READ THE LATEST ISSUE
FALL 2017
The Fall 2017 issue of Rural Connections includes an introduction written by WRDC Director Don Albrecht, and six articles discussing a range of topics including:

- using N.E.A.R. sciences to address community health;
- small-scale agriculture and the new natural resource economy;
- externships in sustainability;
- housing programs to help those in need;
- collaborative biofuels research;
- and results of a nationwide survey of Extension sustainability.

Read it now.

INTRODUCTION
Rural America is coping with significant problems including a shortage of high-quality jobs, severe health concerns, and a lack of affordable housing. The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) seeks to address these issues by serving as a regional catalyst for building capacity in the West. Rural Connections is a vital tool in helping us accomplish this goal by sharing exceptional outreach and research programs developed by talented professionals from throughout the region. In this issue of Rural Connections, we are pleased to present six quality articles that present programs and ideas that will benefit the residents and communities of rural America. Read more.

ON THE COVER
RURAL RESILIENCE
Addressing Community Health Outcomes with N.E.A.R. Sciences

Developing a resilient and thriving community ecosystem is critical to addressing the lifelong effects of adversity for those who have experienced high levels of toxic stress in childhood and adulthood. Read more.
SMALL-SCALE AGRICULTURE AND THE NEW NATURAL RESOURCE ECONOMY

Can Regional Food Networks and Small-Scale Agriculture Contribute to the New Natural Resource Economy?

The emerging focus on local origin and sustainability provides opportunities for rural communities to support a diversity of very small local businesses around the agricultural use of natural resources, restoring greater capacity for self-direction and economic resilience. Read more.

EXTERNSHIPS IN COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Providing Service and Learning Opportunities for Students through Community-Based Sustainability Projects

The key distinction between typical internships and this program's externships is that students are bringing particular skills and employing them in service to their communities through Extension, the outreach arm of the University. Read more.

BUILDING EXTENSION THROUGH COLLABORATIVE BIOENERGY RESEARCH

New Topics, New Audiences, New Strategies

The opportunity to make bioenergy more accessible for the general public and Extension educators, combined with a lack of immediate market potential for poplar biofuels, drove us to develop broader bioenergy outreach materials and design an Extension-led training course for energy literacy volunteers. Read more.

DETERMINED TO BECOME A HOMEOWNER

USDA Rural Development Housing Programs Help Those in Need

"This community is a place when someone is in need everyone helps them and I want to keep that tradition going by helping anyone looking to buy a home. I know what it's like to be poor, homeless, disabled, and hungry. But I also know how to overcome these obstacles and attain the 'American Dream of Homeownership' with the help of the federal government and others," says homeowner, Rosemary Goodman. Read more.
WESTERN EXTENSION AND SUSTAINABILITY OUTREACH
Where Have We Been and Where Do We Need to Go?

As Western Extension professionals, many of us are focused on a specific program or discipline, such as nutrition, range management, water conservation, or climate change. All of these programs embody the fundamental tenets of sustainability, i.e. consideration for the economic, social, and environmental impacts that may occur as a result of our efforts. Read more.

CALL FOR ARTICLES
We are now accepting abstracts for the Spring 2018 issue of Rural Connections.

Submit your abstract today!
Deadline: November 6, 2017