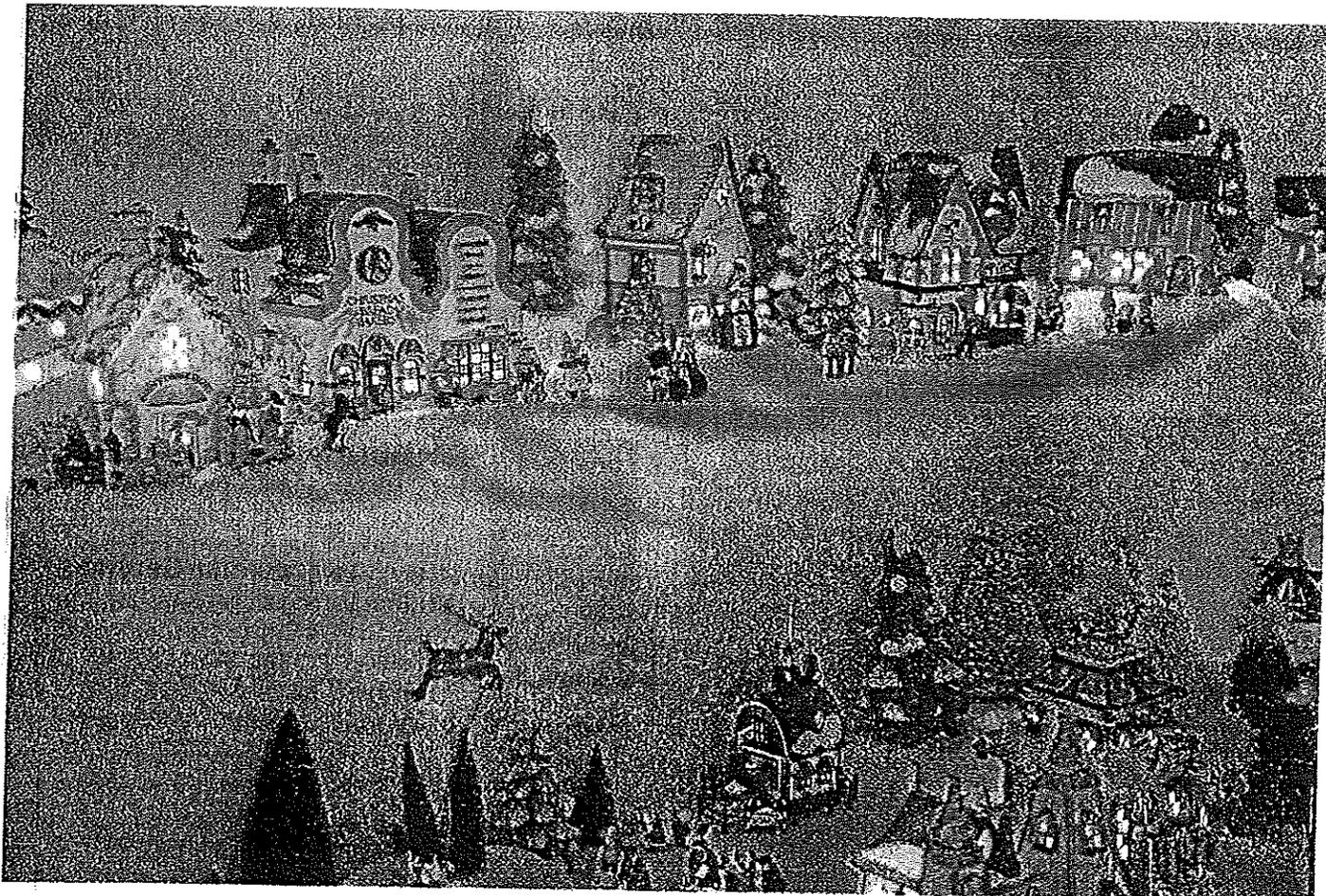
Karrels was happy for the op-

portunity to share a family tradition of hers with the community.

"I've been the director of the Deke Slayton museum for six years, so it's fun for me to be able to bring some of my family traditions to this area," she said.

Please see HOUSES, Page A4

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MEGHAN FLYNN, TOMAH NEWSPAPERS

Over 100 houses are on display at Monroe County Local History Room's Christmas Village Display in Sparta.

Houses

From A1

The collection is comprised of 128 houses and various figurines, trees and other decorations.

With so many pieces to transport from Elm Grove, a suburb of Milwaukee, transport and setup were interesting, Karrels said. She said some of the pieces had never been displayed before.

"We did a big setup weekend at the end of October ... and then my dad came up and we spent, gosh, between two days, probably 20-plus hours setting everything up, drilling holes for each and every building to put the lights through," she said. "The tricky part was that

we had never done it before, so it was like trying to invent the wheel."

After the initial setup, Karrels said it was up to her to add all of the trees, figurines and other knick-knacks. It was a daunting task.

"I was a little nervous, I'm not going to lie, setting that up on my own," she said. "But (my dad) came back for the grand opening because he lives in the Milwaukee area, and he said, 'I couldn't have done it better myself! That was a real sigh of relief, knowing that I did it to his standard.'"

It's a fun display, Roll said.

"What I like about it is that it is so colorful, whimsical, it's playful, it's Christmasy," he said.

"My favorite pieces are the ones where you look inside and see that someone took the time to create a decal for that wall that has a calendar on it - you can see Santa's coat hanging on a chair, you can see a mirror, and it has postcards even ... I love that."

The display has garnered a lot of attention from people of all ages, Karrels said.

"You have people in their later years coming in to view this and then you have children as young as two coming in to view this," she said. "It's great because it's so rare that you have an exhibit that is literally for everybody, that really appeals equally to everybody. This exhibit is something that everyone can look at and enjoy."

Visiting the collection is a way to bask in Christmas goodness, Roll said.

"We want this to be considered something on their to-do list, like maybe they're going to check out some lights somewhere or maybe they go visit Santa at a store," he said. "We want this to be on the list of what they come to see. There's nothing like it around here."

The exhibit has been a hit, Karrels said; the history room broke its December attendance record with 675 attendees.

The collection will be on display until Jan. 14.

Regular museum hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information call 608-269-8680 or visit [Facebook.com/MCLHR](https://www.facebook.com/MCLHR).