



**Arlen Albrecht, Professor, Community Resource and Economic Development
2010 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

Selected Major Program Efforts:

- A. Strengthening Local Government
- B. Protecting and Improving Water/Forest Resources/Energy
- C. Enhancing Community and Business Development
- D. Community Organizational Development

Methods Used to Determine Program Direction:

- Four Year Strategic Plan Central District Survey Data
- Taylor County UWEX Committee
- Taylor County Solid Waste/Recycling Authority
- Taylor County Towns Association

Please note: The University of Wisconsin-Extension bought out 8% of Arlen's county time for a statewide programming effort, 8 unpaid furlough days and thus has less programming time dedicated to County issues.

Accomplishments and Results: A. *Strengthening Local Government:*

Albrecht continues to help the Taylor County Census Committee understand and act on Census Department data and prepare reports. Necessary departments are working towards the April 2011 County Board Supervisors Redistricting process. He also provides educational support to the Taylor County Towns Association and assists by researching answers to individual town questions. In particular he held two town clerk working sessions to understand and gain efficiency in filling out the Form CT and items to include in a new software program. Finally, he works as an advisor with the Taylor County Recycling Authority in providing research based information to strengthen citizen participation, wrote and produced 20 radio PSA's. A noted result is that only 5 of the 19 member municipalities do not meet state goals, but all members have continually increased volumes. He has also investigated options and markets for Ag plastic waste.

Accomplishment and Results: B. *Protecting and Improving Water/Forestry Resources/Energy*

Land Stewardship Conference-Price & Taylor: SITUATION: A countywide needs assessments in 2007, identified Conservation, Stewardship, and Development of Natural Resources as the second-highest priority to be addressed by Taylor County UWEX over the next several years. The Land Stewardship Conference has been offered annually since 2004 to address the changing landscape of Taylor County's Northwoods. There is a trend to parcel off forest and farm land into smaller lots which are purchased by absentee owners and residents alike. Landowners are faced with many management issues they are unprepared to deal with and are seeking resources to assist them.

RESPONSE: Northcentral Land Stewardship team members from Price and Taylor Counties UWEX and Land Conservation Departments, Upper Chippewa Basin Educator, Department of Natural Resources, and Pri-Ru-Ta RC & D Council conducted the 7th annual Northcentral Wisconsin Land Stewardship Conference on April 10. The conference goal was to teach private landowners and professional loggers, selected land and water management and stewardship practices and improve their understanding of natural resources with the focus on Woods, Wildlife and Water. The conference was arranged so participants could attend the keynote address and their choice of 4 of the 25 break-out sessions. This year, the keynote focus was "The History of Conservation." The program included numerous displays from commercial and educational exhibitors. Participants completed evaluation surveys yielding 170 returns.

RESULTS: 173 people attended the 2010 Land Stewardship Conference. Participants learned about environmental stewardship in the areas of managed forestry, wildlife habitat and management, stewardship tools, timber taxes, timber theft, chain saw safety, earning revenue and wetland management. Albrecht team taught a session on "Hobby Income from Your Woods". This multifaceted approach to environmental stewardship education has increased peoples' awareness of environmental issues and land stewardship practices, and people do apply their increased understanding by implementing stewardship practices on their land.

EVIDENCE: Nearly all survey respondents indicated they were satisfied with the conference. 96% stated they had learned something they foresee using on their property for which they identified over 200 examples of things they learned at this conference that they intended to apply to their property.

Taylor County Energy Conservation: In late 2009 Albrecht helped the Taylor County Building and Grounds director work with FOCUS on Energy for an energy audit of its buildings and suggested practices to implement. He also was the principal writer of the \$225,000 grant to further implement planned energy saving practices. Award announcements were given in April. This agent helped secure all necessary contract signatures, develop a project solid waste plan, applications to the State Historical Society for proposed work, and helped understand necessary accounting options. To date Building and Grounds personnel have completed all lighting retrofitting and the heating plant bids were awarded.

CleanSweeps: For the past 17, years Taylor County has conducted hazardous waste clean sweeps for agricultural and household residents. Albrecht teams with the County Solid Waste Department and is responsible for the radio, newspaper and community education to promote the event and lessen the use of or improper disposal of hazardous materials. In 2010, 13,000 lbs of hazardous materials, 178 lbs of pharmaceuticals, 64 mercury thermometers, 4299 fluorescent light bulbs, 345 gallons of waste oil and 530 old appliances and electronic units were collected and properly disposed of. 243 vehicles representing 310 households participated in the event.

Partnering with the Land Conservation Department, Albrecht helped organize the 7 area lake associations under the theme of working together. A list of workshops was identified and the team carried out 4 sessions: Clean Boats/Clean Water, Shoreline Restoration/Protection, The Good, Bad and Ugly Algae in our Lakes, and Grant Writing for Lakes. An average of 17 people attended the sessions. He also facilitated a working session to update their 2011-2021 Water and Land Conservation Plan.

Accomplishments and Results: C: *Enhancing Community and Business Development*

Albrecht continues to work with area development foundations and individual entrepreneurs with whom he has gained trust and respect through 22 years of work. His work meets the unique and individual requests of pre-venture entrepreneurs and the three community foundations, as everyone's problem is unique to their case and confidentiality is important. 20 pre-venture clients received counseling on feasibility, business plans, and avenues for financing and marketing data. He continues efforts in bringing the 3 foundations together and this year they held 3 joint meetings.

The Friends of the Downtown organized 4 years ago. The organization's makeup is interested merchants and citizens of the Medford area. They conduct 5 events to bring residents to the downtown area as a destination. Albrecht organized and taught one program in the series; a bus tour of unique birding hotspots sponsored by the Tourism Committee. A guest speaker was invited to further the educational program.

Gilman Cheese Inc, requested assistance from Albrecht for the expansion of their food processing plant. He brought the DOC in and a Dairy Product Value Added Tax Rebate Program was identified and is being pursued for activities completed in 2010 and for a major plant expansion to be completed in 2011. This project involved bringing the Village Board, Gilman Development Foundation, engineers, and legal counsel together to discuss options and finalize plans for a late November groundbreaking. It included the abandonment of a village street, new sewer and water lines, and use of TID #2 funds.

Significant contribution of time and research was invested in the Rib Lake Log/Sediment Removal project which resulted in a Business Feasibility and Business Plan for a self sustaining project. Albrecht presented the plan to Senator Kohl and his staff for consideration of startup assistance through the Army Corps of Engineers. The project is being advanced to Washington for possible inclusion in the 2011 federal budget.

Accomplishments and Results: D: *Organizational Development*

Albrecht continues his work with the Taylor County Humane Society as an advisor. This year a successful election of board members and officers was conducted, re-negotiated a contract with the Sheriff's Department for payment, the by-laws were updated, a new Shelter Manager was hired and a job description was developed. The organization appears to be functioning as a united team for the benefit of animals in the County.

Albrecht also resumes an advisory role with the Medford Farmers Market. He leads an annual meeting to review rules and procedures for the market year. 2010 was a successful season with over 50 different vendors participating, a growing market niche and expanded to a midweek event in the downtown area.