

DEMETER NEWS

• FOCUSING ON OUR COMMUNITY & THE UW-MADISON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL & LIFE SCIENCES •

President's Message

by Sharon Brantmeier

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the Corn Roast — what an uplifting event. The Corn Roast gives us time to connect with other Demeter members, meet the students who receive our scholarships and grants, and enjoy a great meal together. A huge shout-out to **Larry Binning** for finding **Pat O'Brien**, who generously donated the corn this year. It was delicious!

We also had a great time in October touring **Gottschalk Farms** and learning about cranberry production. Thank you to Demeter member **Fawn Gottschalk** for showing us the cranberry harvest in action.

Thanks to everyone who has donated to Demeter. Hearing the students speak at the Corn Roast was a powerful reminder of the impact your generosity makes. The Education Committee does an excellent job allocating the funds.

As a retired financial advisor, I'd like to share a few ways you can still give this year to support our students:

•**New in 2026:** Individuals who don't itemize can claim a charitable deduction for cash gifts up to \$1,000 (or \$2,000 for couples filing jointly). You may send a check to **Doug Maxwell's** attention or donate online at <https://demeterwi.org/donate/>.

•**IRA distributions:** If you're required to take a minimum distribution from your IRA, you can direct it to Demeter as a qualified charitable distribution.

If you have any questions, please contact us. It's always best to consult your tax advisor for guidance on your specific situation. Thanks again for attending events, supporting Demeter, and sharing your enthusiasm. It's been wonderful getting to know more of our members.



Education Committee Report

by **Kate VandenBosch**, Education Committee chair

The opportunity to meet young scholars who are receiving support from Demeter was a highlight of the Corn Roast on September 3. This year we allocated more than \$56,000 in scholarships, internship support, and grants to student organizations, the most we have ever awarded.

Demeter supported three student internships and 19 scholarships, including support for study abroad and research experiences. We also made grants to 11 student organizations.

Attendance at the Corn Roast totaled 21 students, including many scholarship and internship recipients, plus leaders from the student organizations. Our guests reported on their CALS backgrounds and goals, their fields of study, and the ways that support from Demeter was advancing them toward their goals. We'll feature many of their stories in future newsletters.

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I appreciate the efforts of the Education Committee and other Demeter members to bring this group together. Thanks go to Tonia Peters for coordinating communication with the scholarship recipients, Dave Thomas for his facilitation of the club leaders and for helping organize transportation, and Tom Breunig for working with the interns.

A special shout-out goes to Martha Maxwell for making sure that all of the students had a name tag for the event even though the roster was changing up to the last minute. And thanks to everyone for helping our guests feel welcome.

The Demeter Education Committee is working toward the next round of student support. In October, treasurer Doug Maxwell and I met with CALS Curt Lauderdale, Assistant Dean for Student Advising and Development in CALS, and Alan Avila, CALS Scholarship Manager, to hear about student needs and CALS priorities. The college has had one of the biggest incoming classes in recent years so naturally scholarship needs are also growing.

CALS is prioritizing support for QuickStart, a summer

program for incoming students that helps them prepare for success. CALS also recognizes the importance of experience outside the classroom, including study abroad, research, internships, and participation in student clubs. The Education Committee will gather this month to make recommendations on how best to allocate our dollars. The good news is that we again expect to be able to provide strong support for students in the 2026-2027 academic year due to support from current Demeter members and proceeds from several endowments.

Our most important sources of flexible student support are the Demeter checking account and the Demeter Education Fund at the UW Foundation.

Contributions to the checking account may be sent to Douglas Maxwell, Treasurer, 11691 Mid Town Road, Verona, WI 53593. Please make checks payable to DoD, Inc. Donations to either the checking account or the Demeter Education Fund can also be made at <https://demeterwi.org/donate/>. Contributions are tax deductible as permitted by law.



Demeter sees cranberry harvest in action

Fifteen members of Demeter traveled to Babcock, Wisconsin, October 7 to watch a cranberry harvest at the multi-generational cranberry farm owned by Demeter member Fawn Gottschalk and her brother, Andy. The harvester's "water wheel" beater gently beats cranberries off the vines after bogs are flooded. Wooden or plastic "booms" round the berries up. A conveyor lifts the fruits into trucks that take them to a receiving station for cleaning. Fawn talked about her family's fascinating history and their involvement in the Ocean Spray Cranberries cooperative following a luncheon at the Babcock Town Hall.

Demeter Thanks Generous Donors

DONATIONS TO STUDENT SUPPORT

Loka Ashwood. Sandra Bertics, Tom and Mary Breunig, Hanna Boekhoff-Walsh, Gennie and Lloyd Bostian, Sharon Brantmeier, Nancy Caldwell, Sue Cowan, Vera Cunningham, Betty-Jo Dahlman, Ruth and Bill Dobson, Karen Goebel, Sara Gragg, Kathleen Knox, Paul Koch, Jan Martin, Martha and Douglas Maxwell, Gail and Dan Schaefer, Sean Schoville, Mimi and Ken Shapiro, Priscilla and Jerry Thain, Eve Wilkie

DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF

- Henry “Hank” Ahlgren by Peggy Ahlgren
- Allan Bringe by George Shook
- Laverne Forest by Betty Forest
- Al Ellingboe by Ann Ellingboe
- Dwight and June Forsyth by David Forsyth
- Andrea Kelling by Betty and Dennis Keeney, Keith Kelling
- Jeff Martin by Jan Martin
- Glenda and Robert Lindsay by Joyce Bringe
- Art Pope by David Thomas
- David Stuiber by Heidi Holmes and Mary Stuiber

DONATIONS IN HONOR OF

- George Shook by Kate VandenBosch

SEWING DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF

- Betty Pope by Lynda Thomas

DONATIONS TO DEMETER EDUCATION FUND AT UW FOUNDATION

Sharon Brantmeier and Randy Shaver, Peggy and Richard Daluge, Brenda McNatt



Top photo: Next spring tulips will bloom in front of the Allen Centennial Garden sign thanks to (from left) Jenny Zinniker (horticulturist), and Demeter members Linda Harvey, Mary Whitmer, Sally Leong, Jan Martin, Sharon Brantmeier and Martha Maxwell. Bottom photo: Sharon, Martha and Sally plant a mix of pastel tulip bulbs. Photos courtesy of Jan Martin.

Fine day for planting

Mother Nature provided a sunny and unusually warm day on October 17 for Demeter members who planted 750 tulip bulbs at Allen Centennial Garden on the UW-Madison campus. The members planted a mix of pastel sunrise tulips by the garden's highly visible sign at the corner of Observatory Drive and Babcock Drive. In coordination with Allen Centennial Garden, Demeter started the annual bulb-planting tradition in 2001.



Demeter scholarship recipients in attendance at the Corn Roast are (from left) Briana Meyer, Josephine Ammons, Alexandra Werner, Aletta Bergman, Aren Gonzales, Lucas Prange and Sydney Storer.



Demeter-supported interns June McAniff, left, and Natalie Hensen, attended the Corn Roast. June interned at the West Madison Agricultural Research Station and Natalie interned at the Arlington Agricultural Research Station.

Corn Roast Celebrates CALS Students

by Lynn Grooms, Demeter Newsletter editor

Despite the cool weather, the atmosphere at Demeter's annual Corn Roast Picnic was warm as members greeted students and faculty from CALS and each other. Many thanks to the more than 25 volunteers who helped make the event a success. We also want to thank Pat O'Brien of O'Brien's Super Sweet Corn in Fitchburg for donating the delicious sweet corn. As always, Larry Binning and his crew also did a wonderful job of cooking the corn.

Through the generosity of Demeter members, we awarded more than \$56,500 in scholarships, internships and agriculture clubs this year -- an all-time record! As she pointed out in her Education Committee report, Kate VandenBosch reported that Demeter supported three student internships and 19 scholarships, including support for study abroad and research experiences. Demeter also funded 11 student organizations. Twenty-one students from CALS were able to join us and tell us about their fields of study and how their funding from Demeter will help further their scholastic endeavors.

Demeter members also heard from Jeri Barak, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in CALS.

"People are what makes our CALS community so special and I appreciate your efforts to foster a strong community and support so many members of our student body, along with our faculty and staff," she said.

Barak reported that UW-Madison received about 54,000 undergraduate applications this year, including students in the new program that guarantees admission to UW-Madison for those graduating from the top five percent at a Wisconsin high school. She added that the university has welcomed a first-year class of 8,400 students. Of that number, CALS has more than 800 new students this fall. That's 200 more than last year.



Eleven students from CALS-affiliated student organizations showed their school spirit at the Demeter Corn Roast in September. They each told Demeter members how their club will use Demeter funding.

UW-CALS also is offering new programs to students:

- A new major in Dairy and Animal Food Management for those interested in working in livestock management. The program is a companion for the Animal and Veterinary Biosciences major.
- A new major in Agroecology, which includes courses from many CALS departments and employs ecology, sociology, economics and political science to consider how agriculture can improve the wellbeing of people.
- A new undergraduate certificate in Soil Science, which will allow students majoring in programs across the campus to add this coursework to their programs.

Barak introduced new department chairs during the Corn Roast: Sara Gregg from Animal and Dairy Science; Sean Scoville in Entomology; Paul Mitchell in Agricultural and Applied Economics; and Paul Koch in Plant Pathology.

Two new faculty members also attended the Corn Roast – Loka Ashwood is a professor in the Department of Community and Environmental Sociology; and Sarah Castle is an assistant professor in the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology.



New department chairs in CALS are (from left) Sara Gregg, Sean Scoville, Paul Mitchell, and Paul Koch.

Welcome New Members
We're Glad You're Here

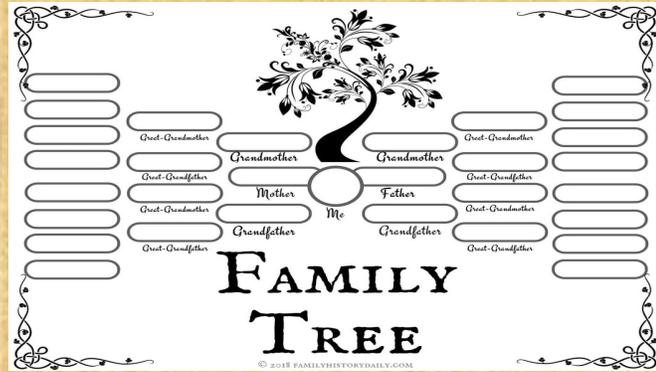
Sandy Larson

Jane Duffstein



Rudbeckia trials at West Madison Agricultural Research Station

New! Demeter Genealogy Club



If you have thought that the time has come to organize your family history, the Demeter Genealogy Club is for you. Dave Thomas and Douglas Maxwell will host the club, which will be tailored to the needs of the club members. The meeting time and location will be arranged to accommodate the circumstances of the members. Please contact Doug Maxwell (douglas.maxwell08@gmail.com; 608-332-3625) by Jan. 8, 2026 to let him know if you are interested in joining or to ask any questions.

Genealogy is the study of family history and one's ancestors. It connects a person with the past and the present by researching family lines, sharing stories, and preserving records (documents and images). Club members will learn options for preparing a family tree, finding historical records, and organizing information.

2026 CALENDAR

Executive Committee Meeting
5:30 p.m., Jan. 7, via Zoom

Board Meeting
5:30 p.m., Feb. 4, via Zoom

**Webinar featuring Laura Hernandez, Assistant Professor,
Animal and Dairy Sciences, UW-Madison**
TBD: late February or early March

Executive Board Meeting
5:30 p.m., March 10, West Madison Agricultural Research Station

Annual Meeting and Luncheon
Beginning at 11:30 a.m., April 29, Blackhawk Country Club

Garden Party
Beginning at 4:00 p.m., June 10
Allen Centennial Garden

Corn Roast Picnic
Beginning at 5 p.m., September 9
Lakeview Park, Middleton

CONDOLENCES

*Family of Laura Hernandez on
passing of her mother*

LIFE EVENTS

*Please send news of life
events to*

Jan.Martin539@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER

*Please send news articles to
groomslynn@gmail.com*