Good afternoon ... and thanks for joining us ... I'm Judy Simpson. Today on the program it’s our quarterly chat with the Dean of University of Vermont Extension. Regular viewers of the program know that we visit with Doug Lantagne a few times a year. It’s an opportunity to learn about Extension programs that benefit Vermonter's, and about the educational opportunities that Extension offers all across the state. Doug served as the associate director of UVM Extension before being appointed Dean in 2006. Great to see you again.

Doug.: It's great to be here Judy.

Judy.: Home having a good summer?

Doug.: It's been too fast.

Judy.: It has been. What are some of the major projects or programs that you've been working on the past few months since we've seen you?

Doug.: We've had some retirements so we're thinking about new positions going forward. I've continued to do my national work for a couple more months before a step down there. I've been doing office visits around state but probably the most exciting thing was visiting with our retirees. We have a lunch in every summer. That was 2 to 3 weeks ago and one of the things folks told me is that they watch across the fence regularly every day in fact and they often waved and say hi to me and I never waver say hi back so this is my verbal wave thank you for watching across the fence.

Judy.: Excellent.

One of the extension programs we've recently featured on across the fence is the building capacity project that project helps both nonprofits and for profit organizations. Here's some background from the project organizers.

Lindsay Jones.: this program is sort of a virtual tool box filled with leadership skills and capacity skills all organized around 10 learning modules available online on our website through webinars and through CCTV as well as other local access channels. The intent is to provide entry level skills either alone or combined together to make them a longer in-depth program.

Ellen Rowe.: We are offering a mentoring service if so if someone comes on and takes the survey and finds out they have real strengths and a couple of these modules and a couple of the others they'd like
to develop a little more we're happy to leave them in the right direction towards a synchronous unit or a webinar or something that can help strengthen that particular piece of their leadership.

Judy.: There have been so many changes and the communities over the past 10 to 20 years that it seems like the building capacity project can really make a difference. What is your take on that project?

Doug.: I think number one volunteers are the core of many of our communities and people work more out of town than they used to. Helping people gain confidence that they can do these volunteer jobs anticipate in their communities is very important and that's where building capacity can help individuals develop that confidence so they can take on those roles.

Judy.: The technology allows extension to offer building capacity throughout the country organizers even told me that some clients come from as far away as Michigan and California to dissipate in these kinds of webinars.

Doug.: A couple of years ago I purchased a webinar software called illuminate that allows anyone to hear about a program and sign in at the appropriate time and watch it and participate so you can take the education we can spread ourselves across the world now even from Burlington Vermont.

Judy.: A major component of that is that it's 24/7 education which is key because that everybody can sit down at the same time.

Doug.: That's correct because we record all of these webinars and they are available 24/7 so you can watch and catch up with what's going on. We also post them on the web site so they will be there for years months or weeks to come.

Judy.: As we saw in the video clip Ellen Rowe is one of the extension specialists involved in the building capacity project. She's also involved in project that is facilitating public issue forums. One of those forums that she told across the fence about is happening September 14 and is focused on preparing for animal disease emergencies. Are the public issue forums new for extension?

Doug.: Yes and no. We've always been there with critical issues and by a security issues are very important. We've always brought in education out in a forum approach so this particular format and direction is new but the concept of bringing the knowledge and education into communities is not.

Judy.: So it's kind of interesting you are taking information that's been there that you've been working on and bringing it into the next generation through some new pathways.

Doug.: Right and I'd say the forum is one way that is teaching and learning so individuals have a lot of questions and knowledge as well in the forum allows a little bit of give and take rather than just where the experts and we hand the information out.

Judy.: We regularly provide updates on UVM extensions 4H program on across the fence and recently we learned about 40 youth environmental council.

Lauren Traister.: This particular program is geared towards teens specially teens who are interested in learning about citizenship had an engaging your community and specifically around in environmental issue.

Sierra Frisbee.: I find 4H to be really empowering for me as a young person but also as a young woman. It helps me find ways to channel his activism that I want to be involved in. We've come up
with all these ideas. What topic we want to study so was very self-piloted it is and somebody else telling us what to do this is what we're going to do now. This matters to us let's do this this seems like a good idea all student based and that's what I really like about it.

Mallory Hillman.: We've done a lot going and presenting for legislature and everything like that and I never thought we could get up that high on the scale and we actually can and can make a difference if we really try.

Would you like to take a pamphlet?

Mallory.: Definitely one of the biggest things I've gained from this whole experience is making connections with community.

Kayla Ray.: A big part of 4H is learning how to be a better citizen can teach citizenship. I think going out into the community making these connections and educating community is a great way to better yourself and be a better citizen.

Judy.: It's clear the kids are getting a lot out of their four H environmental council?

Doug.: Yes and that's the basis of four H is taking areas of interest with the youth and pulling together the adults and then you learn to use their enthusiasm. I think it also ties back to the first clip with building capacity. You just saw some of our future leaders who are building capacity at a young age and may take the building capacity program when they get older to refine their expertise.

Judy.: What I thought was really interesting about that particular program is that it emphasized on the research part of it as far as researching a topic and using technology the Internet and so forth. But it all comes down to one on one interaction that the kids not only had with each other are also with people on the streets of Burlington and legislators.

Doug.: Yes it builds confidence. When they have number one enthusiasm for something they already have a little bit more confidence to step out. With four H giving them the extra tools they do step out and take that enthusiasm that builds more confidence builds more leadership brings them into the legislature. Legislators love to talk to youth and listen to youth and probably listen to more than some of the adults that go in and have conversations in the committee room.

Judy.: Which is one of the things that really surprised the students a lot was that they had such access.

Doug.: Yes legislators love it when they have young people coming into the legislature because the perspective they don't necessarily here day in and day out. It's refreshing and new and exciting and you know the kids do not have another agenda in their background and they're telling you what they want.

Judy.: In environmental council have the information research to back up what they're talking about.

Doug.: That's right if they were well informed about what they are speaking about.

Judy.: There's another four H program I want to ask you about its the new four each youth farm safety project. Let's get a little background on that project.

Kristen Mullins.: The farm is a wonderful place to work to it’s a wonderful place to live and we've really want to underscore that. We want children to be excited to go into farming because we want to
keep our farm and going in Vermont and the northeast. I'm really excited to bring that excitement to the children for children who are around farms to share their excitement in groups. Four-H education is all about experiential learning so clearly were going to have our safety program be experiential and hands on and a very interactive as well.

Mycah King.: Farms are everywhere in Peacham pretty much. There's a farm right down there and if you're crossing the road and there's a big tractor blocking you and there's a car coming for partisan see you can get hit get injured.

Donnie Moore.: You can be safe a farm by never going in front of or in back of the tractor and in front of animals.

Emily grant.: I'm going to think about how dangerous the equipment is and how hurt I can get if I fool around around it. I would say that I'm safe around the stuff now and definitely less scared.

Judy.: I'm here in the studio with the dean of UVM extension Doug Lantagne. People might not realize just how prevalent farm-related accidents are that involve kids.

Doug.: Yes farms are great places to grow up you've got the fields the forest the Barns but you also have equipment and opportunity for accidents. This program as with so many other programs knowledge and understanding you can get lulled into forgetting that pieces of equipment is dangerous and what you should be doing to protect yourself. These types of programs are very important with working with kids for them to understand how powerful equipment is how opportunities arise to Herger self and to help avoid those situations.

Judy.: Is not just for children who are growing up living on farms it's also for using things like lawnmowers and chain saws.

Doug.: We all have learned of bad habits I know I've learned bad habits in how to use a chainsaw. Taking a chainsaw safety course I learned that I should have my chaps and I should have my head gear and how to fell a tree. Adults have a lot to learn with the safety area because we have learned things that may not be the safest. Equipment is very very useful but it can be used incorrectly and unsafely and these programs help us all be better at what we do.

Judy.: I want to take a few moments to touch on extensions work in dairy farming. Across the fence recently aired a series of programs on extensions dairy management teams.

Tony Kitsos.: The dairy management into the night to assist farmers and facilitate meetings that happen on the farm with strategic planners. They come from the lending community. Usually it's a banker some other financial advisers helping them put together budgets. There will be nutritionists that will be involved that are doing the feed programming that can help them with the herd health and making sure that those animals are moving in the right direction. There's oftentimes a veterinarian that's involved as well.

Al Curler.: The dairy management team is there to help improve the bottom line of business. They are looking at who want things can change and what tweaks we can do the business that can create opportunities.

Gert Schut.: The catalyst in it all Al. Al helped us with a business plan on the whole farm viability and it was almost like a natural extension to get into dairy management. Al is very much aware of the challenges that we face here about being spread too thin. It’s so easy to lose focus on very important areas of the farm because I am too busy with the yogurt or the other way around.
Arda Schut.: Sometimes you get so stuck focusing on certain issues that you forget there's other ways out of it or somebody can give you advice and say maybe if you handle it this way it might help. I think that's been a huge advantage of the whole dairy management team. We still make the final call. They can't make as do anything but maybe some people wouldn't like to have that looking over your shoulder but I think I really need it. It helps the focus that another group of people I'm responsible towards to get the job done. The power of having the minds focusing on one issue is tremendous.

Judy.: Would you say these dairy management teams are successful?

Doug.: Yes I think all just use the words of the folks we heard on that clip. A farmer who has five six or seven advices having them look at the full range of the farm and making them think about the full range of the farm is very very useful 'cause it gets them out of their rut of what's critical right now and makes them think about the whole operation so it's an excellent program.

Judy.: If a couple minutes left. Let's take a look at the future. In early 2012 UVM is going to be celebrating its centennial.

Doug.: Yes February 15 actually is the first day of our one 100th year. We will be using our one 100th year to celebrate our history but also our future and where we're going to go to continue to serve the state of Vermont. We have several things that we're looking at. Some things here on across the fence for the next year to celebrate our past. We had a history that went through 75 years and we're extending it out to 100 years we're also going to do a series of three tabloids over the coming year. One Food Systems and the others are still under wraps and they will be into January and June and next fall. If a number of things are going to be doing.

Judy.: Also taking a look at what happens in the future and where extension is needed.

Doug.: That's right. We are tide to communities are tide to having people locally around the state that work state wide that work on critical issues now. The history is great but extension is always known about what they use to do well we're always trying to move to what the newest community issue is that we need to be working on. Our past constituents hate to lose us in our concern in forgetting them but on the other hand there's always new constituents with large societal problems that we need to be working on with our public knowledge.

Judy.: If you have any questions or comments for the dean of extension he'd appreciate hearing from you. You can reach and at the extension state office using the toll-free number on your screen that's 1-(866)-622-2990. You can also learn more about extension by visiting the web site. Thanks for joining us today.

Doug.: Great to be here Judy.

Judy.: That's our program for today I'm Judy Simpson we'll see you again next time on across the fence.

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