

Entre Nous



THE PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF EXTENSION 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

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“FUTURE”

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Entre Nous means “between us” and serves as the official publication for members of the Wisconsin Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals.

Articles should be submitted via e-mail, either in the body or in an attached Microsoft Word document. The e-mail should be addressed to René L. Mehlberg at rene.mehlberg@ces.uwex.edu

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The Fall issue of *Entre Nous* will focus on “The 4-H Youth Development Professional...In the Office”, so start writing your articles now. The due date will be November 1. You don't have to limit your articles to the focus theme. The *Entre Nous* is your newsletter. Express yourself! Share personal and professional concerns and triumphs.

Gaze Into My Crystal Ball.....

By: René L. Mehlberg, Entre Nous Editor, & Door County 4-H Youth Development Agent

Often when you hear the word “future” the image of a fortuneteller with a crystal ball comes to mind. You sit and wait to hear your future be told, but then you need to live your life and wait to see if the fortuneteller was right. Do you even remember what she said? If she’s right, is that good or bad?

Gazing into this “Future” edition of *Entre Nous* you will find a wide range of topics. There are thoughts from colleagues who are ending one stage of their life and heading into a different future, thoughts of 4-H future from a current 4-H member, and a reminder about the 2006 NAE4-HA National Conference to be in Milwaukee.

“As I gaze into my crystal ball, I see the 4-H program turning and evolving on a foundation of 4-H principals that have remained constant over time.”

R. Mehlberg

As I take a chance, what do I see in my crystal ball for the future of 4-H? I see a program that continues to evolve in many different ways. One is to make the best on less. I was recently on the 4-H Centennial website and was struck when I read that in the 4th decade 4-H added provisions for financial support. This was to help ensure 4-H club work would continue despite local and state financial losses. If there were only provisions that could be added for these difficult times.

4-H will evolve to continue to find the best delivery practices to reach a variety of audiences. The 4-H community club model is great, but I believe it doesn’t fit every situation. As one of my colleagues says, sometimes the youth who need 4-H the most may not be the ones that have parents or caring adults who can support them as often expected with membership in a community 4-H club.

4-H will continue to learn how to market its strengths and best practices to collaborate with other large national youth organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club and the YMCA.

4-H will continue to evolve to fit the needs of our changing society. 4-H began as an agricultural program because that was the need at the current time. 4-H has expanded over time and will continue to do so.

As I gaze again into my crystal ball, I see the 4-H program turning and evolving on a foundation of 4-H principals that have remained constant over time. 4-H has never been a stagnate organization. But changes seem to be happening at a faster pace. It’s both an exciting and scary time to be part of the 4-H program. Just when you think you know what the future may bring, the crystal ball goes cloudy to only have a completely different picture come clear. That’s the joy of not knowing what the future may bring!

It has been a pleasure to serve as editor of *Entre Nous* this past year. Read about the future of [Entre Nous](#) by the next editor Dawn Schneider and start thinking how you can contribute next year.

Best wishes for your future!

The Future of Entre Nous

By: Dawn Schneider, *Entre Nous* Assistant Editor & Langlade County
4-H Youth Development Agent

As we celebrate the “Future of 4-H” in this issue of Entre Nous, it seems appropriate to also celebrate the future of Entre Nous itself.

René has done a wonderful job over the past year of reminding us that, as the official publication for members of the Wisconsin Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals, this is OUR newsletter. It is OUR chance to express ourselves and share personal and professional concerns and triumphs.

Thus, the future of Entre Nous—2003-04—is going to be a “reawakening” of this idea of sharing *personal* and *professional* aspects of ourselves. It is going to be a celebration of the “whole” 4-H Youth Development Professional.

Each issue next year will focus on one aspect of the 4-H Youth Development Professional—with the idea being that a well-rounded, healthy professional, is a successful and happy professional.

The Fall 2003 issue will center on “The 4-H Youth Development Professional...In the Office”. For example, how do you find time to write your plans of work...and still do everything else? How do you find time to develop yourself on a scholarly level? Tackle any issue that involves the “career side” of you.

The Winter issue will center on “...In the Home”. Share with colleagues ideas that you have about balancing your personal and professional life, finding time for family, things you do to relax, and any other topic related to home life.

Finally, the Spring/Summer issue will focus on “...In the Community”. Share ways that you contribute and/or volunteer in your community. What do you *enjoy* doing?

To encourage the development of all three of these areas (office, home, and community), there will be several features added to Entre Nous. The first will be a “Message from the President of WAE4-HYDP” and other association updates and reminders.

Another area that we are hoping to include is a “Literature Review” section. Share interesting, enlightening, or scholarly reading you have done. Tell us if you found it helpful and any ideas you have developed because of it.

Finally, there will be a “Profiles” section in Entre Nous. If you know a 4-H Youth Development Professional who excels at contributing to their community, write up a story on HOW they do it. If you know someone who does an outstanding job of balancing their family and job, interview them and share it with the rest of us. There is a wealth of knowledge inside the experienced professionals in the state of Wisconsin that is just

Entre Nous Themes
for 2003-2004

Focus on
“The 4-H Youth
Development
Professional...”

In the Office
(Fall)

In the Home
(Winter)

In the Community
(Spring)

waiting to be tapped. If you are interested in interviewing someone and writing a profile on them, please let the Entre Nous staff know ahead of time.

Please remember you may submit articles written for other sources, such as a local newspaper, newsletter, or radio. Photographs of programming or people are always welcome.

The future of Entre Nous is YOU! Throughout the next year, we hope that Entre Nous will help you become a happier and healthier 4-H Youth Development Professional—in the office, in the home, and in the community.

A Positive View of Their Future

By: Annette Bjorklund, Washburn County 4-H Youth Development Educator

In May and June, many of our older 4-H members and other young people will be moving on to the next stage in their lives. As they graduate from high school, they will be bidding farewell to their childhood friends and teachers and leaving behind the security of their familiar school environment and homes. Many will choose to continue their education by attending a 2- or 4-year college. Others will choose to enter the workforce. These young people have a future ahead of them that can take them in many different directions. Do many young people view their futures in a positive way?

Asset #40 is Positive View of Personal Future: Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

This question can be answered by Search Institute, a non-profit organization that specializes in research on children and youth. Through the administration of the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey by public and private schools in the United States, Search Institute gathers data from students in grades 6–12. The questions that are asked on the survey measure how many young people experience each of the 40 developmental assets, a framework of adolescent development that identifies what young people need to grow up healthy.

Asset #40 is Positive View of Personal Future: Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future. From data gathered by Search Institute from over 200,000 U.S. students in grades 6–12 during the 1999-2000 school year, 74% of students indicated they experience this asset. This is the highest of all the assets. (See <http://www.search-institute.org>.) In recent Search Institute surveys in two school districts in Washburn County, youth in grades 7-12 reported that 69% and 72%, respectively, experience Asset #40. For both schools, as with the national data, this was the asset with the highest percentage of youth experiencing it.

So why do young people have this positive view of their future? My guess is that it has to do with the people they grow up around as well as the experiences they have in their lives. These are powerful influences on a young person. Are the people around them positive or negative? Have they seen adults around them be successful? If the adults around

the young people had to deal with misfortune and bad breaks, how have they handled those situations?

I asked a 4-H member who is graduating this year the following questions to get a youth perspective on this topic. She is also a student in one of the school districts that administered the *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey.

“As 4-H Youth Development professionals, we are certainly in a position to be a positive influence in a young person’s life and how they will view their future.”

A. Bjorklund

A: Do you agree or disagree with this statement—When I’m an adult I’m sure I will have a good life. Why? (This is the question from the survey that addresses Asset #40.)

B: I agree, because of how I was brought up. I wasn’t rebellious. I like the way my parents brought me up. It gave me a good starting point.

A: You’ll be graduating from high school in a couple of weeks. What do you see when you envision your future?

B: Having a 4-year degree and getting a job I really love.

A: Who or what has influenced your view?

B: My parents, brother, different role models in school, work. They gave me encouragement and led by example. I learned from others mistakes.

A: You’ve been in 4-H for over 10 years. How has being in 4-H affected how you see your future?

B: It’s been incredible. My mom says it’s amazing how after having started in 4-H as a timid Cloverbud in the corner of the room, I’m leading the club now. Being an officer, a junior leader and an ambassador have helped me with my leadership skills. I’ve learned how to teach others and to understand different stages of development. From what I’ve learned in 4-H, I’ve molded what I want for my future.

Yes, having good role models and experiences helps shape a person’s outlook. As 4-H Youth Development professionals, we are certainly in a position to be a positive influence in a young person’s life and how they will view their future. We do this through the various programs we offer, through the 4-H experiences that we help create, and through our own interactions with young people. What will you do to ensure that you are helping young people have a positive view of their future?

Leading the Way: The Next Century of 4-H

By: Justin Lemke, Lincoln County 4-H Member and 2003 National 4-H Conference Delegate

“What I see in the future of 4-H are many changes dealing with diversity, projects, programs, meetings, and much more.”

J. Lemke

The trip to National 4-H Conference has opened my eyes to the world and has shown me that I can, and have to make a difference in the world. That was the main focus of the National 4-H Conference held in April 2003. This conference has helped me understand 4-H better – the reasons for the programs and the future of 4-H. I found that 4-H really improves the leadership, speaking, and organizational skills of youth. I

also learned a lot more about the history of 4-H; especially the dedication of the people who helped established 4-H as a youth program. Now when my friends ask me what 4-H is, I am more prepared to tell them.

While at conference we participated in discussion groups to talk about 4-H and how it needs to change in the next 10 to 20 years. We discussed the ways 4-H needs to reach out and bring in diverse groups. What I see in the future of 4-H are many changes dealing with diversity, projects, programs, meetings, and much more. Dealing with diversity will be a big part of 4-H in 20 years, because today's minority will be tomorrow's majority. 4-H will have to change projects so everyone will have something to do. Project literature will need to be adapted and may need to be printed in other languages.

"I owe so much to 4-H that there is almost no way to pay it back, but I will return all that I have gotten to my club and my community."

J. Lemke

I think even the way programs and meetings are run will change. More things will happen on-line, such as meetings so you won't have to leave your house. I also see that in the near future, 4-H members will be able to complete record books or portfolios right on the Internet. This will be a more effective way and may encourage more youth to complete the books.

Also, in the near future I can see 4-H having financial problems as a result of budget cuts throughout the government. The way it looks when the government talks about what to cut, the 4-H program is one of the first possibilities. That would hurt the youth. Throughout the conference we talked about what 4-H is as opposed to what people think it is. 4-H is not the milk and cookies everyone thinks, but instead it is a youth program to help young people develop leadership skills.

Being in 4-H has given me many opportunities that other youth don't have. Being in 4-H has done much more than keep me out of trouble. All the trips I have been on and what I've seen, done, and learned in 4-H has been beneficial to my development as a person. I owe so much to 4-H that there is almost no way to pay it back, but I will return all that I have gotten to my club and my community.

Kustka: Cruisin' into the Future

By: Merry Klemme, Calumet 4-H Youth Development Agent



Everywhere you go these days, 4-H Youth Development professionals are asking the BIG question: "What are we going to do without Linda Kustka?" She has been a mentor, major resource, and all around "rock" in our program. But all good things come to an end and I know that all of us want to wish her the very best in the next phase of her life.

Recently I took the time to interview Linda via e-mail. She told me she really appreciated that means of an interview because her "green" temperament liked the time to think about and reflect on her answers to my questions.

Klemme: Tell me a bit about your career. What was your educational background? Previous professional positions? How long have you been with Extension? In your current position?

Linda Kustka
30 years in UWEX
Brown County 4-H
Youth Agent
(1973-1982)
State Specialist
(1982-2003)

Kustka: I went to UW-Madison (twice) and Michigan State to get degrees in Home Economics Education, Family Studies, and Adult Education. Before coming to Extension, I was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Jamaica. My Extension career started in July 1973 as the first female 4-H Youth Agent in Brown County. I've worked as a State Specialist since 1982 with evolving roles that included Curriculum/Learning Resources, District Liaison in West and Central Districts, and Volunteer Specialist.

Klemme: Tell me about some of the highlights of you career? Of what are you proudest?

Kustka: In Brown County, I felt good about co-developing and implementing an extensive county 4-H volunteer committee system, extensive volunteer training, and EFNEP summer youth programs. John Kauth and I tried quite a few new methods of reaching new urban audiences (some worked).

I enjoyed working as District Liaison, Professional Improvement chair, and in CES diversity education. My involvement with the volunteer conferences (Regional Forum + 5 state) were terrific ways to work with committed volunteers in planning and implementing educational experiences.

I'm proud of work that resulted in some products that staff can use locally. Each of these was developed with involvement of many staff and volunteers. They deserve most of the credit! The list of "things developed" includes: Marketing 4-H with Volunteers notebook; Youth Protection (curriculum, policies, procedures, videos); Youth/Adult Partnering materials; Strengthening Community Clubs resource box; Youth in Public Leadership trainings and evaluations; Public Adventures; Child Labor Law materials; Club Treasurer video; "4-H Meetings that Shake, Rattle, and Roll" satellite conference.

Klemme: What kept you going even through tough times? What motivated/motivates you?

Kustka: Supportive colleagues, friends, and family have kept me going during tough times. I have a couple of lifelong friends who also work in demanding careers (non Extension) and we are "there" for each other with late night phone calls.

It's important to remember the "big picture" which helps put the "smaller annoyances" into perspective. I've also learned via "school of knocks" that if I'm feeling emotional about something, the best thing I can do is to write down the feelings and issues and "sit on it." I've come to regret letters, emails, phone calls, contacts made when my feelings were running high.

I'm continually motivated by the work of volunteers and staff. I see the wonderful experiences they are providing youth and families. I see how they are making our communities and state a better place to live. I often

"I'm continually motivated by the work of volunteers and staff. I see the wonderful experiences they are providing youth and families."

L. Kustka

leave meetings or events thinking, "I'd do anything to help continue this good work."

Klemme: Do you have any funny stories you would like to share?

Kustka: One story that I can share happened in Brown County at a time in my life when I had a harder time saying "NO." You'd think I'd have learned from my early career experience of fracturing vertebrae at a County 4-H Tobogganing event. I've often been a slow learner.

The event was a donkey baseball fundraiser for a county 4-H group. Having grown up with horses, I never liked donkeys. You may have seen this event. The batter and key players ride donkeys to play the game. When batting, I tried to strike out. They kept throwing pitches until I finally hit one. I had to jump on the donkey and ride him around the bases while the crowd cheered. These mean little donkeys are trained to buck. It looked like rodeo time. Somewhere, between home plate and first base, the donkey won and I hit the ground. Rippp!!!! Not only did the hard ground hurt, but the inseams of my pants ripped out from one knee to the other. The pants flapped in the wind like a flag. The crowd loved it and felt that scene was worth the admission price. So, if you ever wondered why I haven't been a "good sport" about doing certain physical things, it's the memories of the donkey.

Klemme: What do you plan to do in your retirement?

Kustka: I'm looking forward to more intensely parenting Mindy and Tony who are in middle school. Like Phyllis Diller, I'm about 15 years behind in taking care of the house. I plan to get more involved as a community volunteer and Epsilon Sigma Phi board member. For fun, I'm really looking forward to more exercise, reading, quilting, and training our dog who has "an attitude." I hope to keep in contact with Extension staff and look forward to being with you in the future.

Klemme: Any advice for newer, less experienced Extension employees?

Kustka: I'd recommend getting a copy of Life's Little Instruction Book which has great advice. Here are some other suggestions:

- Maintain a fulfilling personal life away from the job.
- Read Jerry App's book, The People Came First, to appreciate the history/legacy of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension (plus, some funny stories).
- Continue to develop your evaluation skills. Incorporate the "scholarship philosophy" into your way of work.
- Teach as much as you can in a wide variety of ways.
- Renew yourself with personal learning throughout your career.
- Continue to question and seek resources.
- Interact constantly with volunteers. Let them know they are valued. Provide developmental experiences for them.
- Get involved with the 4-H Youth Development professional associations, department, and Epsilon Sigma Phi.
- Periodically, list all the positive outcomes of your work for yourself. You're accomplishing more than you may realize.

Klemme: Any other comments, stories, etc?

Kustka: It has truly been a privilege to get paid for working with such excellent people in a great organization! At the recent Department of Youth Development meeting, I kept thinking "What a group of caring, competent people!"

Thank you for all the support!

Faces of the Future: 4-H, Extension Reach Out To Diverse Audiences

By: Wayne Brabender, State 4-H Staff

It happened when my son, Eli, was only three. We were ambling down the sidewalk toward a date with an ice cream cone when we met a family waiting for a bus. The younger daughter, about 12, was standing next to her mom, both staring down the street. Her sister, about 16, was sitting dejectedly on the sidewalk, looking down at her feet. They were not happy. They had been waiting a long time.

Eli stopped, looked at the family, and then walked over to the seated girl. He stepped around to her front, stooped over, and looked directly into her face. He stared for a couple of seconds, and then looked up at me.

"Usually white," he said. It was a three-year-old's innocent observation that most of the people he had known so far in his young life did not have brown or black skin. They were usually white. This family was black.

Eli could have been speaking about Wisconsin 4-H through most of its history. It's been mostly white. But the latest ES-237 report shows that 4-H Youth Development is starting to succeed at reaching out to new and diverse audiences.

Of the 250,000 youth that were involved in Wisconsin 4-H and youth development at some level last year:

- 24,023 were Black
- 5,762 were American Indian
- 13,191 were Hispanic
- 8,950 were Asian or Pacific Islander

If you add up the numbers, they equal 51,926, or slightly more than 20 percent. Granted, most of these youth were involved in short term special interest programs, day camps or school enrichment programs. But the number is significant, and that's a good sign for the future.

There are other positive signs that Coop Extension and 4-H are reaching out. For example, the National Subcommittee on Extension Diversity has created the National Extension Diversity Center at <http://natldiversity.extension.oregonstate.edu> to "strengthen our capacity to serve a diverse society."



The Face of 4-H is
Changing

Sheboygan
County 4-Hers

Check out the UW-Extension web sites aimed at educators who work with Hmong and Native American audiences: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/hmong> and <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/natf/>.

Now there is a major effort to reach out to the emerging Hispanic/Latino population. Check out UW-Extension's Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program site with teaching resources for Latino audiences at http://cf.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/tch_res/res_list.cfm?ethnic_id=2.

The 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System (4HCCS) is creating Latino Cultural Arts curriculum, designed to teach youth about the traditional arts in Latin America. Products will include three youth guides, a helper's guide, CD of Latino music, video of artisans at work, and a web page. I'm on the national design team.

Marie Lee, 4-H youth development agent in Sheboygan County, and I are also on Wisconsin Coop Extension's new work group to improve the effectiveness of Extension education with Hispanic/Latinos. The group's plan is to create professional development opportunities, as well as identify and collect resources for working with Hispanic/Latino clientele.

We're off to a good start with a new web site featuring educational materials, cultural and demographic information about Latinos, and URL links to Latino web sites, such as these Extension-related sites:

<http://extensionenespanol.net/index.cfm>: A national clearinghouse for Spanish-language educational resources operated by and for Extension professionals.

<http://fourh.ucdavis.edu/4hinfo/spanish/index.asp>: California 4-H Youth Development Program web site featuring general information on 4-H in Spanish.

<http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/oregonoutreach/index.html> Latino Page, "dedicated to increasing the participation of Latino(a) youth and families in the Oregon 4-H Program."

<http://www.aces.edu/urban/spanishindex.html>: A Spanish-only web site maintained by the Alabama Extension Service and devoted to serving Hispanics in the U.S. Includes links to over 750 research-based publications in Spanish.

http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/espanol/index_eng.html University of Illinois Extension site serving Hispanics and Latinos.

For comprehensive national research on the Hispanic population, we recommend that you visit the Pew Hispanic Center at <http://www.pewhispanic.org/index.jsp>. In particular, read the Center's 2002 national survey at <http://www.pewhispanic.org/site/docs/pdf/LatinoReportExecSumandSectionOne.pdf>.

For a good example of what's happening in Wisconsin, see the Manitowoc County Latino population report by Faye Malek, UW-Extension Family Living Educator, at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/manitowoc/LatinoFocusReport.pdf>.

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Onto the Next Canvas in Her Life

By: Susan Marino, Vernon County 4-H Youth Development Agent

Progress. Change. Growth. These three words, so dynamic in the picture they paint, document the career of Susan Farmer. In 1985 Susan was hired at 50% time as the Visual Arts Specialist to take responsibility for several parts of the 4-H arts program. So much of the legacy that she now leaves we can see – visual examples of building youth leadership.



Susan
Farmer-Tiefenthaler

A One of a Kind
Wisconsin 4-H Art
Specialist

The Art Team started in 1984. The team came to State Congress, put up the exhibit and left. From that two days of experience the Art Team has blossomed – from a weekend to a week to 10 days plus a planning weekend. The time includes making art, evaluating art, and documenting the experience. For three years the Art Team also worked at State Fair, working first in Madison with an artist in June and continuing that experience for State Fair attendees. Susan also worked with the art curriculum and gave many workshops for adult leaders.

When Jack Heller retired, the Arts & Communication Subprogram Committee asked her to take over the Rec Lab. In 1985, the first year, it was not held at Upham Woods. In January 1986 Rec Lab was held in Stevens Point. In December 1986 it was moved to Upham Woods where it has been ever since. It also had a name change to Arts Leadership Lab.

Susan also produced the newsletter, *The Art Line*. She surveyed leaders and they said that curriculum was needed for younger members. *Art-in-a-Box* was developed for the 8-12 year olds; *Palette of Fun* was prepared for those even younger.

In the last 18 years Susan has seen a tremendous change in her audience. When she began, she usually taught adults alone. Then gradually the audience expanded to include youth. Now she usually teaches youth alone. For many years Joan Lazarus, the 4-H Drama Specialist, and Susan took their teaching on the road, traveling to many districts each year. With funds dwindling, so did these opportunities to work with clientele directly.

In 1996 when Arts Camp was added to her plate, her time increased to 55% and her title changed to Arts Specialist. Arts Camp gives those high school age youth a chance to teach and lead middle school members. Middle schoolers look up to and respect high schoolers. When high schoolers get this respect, their confidence increases. “These youth are the cream of the crop. Working with them has increased my comfort level with letting the youth leaders be in charge. I’ve learned to relax and let them do it. It’s so satisfying to see youth go full cycle – attend Arts Camp, go to Arts Leadership Lab, become an Arts Camp counselor, and then return as a Youth Director.” Arts Camp is a growing, expanding, inclusive, and green experience for all involved.

Personally, Susan grew in another way. When her niece Andrea was a pre-schooler, she couldn’t wait to join 4-H at the age of eight. Susan joined the local 4-H club with her in Waukesha County. She relates, “It

was an epiphany for me, to watch her grow and for me to understand 4-H. I learned 'to watch'. I learned a lot."

"These youth are the cream of the crop. Working with them has increased my comfort level with letting the youth leaders be in charge. I've learned to relax and let them do it. It's so satisfying to see youth go full cycle – attend Arts Camp, go to Arts Leadership Lab, become an Arts Camp counselor, and then return as a Youth Director."

S. Farmer-Tiefenthaler

How have youth changed in her tenure? "They have changed for the better. There are fewer kinds doing risky behavior in these last 10 years than the first five."

How has teaching changed? "When I started, we needed some ceramics materials updated. I am just completing them to be available online. Kidspace is online, too, recommended for adults and youth to work together."

Two years ago Susan married Tom Tiefenthaler, a man who shares many of her interests, especially in the outdoors. What's ahead for her? She concludes, "My UW career has been a great run, but now I'm ready to try new things. I want to do some drawing and painting and get involved locally with art."

When Susan heard about this job with UW-Extension, she had lots of experience with Girl Scouts, planning retreats, and camp. She visited her local 4-H agent, Tamie Koop, to learn more about 4-H. Such was the beginning of a lasting friendship.

Thank you, Susan, for Art Team, Arts Leadership Lab, for Art-in-a-Box, for Arts Camp, for Palette of Fun and more, but most especially for your leadership in the arts, working with us, youth, leaders, and parents. You have added so much color to our world!

U-rah-rah F-O-U-R-H!

By: Michelle Batterman, Fond du Lac County 4-H Staff Assistant

As we look to the future, let's image what 4-H stands for:

- F** - Family, Friends, and Freedom
- O** - Opportunity, Opinions, and Options
- U** - Unity, Unabridged, and Ultimate
- R** - Reminiscing about the past, realizing the future
- H** - Head, Heart, Hands, Health, and Happiness

"4-H gives our youth the opportunity to participate in a variety of projects, to partake in various activities, to make new friends, and to be the best that they can be."

M. Batterman

Now let's take a few moments and think about each letter and what it means to you. "**F**" is the letter that holds us together through our "Family, Friends, and Freedom". We know that we will always have some kind of family lifestyle because we are born into a family from day one. As for friendships, they may come and go but we will always be able to find a person in 4-H that we can depend on or to discuss our 4-H project. As far as freedom goes, our country gives us the freedom to express ourselves through our masterpieces and provides us the opportunity of free speech. This is a very important part of our lives and those of our youth. Freedom provides our youth with the chance to explore and investigate the world around them. Their experiences will enable them to make mature decisions on their own as they grow into adults. This will give them the capability to make positive contributions to society and the world around them.

"O" is the letter of "Opportunity, Opinions, and Options". 4-H gives our youth the opportunity to participate in a variety of projects, to partake in various activities, to make new friends, and to be the best that they can be. No other organization gives youth so many chances to succeed and build on their opportunities. Another opportunity we give our youth is the chance to present opinions on the programs that are created for them. As the youngsters develop into junior leaders, we suggest to them that they voice their opinions so they can have a say in the matters that affects their program. Finally, 4-H provides the options for youth to make decisions and participate in programs that are of interest to them. Allowing youth to make these choices will help strengthen them to meet the challenges of our ever-changing world.

When looking at "U", we tend to use it to stand for us but there are three other words that stand out in this organization: "Unity, Unabridged, and Ultimate". In 4-H, we unite as a whole to become one big family. We share the growth of our fellow members by working with them in various programs that will enhance their way of thinking, doing, and participating. Ultimately, we are making fine, aggressive youth that are determined to challenge each other, as well as their mentors, in making the best of the resources that are provided for them through 4-H. In the unabridged picture, the mentors provide programming that is both educational and fun! Yes, "Fun"! Our future needs fun! Many of us work over 40 hours a week to ensure that we provide the programs necessary for our youth to learn, but our time is also spent beyond the office. We have to make sure we have money in our pockets, food on the table, a clean house, a mowed lawn, a shiny car, and the list goes on, but our life should not always focus on work. We as a society need to take time to have fun and we need to instill that in future generations. Without "Fun", our lives and world would be very dull. We are all full of energy, especially since we work with youth. So let's take advantage of our time. Try to make time to have fun or at least take time to give yourself a break from the everyday routine of life.

"R" stands for reminiscing about the past and realizing the future. Last year, we had the chance to reminisce about the past with our National Centennial celebration. It is amazing how often I talk about my 4-H experiences with the youth I work with today or even how often I bump into someone that I was in 4-H with and we start talking about "the fun times". Matter of fact, I was just talking about one of my 4-H experiences with a member I grew up with. We participated in Junior Leaders and it was a monthly event after the meeting to go to a pizza place in Fond du Lac. Well, on one of our "pizza nights" Bart Starr walked in with his wife and another couple. Most of the Junior Leaders rushed to get his autograph and interrupted his meal. There were four of us that felt awful so many Junior Leaders bothered Bart during his meal. So, we decided to purchase a beverage for Bart and had it delivered to his table as an apology for their behavior. The four of us were the last to leave that night and before Bart Starr left, he came over to our table and presented us with an autographed business card. To this day, I still have that card and the memory of that night. It was a very rewarding 4-H experience that I have held onto for years. I realize the future holds a lot of opportunities for me but I look for the future to reward our youth with the chances that I

"I realize the future holds a lot of opportunities for me but I look for the future to reward our youth with the chances that I was given."

M. Batterman

was given. Who knows, maybe they will meet Brett Farve in a restaurant someday and he will reward them like I was rewarded for respecting others.

Finally, we come to the "H" which stands for Head, Heart, Hands, Health, and Happiness. Sometime when you have a free moment, take time to reflect on the "H" and, hopefully, you will recall happy experiences!

A Look Back from Bonnie Herrmann

By: René L. Mehlberg, Entre Nous Editor & Door County 4-H Youth Development Agent

Editor's Note: Seeing how great a job Merry Klemme did with an email interview, I tried the same tactic with Bonnie Herrmann. Bonnie was gracious enough to share some thoughts while trying to finish her county budget. Thanks Bonnie!

How long have you been with UWEX and in what capacities?

Thirty years and eleven months. I also worked in Indiana for the first two years of my career as a 4-H Youth Agent in a very rural county in the middle of the state.

In 1972 I moved to Milwaukee and continued my career as a 4-H Agent there. In 1981, the Milwaukee Extension office was cut in half due to County financial crisis. I was the second of two 4-H agents, but had luckily received tenure the previous year. So I moved to the Milwaukee County Extension Urban Garden program, "Shoots 'n' Roots" as the youth program director. I worked with that program until 1985 when the Milwaukee County 4-H Agent position became vacant. I re-applied and was the 4-H Agent there until 2001. During that time, I also had additional responsibilities including assistant Office Chair for 8 years, interim Office Director for 3 years, Youth Development District Liaison and youth program Liaison with State Fair. In 2002, I transferred to Racine County, where I have 75% Office Director responsibilities and 25% 4-H Youth Development responsibilities.

Looking back from when you started, did you ever think you would end up where you are? Comments.

No, I really didn't have any idea where I'd end up. Even upon moving to Wisconsin and knowing that I would need to complete a Master Degree and get tenure, I wasn't sure that was how I would end up. But once I got involved in the program and also in the academic structure that UWEX provides, I could see the real value that UWEX puts upon its faculty. Being a faculty member and having the kind of programmatic input that 4-H Youth Development has expected from local staff became very important to me. As I said, I worked in Indiana for two years and the Coop Extension program was very different there. I have really come to value the professionalism and academic status, which UWEX provides.

As for ending up in Wisconsin and finally in Racine, life is an interesting dance and you just never know where it will take you. But as in the County Western Song, be sure that you don't set out, but DANCE.



Bonnie Herrmann

Career in UW-
Extension:
30 years and 11
months

1972 –2002:
Milwaukee County

2002 – 2003: Racine
County

What do you see as the future for 4-H youth development? Any specific thoughts about 4-H in urban areas?

This is a tough question. There is definitely a future for 4-H Youth Development. As I compare the two Youth as Resources Boards here in Racine County, it is so very obvious that the West Side 4-H members have a much greater understanding of group work, civic involvement, and organizational skills. So yes, 4-H Youth Development has a future in developing leaders in our communities.

"Life is an interesting dance and you just never know where it will take you. But as in the County Western Song, be sure that you don't set out, but DANCE."

B. Herrmann

One of the challenges will be keeping the program current with youth today. Many of our leaders still view 4-H in terms of their own youth experiences and kids today need different types of projects and involvement. So it will be a challenge to the professionals in our area to help adults see youth as partners and engage them fully in the positive community development work that needs to be done.

Another challenge will be finding adult volunteer leadership. With both parents working, it will continue to be difficult to find volunteer leadership. We really need to look to maximize the delivery of our program and it may very well be through the use of other youth program staff. As long as we keep the essential components of the 4-H Youth Development experience in the program, the program can take many colors and shapes.

Do you have one moment (or more) that sticks in your head from throughout the years?

My involvement in the National 4-H Agents Association is probably one of the highlights of my career. It was both rewarding as well as a huge growth experience for me. I would highly recommend that everyone who needs a challenge and is committed to this profession get involved with the National Association. It provided opportunities for me to travel, make many new friends, and learn about local programs from across the country as well as getting to be involved in policy decisions on the National level. It was the incentive that helped keep my enthusiasm fresh and charged me up for the second half of my career.

"It will be a challenge to the professionals in our area to help adults see youth as partners and engage them fully in the positive community development work that needs to be done."

B. Herrmann

As a person who has experienced lots, do you have any advice for us newer and especially untenured people in the organization?

Yes, stay with it. As I said earlier, UWEX provides an unparalleled opportunity for staff to develop into meaningful educators and be recognized as such. There are very few (5 or less) University systems where county faculty can identify themselves as university "faculty" members. This has provided me with entrées into many areas of education (local and higher) that I would not have been able to work in. It has also given me the confidence to develop and manage local programs that are need driven, not mandated.

Also, remember that while you may not be able to change situations, you can change how you react to them. So keep a positive out look as you face the future. Make the job work for you, not the other way around.

After all is said and done with your UWEX career, what plans do you have for yourself?

My husband and I are building a bed and breakfast near Branson, Missouri. We will only have 2 rental rooms available. I hear it's a great

“Through these years, I have worked with thousands of young people and hope that I have impacted their lives in a positive way.”

B. Herrmann

tax shelter. We have property on Table Rock Lake in Kimberling City, which is about 10 miles from Branson. We want to keep active, love the lake and enjoy the long summer season that southwestern Missouri offers. I have a sister that lives there, so we are very familiar with the area, both climate and the culture.

Once that is up and running, I would like to teach ad hoc at one of the several local universities. It would be great to teach only one class a semester and actually have time to research and prepare. I would also like to do some consulting on youth, volunteer, and non-profit development. So I plan to have lots of projects to do.

Anything else you would like to share?

4-H Youth Development has been a great part of my life. It has challenged me to grow intellectually, develop people skills as well as management and organizational skills.

Through these years, I have worked with thousands of young people and hope that I have impacted their lives in a positive way. I've made hundreds and hundreds of new friends, as well as some very cherished "best friends".

Looking back, I wouldn't change a thing. I've always enjoyed challenges and 4-H Youth Development and UWEX has continued to provide those challenges for me.

A Look Into the Future

By: Tom Schmitz, Grant and Lafayette County Youth Development Educator

Where will Wisconsin's 4-H Youth Development program be in the future? Your guess is as good as mine, perhaps better. Despite that, I will share some random thoughts.

“As the future unfolds, our organization will continue the process of looking for ways of expanding youth development educational programming to under served audiences.”

T. Schmitz

In my view 4-H will be UW-Extension's premiere youth development program for years to come. The process of transferring ownership of the program to volunteers will continue. The work of educating club leaders and adults that the 4-H members need to be the decision makers in the club and that adults are there to guide them will still go on. Teaching project leaders about experiential learning will be a major part of the work as will developing leadership opportunities for youth and adults.

As the future unfolds, our organization will continue the process of looking for ways of expanding youth development educational programming to under served audiences. After school programs and clubs, school-based initiatives, work with coalitions and yes, even Internet based efforts will be undertaken.

The management of 4-H and these other youth development programs will continue to involve emersion in legal issues surrounding liability, insurance, child labor laws, child protection, volunteer protection and other issues that we have not begun to imagine. We can pray that the reporting system will be refined to make our lives easier, but my guess is that we will be changing it every few years.

In all this, Wisconsin's 4-H Youth Development Programs will continue to strengthen evaluation efforts. Attempts to concisely communicate the value of our work to those who fund us, whoever that might be, will carry on.

Each county will have their own degree of success in these efforts. The question will be how will the work get done. My guess is that we will have no choice but to look at different delivery methods for our programs. Counties may be forced to consider sharing faculty and using para-professionals to handle the workload. The program area may have to consider piecing together staffing options to meet programming needs. The Department of Youth Development might be compelled to think about expanding its knowledge base while reducing the number of faculty.

In the future, our programs will look much like the programs of today and yesterday. They will be based on experiential learning and other sound youth development principals. What is up in the air, is how those programs will be delivered and by whom? Also, what will the role of youth development professionals be?

Get Ready for NAE4-HA Future! “Quest for Spirit and Imagination”

By: René L. Mehlberg, Entre Nous Editor, & Door County 4-H Youth Development Agent

“Quest for Spirit and Imagination”.....that is the theme for the 2006 National Association of Extension 4-H Agents Conference that will be held in Milwaukee. I am part of the publicity committee. To some I'm known as the doo-dad queen. Even though the conference is still 3 years away, work is underway and publicity is key. Choosing a theme for a conference isn't always easy. You want something that isn't too long, is unique and catchy, and of course something that embodies what 4-H is.

The more I work with the theme, the more I realize how naturally our theme represents each of the 4-Hs. Working on various committees and projects makes one think with the “head.” As 4-H clubs decide on community service projects they use both their “heart” and “hands” to help make those projects a reality. There are many elements of 4-H that leads to good “health” – positive interactions with youth and adults and recreation activities, just to name a couple.

As a lifetime 4-Her, 4-H has filled my “Quest for Spirit and Imagination.” My 4-H quest led me to many places and experiences – Washington D.C., my first plane trip as I traveled to Florida for interstate exchange, the opportunity to work at the State 4-H Office and State Fair, and much, much more.

I have also seen my own brothers and sisters grow up through the program and the spirit they have for 4-H. This time of year in Shawano County 4-H, our club is in the midst of summer 4-H softball. I've heard

“I have seen how 4-H can stretch the spirit and imagination of many youth and adults.”

R. Mehlberg

they are off to a good start to fulfill their quest for another successful year including another trophy for their case.

Working in the 4-H program, I have seen how 4-H can stretch the spirit and imagination of many youth and adults. Being part of the 4-H Arts Camp, high school counselors bring spirit and imagination to the work they do with the middle school 4-H campers. They plan a weekend packed full of activities and experiences while the adults help them make it possible. The main goal is to help campers realize that not only does art come in various forms (photography, communication, drama, visual arts) but that art can take you places you never imagined.

I have seen youth grow to become more confident: to do public speaking, to go in front of adult groups that often don't work with youth, to take a risk of something new and in the process not only grow their spirit but also enrich the spirit of those around them. As the National Conference gets closer and the more "Quest for Spirit and Imagination" becomes engrained in my head, I'm sure I and many others in the Wisconsin 4-H program will continue to see exactly how 4-H does fulfill the "Quest for Spirit and Imagination."

If you haven't already, get involved in the 2006 conference today!

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