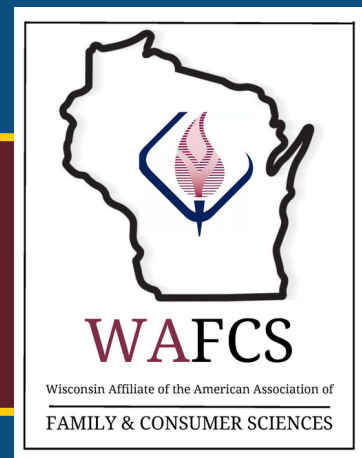


WAFCS News – August, 2025

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCES



President Cathy's Corner



Labor Day is fast approaching and there are subtle signs that the transition from summer to autumn is underway. In the spirit of collaboration each Executive Board member has been asked to share a resource with members via WAFCS e-news. A variety of resources will be shared - one per month. I will share this month; look for it further down in this issue.

Take time to be awed by the auras of autumn. Best wishes for a productive school year as FCCLA chapters continue to move "towards new horizons".

FCS student teachers - YOU ROCK!

2025-2026 Executive Board

President – Cathy Lader

President Elect – Jenny Wehmeier

Past President – Sue Strutz

Secretary – Judy Knudsen

Treasurer – Susan Turgeson

VP of Professional Development – Jennie Marx

VP of Awards & Recognition – Tara Weber

VP of Communication & Technology – Sadie Hooker

Executive Director – Cindy Quilling

Standing Committee Chairperson

Membership Chair – Kelly Yeahey

WAFCS extends it's condolences to **Jeanne Schwass-Long** on the loss of her husband, Francis, who passed away July 22 at 94 years of age.

Career Moves for WAFCS Members

- Miranda Ritger - CESA 9, Associate Director of Continuous School Improvement - Career and Technical Education Coordinator
- Katie Sands - FCS Educator and FCCLA Adviser, Valders High School
- Sue Strutz - FCS Educator at DeForest High School
- Brittany Vanderbilt - FCS Educator at WI Dells Middle School and High School
- Melanie Wroblewski - CTE and ACP Coordinator for the Oshkosh Area School District
- Amanda Drews - FCS Asst Professor, School of Education, UW-Stout

WAFCS Executive Board Updates

The WAFCS Executive Board is focusing on collaborative efforts this year to increase input and enhance opportunities for members. Executive Board members may be asking you to serve on a committee, generate ideas for a program, and/or suggest potential sponsors for the 2026 WAFCS Annual Conference. Increased member participation throughout the year results in a stronger organization.

As a result of the group processing by the board on July 21 three priorities for our collaboration were identified:

- being accountable (follow through)
- using clear, concise communication
- demonstrating commitment to group goals (and benchmarks).

Thank You to members already serving on the Awards & Recognition and the Partnerships Prospectus committees. Also, appreciation to the ad hoc financial management committee.

~ From Our Members ~

Hello everyone! My name is Lynzie Nightengale and as I begin my second year teaching Culinary Arts I at North High School in Eau Claire, I've taken some time to reflect on what I've learned and how I've grown since stepping into the classroom.

One of the most valuable resources I've discovered is the network of supportive teachers around me. The connections I've made with colleagues have been a lifeline—especially during moments when I've felt stuck or unsure. Knowing there are experienced educators who are willing to offer advice, share materials, or simply listen has made a huge difference in my experience as a new teacher.

If I could go back and do anything differently in my first year, I would focus more on classroom management right from the start. It's something that impacts everything else, and while I've made progress, I know it's a skill that takes time and intention to build. I'd also remind myself to work harder at maintaining a healthy work/life balance. The school year can be all-consuming, and I've learned the hard way how important it is to carve out time to rest and recharge.

Teaching semester-long classes has its own set of challenges. It can be difficult to build strong, lasting relationships with students in such a short period of time. I often have students ask if they can have me again for another class, and it's bittersweet—not always being able to continue those connections. That said, I've learned that showing up for students outside of the classroom—whether at a sports event, concert, or performance—really matters. They notice when you're there, and those moments help build trust and connection in a way that goes beyond the classroom.

And one thing I've definitely learned - high school students are always hungry! I keep granola bars on my cart for anyone who needs a quick snack. It's a small thing, but it goes a long way. Also, the lengths some students will go to for a piece of candy never fail to surprise me—they'll do just about anything!

This summer, I spent time traveling and baking desserts with friends—two things I love that bring me joy and inspiration for the classroom. As I head into a new school year, I'm excited to keep growing, learning, and building relationships with my students and colleagues.



Lynzie Nightengale

From Our Members will feature members sharing reflections, resources, lesson plans, or current FCS issues.

Consider contributing to a future E-News by contacting Cindy at cindyquilling.wafcs@gmail.com

~ WAFCS Members in Action ~



Jenny Abel

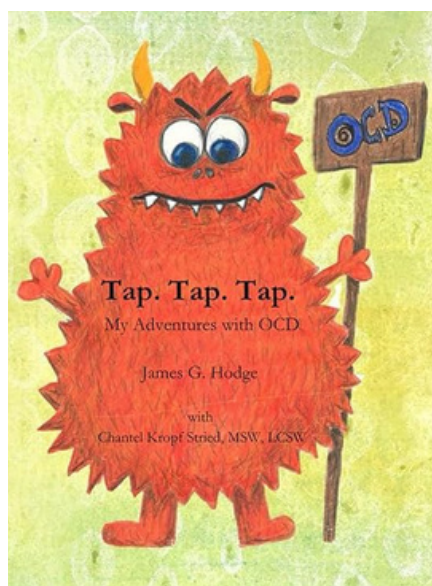
WAFCS Member, Jenny Abel, along with LJ Hendrix and Portia Johnson gave a panel presentation titled "Hazard-Proofing Finances: Tools for Teaching Weather Resilient Financial Education" at the AAFCS 2025 conference. Their presentation, "The 52 Ways to Hazard-Proof your Finances Toolkit" addressed the steps families can take to enhance their financial well-being and increase their financial resilience from the consequences of climate change and extreme weather including heat waves, droughts, large rainfalls, hurricanes, and wildfires.

The kit offers 52 financial strategies to implement or habits to develop. The suggestions are organized into the following categories: personal finance, insurance, clothing, shoes, and laundry, food, housing, tax credits, transportation, preparedness, and becoming a professional.

Jenny Abel, an Financial Security Outreach Program Manager at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension, together with her fellow panelists, answered questions from session attendees and offered additional resources. In her follow up email, she included more resources for teaching weather resilient financial education including 30 and 60 minute lesson plans, powerpoints, and social media graphics. In my opinion, the strategies and actions offered in different categories are inspirations for life skill lessons in FCS including personal finance, housing needs and interior design, textile and fashion, food and nutrition, and careers exploration classes.

Submitted by WAFCS Member, Caiping Su, Foundation Travelship Recipient

Resource Share - Cathy Lader, WAFCS President



Title: *Tap. Tap. Tap. My Adventures with OCD*

Author: James G. Hodge with Chantel Kropf Stried, MSW, LCSW

Publisher: KDP, an imprint of Amazon

Copyright: 2024

Description: One adolescent boy's heartfelt journey through the tangled world of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Great resource for individuals, parents, educators, and therapists. Perfect for ages 8 through 100!

News Link: <https://www.wmtv15news.com/2025/02/24/parker-high-school-senior-publishes-book-struggles-living-with-ocd/>

Special Offer: You may secure a complimentary copy by sending an email to wafcsconf@gmail.com using the subject line of Tap Tap Tap. In 25 words or less share how this resource will be used, include your name. Requests due by September 30 and will be confirmed via email.

One is the Loneliest Number: Collaborative Research is more fun!

Recap of AAFCS conference session by Jenny Abel

WAFCS member Susan Turgeson joined her colleague Mari Borr, editor of the FCS Research Journal, to share the benefits of working with others on research projects and journal articles. The presenters also talked about ways to use AI to enhance and simplify the research and writing process.

Susan and Mari highlighted six types of collaboration, including homogeneous where researchers from one discipline work together, interdisciplinary where colleagues from across disciplines come together to solve complex problems, and public-private partnerships, where universities work together with private companies.

Collaborating on research has many benefits, including dividing tasks, sharing resources, learning from other disciplines, and lending validity to the project. At the same time those who are considering a collaboration should plan for how to address potential challenges, including the potential of conflicting expectations, fair publication practices, and making sure that funds and resources are equitably managed.

Challenges and barriers can be avoided by considering questions like these ahead of time:

- How will research roles and responsibilities be divided?
- Is the collaborator receptive to having his/her program monitored?
- Is the collaborator meeting project deadlines?
- Is the collaborator adhering to research procedures and protocols?

Susan and Mari then invited participants to consider new collaborations they might form. During discussions we had the chance to learn about fascinating collaborations that are underway, like one at Texas Christian University where a textiles and apparel specialist reached out to the chemistry department to help test a new seam that can prevent lunar dust from getting through a spacesuit (the project was commissioned by NASA).

Mari and Susan then discussed responsible ways to use AI in research. Those include using AI tools to brainstorm and clarify ideas, help with literature search, and to help with editing text. The presenters warned that while AI is very useful for checking grammar and sentence structure, it is vital to avoid the pitfalls of AI use, such as over reliance on AI tools, lack of originality, and potentially including inaccurate information. The presenters also shared information on how to cite AI as a source in journal articles.

Susan's and Mari's session was packed with actionable information and allowed ample time for discussion and reflection. It was a highlight of my conference experience.

Reminders:

- WAFCS Annual Conference, The Wisconsin Hotel and Conference Center, Feb 26-27, 2026
- Foundation Professional Project/Grant Application - due September 1
- WAFCS FOUNDATION - [Donate Here](#)
- WAFCS Website: <https://www.aafcs.org/wafcs/home>
- AAFCS Grants open September 1st
- AAFCS 2026 PSA Contest "FCS is the Answer-Share It"- Watch for Info

Recap of the 2024-2025 Membership Initiative

by Ryan Lehman Kelly Yeakey
2024-2025 Membership Co-Chairs



Over the past year (July 2024-25), the Membership Committee actively worked to strengthen engagement and outreach within WAFCS. We consistently tracked our current members to maintain accurate records and ensure continued connection. To warmly welcome new members, we sent personalized WAFCS welcome postcards, helping to create a friendly and inclusive first impression. Additionally, we sent out a survey to members whose memberships had been terminated to better understand the reasons why they chose not to renew.

One of our key accomplishments was receiving a WAFCS Foundation grant, which allowed us to provide "Goodies" for attendees at the WAFCS Annual Conference. These included AAFCS Post-it notes, AAFCS/WAFCS notepads, a WAFCS business card, and Betty Lamp stickers. We also created an information packet for non-members attending the conference, which included an AAFCS membership form, a credentials sheet, an overview of membership benefits, and materials encouraging investment in the profession.

To broaden our outreach, we sent an email to the FCS/FCCLA Listserv, reaching approximately 500 FCS teachers across Wisconsin, highlighting the benefits of joining WAFCS. We also exhibited at the FCCLA State Leadership Conference by hosting a display table and placing an advertisement in the conference program. Through these efforts, we demonstrated our commitment to growing and supporting the WAFCS membership community.

WAFCS NEWS – AUGUST, 2025

Editor: Cindy Quilling

All newsletter submissions are due the 15th of each month to
cindyquilling.wafcs@gmail.com