

Entre Nous



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

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“PRESENT”

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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.

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The Spring issue of *Entre Nous* will focus on the Future, so start writing your articles now. The due date will be May 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.

Tension of the Present

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

Writing this article caused more tension than I thought it would or should. I'm living the 4-H present, why can't I write about it? Am I just too busy or do I not know how to explain what 4-H present really is?

Finally, I got that "epiphany" or "blinding flash of insight" moment that I needed. At the recent state conference, I attended the break-out session of Richard Gault. During his session he shared the Rubberband Theory by Peter Senge, which I think perfectly describes 4-H present.

"...many of us are in the middle of being pulled between the opportunities of the future (creative tension) which may lead to a new 4-H vision and the traditions of 4-H past (emotional tension).

R. Mehlberg

The Rubberband Theory states that as you live in the current reality, you end up being pulled in two different directions: creative tension is pulling you towards a future vision and emotional tension pulls you towards the old paradigm. Applying this to 4-H means that many of us are in the middle of being pulled between the opportunities of the future (creative tension) which may lead to a new 4-H vision and the traditions of 4-H past (emotional tension). The pull on both ends can and often does create daily tension.

What can we do? Well, we can only work so hard, but we need to do our best with the tension to help propel our programs forward. That's not to say that we may not be pulled back at times, but we must look at the overall progress. Over time, and yes it will take time, we will eventually reach our vision. But beware! As Gault said, once you've reached that goal, that now becomes the old paradigm and a new vision will emerge that you will once again start working towards. The tension is almost ever present.

Each day we are faced with this tension – where do we go, how do we get there, and what and who will help or hinder us along the way. All that tension may seem overwhelming. But it is up to us to take that "tension-energy" to help make us alive to create an atmosphere that is full of hope and opportunity to preserve the 4-H past while simultaneously paving a bright, new path into 4-H future.

Today's 4-H: A Premier Prevention Program

Merry Klemme, Calumet County 4-H Youth Development Agent

"4-H is much more than projects. It is much, much more than cows. And what happens in a 4-H club is some of the best prevention programming ever conceived."

M. Klemme

4-H is one of the best prevention programs this country has ever had. I think there are people who will read that statement and say "What? 4-H is about cows and projects and clubs. How can she say that?" Well, I stand by my statement. It is true. 4-H is one of the original prevention programs.

4-H is much more than projects. It is much, much more than cows. And what happens in a 4-H club is some of the best prevention programming ever conceived.

The Search Institute, located in Minneapolis, has done research that shows that youth who have more developmental assets have a better chance of staying out of trouble and a better chance of becoming healthy, successful

adults. They identify 40 developmental assets that we should be striving to build in our children. Thirty of those development assets are directly connected to the activities promoted by 4-H. Examples are having other adult relationships and adult role models, service to others, creative activities, responsibility, planning and decision making, personal power, and a positive view of personal future.

“4-H is one of the best prevention programs available. It reaches urban and rural youth. It teaches life skills and builds valuable developmental assets. It is a family based program, recognizing the changing look of today’s families. It is intergenerational.”

M. Klemme

Looking at only one aspect of 4-H, Wisconsin 4-H youth do endless hours of community service. Recently, while celebrating the 100th birthday of National 4-H, Wisconsin 4-H youth pledged 344,768 hours of community service. Being involved in community service projects builds life skills and assets in the young people involved.

Montana State University and Montana State University Extension recently did a study of 5th, 7th and 9th grade youth. Twenty-five hundred surveys from nearly 50 different schools were completed. What they found was that 4-H youth reported getting better grades in school, that they were less likely to shoplift (2.9% for 4-Hers compared to 9.2% for non-4-Hers), less likely to use drugs (5% compared to 11.6%), and less likely to smoke (10.3% compared to 16.5%). 4-H kids were more likely to hold leadership positions in their school and their communities. More details of this research can be found at <http://www.montana.edu/www4h>.

So you see. I was right. 4-H is one of the best prevention programs available. It reaches urban and rural youth. It teaches life skills and builds valuable developmental assets. It is a family based program, recognizing the changing look of today’s families. It is intergenerational. Kindergarten kids can belong to 4-H. Older youth teach younger members and mentor them. Youth and adult leaders work together to provide a quality program. Grandmas and grandpas stay involved as leaders and family members. Clubs do countless hours of community service, often in nursing homes.

Let’s celebrate 4-H, the premier community prevention program!

Fond du Lac County 4-H Connects With Other Youth to Illustrate the Ways of Community Service

Michelle Batterman, Fond du Lac County 4-H Program Assistant

“When we combine the four ‘H’s’, we offer a service and enrichment for our club, community, country, and world.”

M. Batterman

Fond du Lac County 4-H takes great pride in community service projects. The youth program strives to teach individuals about their community and helping others. The 4-H pledge even demonstrates how the 4-Her should use their head, heart, hands, and health to enhance their club, community, country, and world.

The four words beginning with "H" help to create leaders and develop skills that will aid in building youth responsibility and gain self-satisfaction as they participate in community service projects. In the pledge, the Head symbolizes thinking through the plan of action and setting the goals; the Heart symbolizes devotion to the 4-H program and what it has to offer to our youth and the community; finally, the Hands represents the service to our

community, the leading hand of help and the goal of creating. When we combine the four "H's", we offer a service and enrichment for our club, community, country, and world. All in all, we emphasize helping others and sharing our talents for the improvement of the world around us and developing skills that will help our youth later in life.

Fond du Lac County 4-H goes beyond the club level to do countywide projects including collecting pop-tops for the Ronald McDonald House, making quilts, starting a literacy program, Junior Master Gardener Program, Summer Leadership Adventure, College for Kids and our new project, a fundraiser for a 4-H member who suffers from a rare disease.

The Fond du Lac County 4-H Ambassadors club began the pop-top collection in 1997 in the hopes to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House, of which some 4-H families have used. The Ambassadors were recognized for their efforts with a golden leaf on the entrance tree of the house and they are nearing another milestone, which will be reached within the next few months.

In 1998, the 4-H program received some grants to begin a County Quilting Project. By 2000, 4-H member Katelyn Santy received a large grant that has funded the project for the last three years and will continue for another. Katelyn's mother, Sharon, arranges four meetings a year to teach youth about quilting and to create quilts that will be donated to charities or families of need. The quilts can be found at quilting shows and the local fair, before they are distributed throughout the community.

The Backpack Book Club began in 2002. Once again, Katelyn applied for a grant to cover the cost of the books, backpacks, materials, and workshops. The Backpack Book Club is affiliated with the Communications project, and a workshop was held last fall, to discuss the communication project and book club. Backpacks are available to 4-H clubs to promote literacy among club members and the community. The Communication Project Committee is planning another workshop, book club meetings for the upcoming year and going to various locations and reading books to children.

The Fond du Lac County Junior Master Gardener Program was created in 2002 to introduce the concepts of Horticulture, Nutrition, Leadership, Communications, and Community Service to the youth in the WNEP (Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program) Food Group and the Boys and Girls Club. Youth participated in hands on learning about taking care of a garden, classroom/kitchen activities, and community service through the collaboration of UW-Extension Fond du Lac County 4-H Program, Northeast District Urban Initiative (Gardens), and Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program. The club was recognized by Texas A & M University as being the first county in Wisconsin to complete the program as arranged by the university. Future goals are to involve youth from other programs including 4-H, 21st Century Programs, home school, and other youth groups; have a second garden plot; and increase the youth involvement in planning the garden. For more information on the Junior Master Gardener Program visit our website at www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/fonddulac/JMG1.htm

Summer Leadership Adventure is a program for young teens to explore volunteer opportunities in their community while developing leadership skills. This second year of the program involved sixteen youth performing



Katelyn Santy organizing books for the Backpack Book Club.



Junior Master Gardeners hard at work.

community service at various sites including the American Red Cross, UW-Fond du Lac Gottfried Arboretum, Free Spirit Riders, and St. Agnes Adult Day Care Services. The program also included developing leadership skills of teamwork, communication, understanding and working with people of different personalities, and managing stress. Games, role-plays, discussions and group activities emphasized the importance of working together, cooperation and working to understand other's viewpoints.

*Fond du Lac's
Community Service
Projects:*

- *Pop-top collection for Ronald McDonald House*
- *Quilting Project*
- *Literacy Program*
- *Jr. Master Gardeners*
- *Summer Leadership Adventure*
- *College for Kids*
- *Fundraiser for a 4-Her in need*

Challenge, creativity, teamwork, self-satisfaction and giving back to the community describe the experiences of children participating in College for Kids Make a Difference session. Young people ages ten to twelve played a role in making a difference in our community through addressing a community need. Betty Johnson, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity talked with the children about how Habitat works with families to provide affordable housing. This inspired participants to design and build a house-shaped collection box for fundraising. During the process participants learned about decision-making, teamwork, communication, responsibility, and planning and organizing through class activities and discussions. Through this hands-on approach the children experienced real life application of these skills.

2003 is beginning with yet another community service project. The 4-H ambassadors is teaming with the family of Danny Kochan to hold a Halloween Party on Halloween night to generate awareness and funds for a rare disease that has confined Danny to a wheelchair. The disease known as Ataxia-Telangiectasia (AT for short) is a rare degenerative disorder that first becomes apparent during childhood. It is a complicated illness affecting a number of different body parts, particularly the brain and the immune system, which is progressive and worsens with time. Our goal is to inform the public about Danny's illness. Danny is a very important individual in our program and when Danny's family approached the Ambassadors with helping them with an awareness event, the Ambassadors jumped on the bandwagon. Not only will this be a community service project for the Ambassadors but it will also be a promotional event. As the community learns more about Danny and his disease, they will be able to communicate what they learn to others. It's a win-win situation and the Ambassadors feel they are giving of themselves to assist a fellow 4-Her that will be recognized as an individual not someone with an illness.

Have You Collaborated Lately?

Dawn Schneider, Entre Nous Assistant Editor, Langlade County 4-H Youth Development Agent

Collaborate—to work with another or others. A seemingly simple word commonly used today in Extension and in conversations with the community. Collaborate is also a word that has done a lot towards coloring the world of 4-H Youth Development in the present.

There are many advantages to collaborating with others. The first one that comes to mind is a reduction in workload and in expenditures, "spreading the work (and the cost) around", an area that everyone is interested in developing. However, the experience can mean much more than that.

A key of collaborations is the opportunity to network and relationship-build. They can open the door to meeting key stakeholders, creating a sense of trust, and developing open communication. Collaborations allow for an open dialogue with other youth development professionals and organizations within a community and creates the opportunity to enhance programming through shared resources.

“Collaborations also allow 4-H Youth Development Professionals the opportunity to get the message out to a much broader audience, sharing programming efforts and philosophies with a wider range of constituents.”

D. Schneider

Collaborations also allow 4-H Youth Development Professionals the opportunity to get the message out to a much broader audience, sharing programming efforts and philosophies with a wider range of constituents. The 4-H program can be introduced to individuals who under other circumstances may not have the opportunity to ask questions or seek information. This, of course, opens the door for opportunities to reach more youth.

In theory, these all seem like excellent reasons to work collaborations into the 4-H Youth Development Program, but how does it work in practice? The following are several examples of how collaborations have been effective in the Langlade County 4-H Program:

- ❑ Collaborations with the Boys and Girls Club has led to the Langlade County Community Youth Talent Show, a *Lights on Afterschool!* celebration, a Safe Night rally, 4-H Ambassador and older youth demonstrations and activities, and other events.
- ❑ Collaborations with the 21st Century Grant After School Program has led to the formation of “LEADERS”, a community wide collaboration between youth organizations, county offices, such as social services and health, the technical school, family corner resource center, Main Street, the Tobacco Coalition, and many others to publish a community calendar and a “positive community happenings” column in the newspaper. Programming is also shared to avoid duplication of services and to look for other possible areas of collaboration.
- ❑ The next step in the collaboration with the 21st Century Grant program will be the introduction this fall of an “After-School 4-H Club” and possible expansion into other or all of their sites.
- ❑ Collaborations with the Public Library has led to a growing Young Adult Book Club. It has also led to an increase in the 4-H Communications Project and use of the 4-H “Building Bridges” Communications Curriculum.

These are just several examples of how collaborations have benefited the 4-H Youth Development Program and the community in Langlade County. It is hard to say whether collaborations are the future, but it is safe to say that they are a key aspect in the present of 4-H.

4-H Present:



Shooting Sports is now a popular project area in many counties, including Shawano who hosted their first annual shoot last May with the second scheduled this May.

“Just a Spoonful of Sugar Helps the Medicine Go Down”

Myrna Rhinehart, *Entre Nous* Past Editor, Marquette County 4-H Youth Development Agent

Constructive Communication Lesson of the Present

“Have you ever tried to give anyone some advice about his or her own behavior (medicine) without giving a small (spoonful) complement or word of understanding (sugar) first? It doesn’t “help” the advice (medicine) be accepted (go down) very well, does it?”

M. Rhinehart

Have you ever really thought about what this phrase is saying? Let’s break it down into manageable pieces:

“Just a Spoonful” – The word “just” implies that only a little is needed, not three or four spoonfuls, just one.

“Of Sugar” – Have you ever known sugar to be bitter, harsh, sour, or unpleasant? Sugar is a sweet source of dietary carbohydrate, and a preservative of other foods. Sugar can preserve or bring out the sweetness in other foods. Hypothetical sugar can preserve or bring out the sweetness in other people. Some sugar is necessary in everyone’s lives, be it the crystalline form, or the hypothetical form.

“Helps” – makes easier, supports, comforts are some words that could be used in place of “helps.” Helping does not hinder or make difficult.

“the Medicine” – Something that affects well-being. Substance or preparation used in treating disease. A person usually takes medicine when there is something wrong with their body or mind. Medicine is supposed to help cure what ails you. Medicine is typically not known for being especially tasty. If a person has received the negative response of a person they have disgruntled, it is said that they have received “a taste of their own medicine.”

“Go Down” – be swallowed, digested, absorbed, not rejected. A person who has learned a new concept will have received the idea, processed it, and accepted it. As a result, the new concept will have hopefully made an impact, or “improved their condition.”

So what does this mean? Have you ever tried to give anyone some advice about his or her own behavior (medicine) without giving a small (spoonful) complement or word of understanding (sugar) first? It doesn’t “help” the advice (medicine) be accepted (go down) very well, does it?

Try this method:

1. Think of what you are going to say when you approach a person before you get there.
2. Supply them with some sugar first. (“A little dab ‘il do ya’.”) “Mary, I understand that you were upset that the kids left the toys all over the floor.”
3. Then provide some medicine. “Do you think that yelling at them helped the situation?”
4. Allow the person to “swallow” the “medicine” before continuing the discussion.
5. If necessary, provide a little more medicine. “How else do you think that you could have handled the situation to get them to pick up their toys?”
6. See if the advice (medicine) helped change his or her behavior or attitude.

Same conversation without “sugar”:

“Mary, don’t yell at the kids! That’s not going to help the toys get picked up!”

Which way would you rather be approached, with or without “sugar”?

“Try it!” Exercise:

Take some 3” X 5” cards and write the word “sugar” on them.

Have a small group of 3-4 people brainstorm recent problematic issues that have developed in their lives. (Don’t spend a lot of time on this, or you will lose the group.) Write them down.

Each group should take their issue list and practice how they can approach the situation constructively using the following method:

Pick a group “Sugar Bowl”, the person holding the “sugar” cards. He or she can distribute or take away the sugar cards to and from participants at will. The facilitator can also be this person if desired.

The other participants will “discuss” the issue situations. The Sugar Bowl will give the “sugar” cards to the participants at random. When a participant is holding a “sugar” card, he or she needs to add a positive attitude to the conversation and give the other participants some complements or words of understanding. When the Sugar Bowl takes the cards away, the participants can go back to handling the situation however they want.

After everyone has had an opportunity to experience having sugar and no sugar, discuss the exercise:

“How did you feel when the person you were talking with used sugar in their conversation?”

“How did you feel when the sugar was taken away?”

“Did you respond more positively with or without sugar?”

Come up with your own questions as well!

NAE4-HA Membership in the Present

Donna Duerst, Rock County 4-H Youth Development Agent

OK, OK, so 2002 is not exactly the present. However, 01/31/02 is the date of the most recent Membership Profile Assessment completed by NAE4-HA. The assessment tool was mailed to all life and new NAE4-HA members in 2001, e-mailed and/or presented to all state presidents and made available on the NAE4-HA web site. A total of 836 surveys were returned for a 25% return rate. Read on and test your knowledge of our national membership “in the present!”

“When a participant is holding a “sugar” card, he or she needs to add a positive attitude to the conversation and give the other participants some complements or words of understanding.”

M. Rhinehart

**Test your
knowledge of
NAE4-HA
membership &
learn!**

(Note: The term “NAE4-HA members” actually refers to survey respondents.)

1. For how long have the majority of NAE4-HA members been with the profession?
 - A. 26 years or more
 - B. 16 to 25 years
 - C. 0 to 15 years
2. What is the current position assignment of most NAE4-HA members?
 - A. Program Assistant
 - B. County Agent/Educator
 - C. State 4-H Leader or Specialist
3. What is the highest academic degree held by most NAE4-HA members?
 - A. Doctorate
 - B. Bachelors
 - C. Masters
4. What is the percentage of NAE4-HA members who are Caucasian?
 - A. 90%
 - B. 75%
 - C. 50%
5. What is the most common relationship/family status of NAE4-HA members?
 - A. Married with 1-2 children
 - B. Married with no children
 - C. Single with no children

Did you know?

- Of those members responding to the NAE4-HA membership survey, 75% would like to reduce their number of hours worked, 24% would like their number of hours worked to stay the same, and 1% would like to increase their number of hours worked.

Now for the answers, along with more information than you probably ever wanted to know about our national membership!

1. It should come as no surprise that 68% of members have been with NAE4-HA from 0 to 15 years. 60% of NAE4-HA members have 0 to 15 years with Extension.
2. OK, so this question is another no-brainer. A whopping 70% of NAE4-HA members are County Agents/Educators, while 11% are State 4-H Leaders or Specialists, 2% are Program Assistants and 17% hold a variety of other position assignments.
3. A majority of NAE4-HA members have Masters degrees (64%); a Bachelor degree is the highest degree held by 25% of members.
4. Our national association is a very homogeneous organization with 90% of NAE4-HA members reporting themselves as Caucasian.
5. Most NAE4-HA members are married (66%), and most have no children (43%) so the correct answer is B. That compares with 40% of members having 1-2 children, and 24% of members being single.

Here are few other interesting tidbits of information about our national membership:

- Geographically, 50% of NAE4-HA members are from the South Region, followed by 22% from the North Central Region, 15% from the Northeast Region and 12% from the West Region.
- A total of 69% of members are female and 31% are male.
- Of those members responding to the survey, 75% would like to reduce their number of hours worked, 24% would like their number of

hours worked to stay the same, and 1% would like to increase their number of hours worked.

- The number one reason for attending national conferences was listed as “overall professional development.”
- The number one reason given for NOT attending national conferences was “lack of funding support.”

There probably aren't a lot of surprises in this summary, but it does provide a generalized view of our national membership. How will the future change these characteristics of NAE4-HA members? We'll have to wait for another Membership Profile Assessment to find out!

Training Tomorrow's Leaders Today: 4-H Winter Leadership Adventure

René L. Mehlberg, Door County 4-H Youth Development Agent

The Power of Youth!

The term, The Power of Youth, came about last year for the National 4-H Centennial. After attending the Northeast District 4-H Winter Leadership Adventure February 7-9, that phrase really describes what happened throughout the weekend.



Brown County's Jake Van Schyndel explains his Cloverbud Chicken Project Plan.

Thirty-two 4-H middle school youth and five 4-H adult volunteers attended the first Northeast District 4-H Winter Leadership Adventure. The focus of the camp was leadership, specifically:

- Youth had a chance to better understand themselves and others
- Youth participated in various different leadership sessions
- The camp was a great place to meet other 4-H members from throughout Northeast District
- Each county group came up with at least one project plan to take back to their county.

Sunday was presentation time. Youth had to present their plans of what they are going to do in their county. This is truly when you could see “The Power of Youth.” Plans ranged from a club promotion project, a Cloverbud chicken project, countywide picnic, teaching similar leadership sessions for their county, and a district rollerblading party.

When asked what participants liked best about Leadership Camp, it was obvious that they enjoyed their time at camp: “It was very educational, but we had free time too.”; “I enjoyed being with people I never see and make new friends.”

The enthusiasm the youth had was contagious. Even with it being cold, everyone left fired up and ready to make a difference back home.

The Power of Youth was evident. The training these youth received in the present will help make them the bright leaders in the future.

Joe Stellato, Back in the Fold

Susan Marino, Vernon County 4-H Youth Development Agent

Question:

“The burning question: what caused Joe Stellato, Shawano County 4-H Youth Development Agent, to return to 4-H?”

S. Marino

Was it the allure of working nights and weekends—too many? Or was it the network of 4-H Youth Development agents? Maybe the salary? The burning question: what caused Joe Stellato, Shawano County 4-H Youth Development Agent, to return to 4-H?

When the recent interview was all said and done and we got to the family questions, Joe anteed up his reason: Mike, Nick and Lauren, his 14 year-old triplets. Joe wanted his children to be more involved in 4-H, and he wanted to be more involved with them. Joe had been a 4-H agent once and enjoyed it, so he knew a lot about the program area already. Joe had also served as an Electricity Project and Tractor Safety Training volunteer. As a parent he saw some needs of youth in the community. The opportunity was there for his family to participate and for him to make a contribution as a 4-H agent.

He also had the opportunity for a lateral shift from Ag to 4-H in the same county, so he didn't have to move his family. He knew the 4-H program was a strong one, but his second most important reason for returning to 4-H? “The staff here in Shawano County. Our Program Assistant Teri Brunner is outstanding. Because of her and the rest of the 4-H staff, I knew we could work together and make a very good program even better. Sandy (Phillips) left the county with a strong 4-H program. She was excellent at developing leadership in volunteers. It's been a real joy to move into this position.”

Answer:

“The opportunity was there for his family to participate and for him to make a contribution as a 4-H agent.”

S. Marino

Starting in 1979 with UW-Extension, Joe was the Interim 4-H & Ag Agent in Sawyer County. After less than a year he returned to UW-Madison to get a Master's in Ag Education. In 1982 Joe took the job as 4-H & Youth Agent in Iowa County.

“That was a strong program in 4-H, very traditional. There were about 800 members with a heavy emphasis on dairy and livestock competition. Things were going well. I was able to tweak the program a bit. For instance, individual letters used to be sent to every member in a project when meetings or activities were going on. Take the dairy project, for instance. When a dairy project meeting was coming up, individual letters would go to every member in that project. When I was there, we started the 4-H newsletter that carried all the news and announcements for all members. We revamped the Achievement Night, put out a new 4-H Leader's handbook, introduced the Key Committee concept and updated the camping program.” When Iowa County's Ag Agent, LaVerne Draves retired in 1984, Joe applied for that position and became Iowa County's Ag Agent.

Joe moved to Waukesha County in 1986. He loved working with the farmers there in a challenging environment on the urban fringe. The county was getting a little too urban for Joe when he left in 1992 to be the Crops & Soils Agent in Shawano County. In 1996 he added Office Chair responsibilities to his job. From the beginning Joe worked with the 4-H Tractor Safety program and the mechanical sciences. When Sandy left last year, the Ag & Extension Education Chair asked Joe if he would consider the 4-H position.

“Empowering leaders is what it is all about. There are more project areas now and the curriculum has really improved.”

J. Stellato

Currently, Joe is working with the school district on a grant to pilot after school 4-H programs. He is also using some of the project kits developed by the Northeast District and State 4-H Staff.

He likes the way 4-H has shifted from being service oriented to more program and research opportunities, from agent driven to volunteer driven.

“Empowering leaders is what it is all about. There are more project areas now and the curriculum has really improved.” He’s got that sparkle in his eye when he talks about 4-H. Welcome back, Joe!

Dare to Dream

Michelle Batterman, Fond du Lac County 4-H Program Assistant

Dare to Dream about what we have in the 4-H program! Let’s take a minute and think about the world around us. In these troubled times, family members and friends may be departing for destinations unknown, we know that these individuals maybe gone for months or even years to protect not only the world but to protect our country and our families. We can cry tears of sadness as they depart and shed tears of happiness upon their safe return. Now stop, think...

Dare to Dream what we have in 4-H! We can be grateful for what we have in the 4-H program. We dare our youth, and even our volunteers, daily to the challenges of 4-H, to make them the best that they can be and to become those individuals that will fight for our freedom.

When the 4-H pledge was written, I believe that the four "H's" dared people to think about their loyalty to their community, country, and world. As a past 4-H member I was taught the pledge but I really didn't understand or even think about the meaning until years after I graduated from 4-H. Maybe, as the crisis of the world around us increases, we as leaders need to lend a hand and take the challenge to explain to our youth the true meaning of 4-H. This can be achieved through our newsletters or visits to clubs.

The 4-H youth that we work with daily dream about their family, friends, animals, projects, and those blue ribbons from the county fair, when "4-H is in the air." The nightmare comes when record books are due. I am sure, every 4-H member at one time or another dreads the record books. I know I did especially when I was older and involved in everything, and I mean everything. At that time, I was a little naive to what record books were teaching me: leadership, responsibility, and organization. Today, I am thankful for what 4-H taught me: how to work with others, to get my work done in a timely manner, and finally to set goals – long or short term.

4-H teams youth with other youth and/or adults to dare each other to learn about one or more of the 72 different project areas. Today, your member may be challenged with raising their animal. Tomorrow, they may be challenged with that woodworking project that looked so simple on the cover of the kit. Do you know who they will call to help them complete their mission...YOU. As 4-H staff, you are challenged to find that specialist to help the member complete the project they are struggling to finish.

“We dare our youth, and even our volunteers, daily to the challenges of 4-H, to make them the best that they can be and to become those individuals that will fight for our freedom.”

M. Batterman

"We can only dream about what we had yesterday, appreciate what we have today, and challenge what we will see tomorrow because our world is changing right in front of our eyes."

M. Batterman

As you march through the years, you see your troops grow-up into outstanding individuals and you can credit yourself for a job well done. At times our members may get frustrated because they feel we challenge them too much. But as they leave our program and move to bigger challenges in life, they will dream about the times they shared with others and the motivations they had for completing those blue ribbon projects. Then they will say, "If I were only a 4-H member again!"

We dared to dream and followed our inspirations to our 4-H careers today. The youth look up to us as the leaders that will guide them to their next level of life. We can only dream about what we had yesterday, appreciate what we have today, and challenge what we will see tomorrow because our world is changing right in front of our eyes. Remember to take time for yourself and enjoy what you have because we may be faced with bigger challenges in the near future.

4-H Life Skills in Action: State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

Susan Marino, Vernon County 4-H Youth Development Agent

Editor's Note: When I was short on material, Susan contacted me with the offer to do some interviews and asked for suggestions. After thinking about who would make a good/interesting interviewee, I came up with the idea of State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. From the UW Board of Regents Teaching Excellence Award presentation, it was noted that Burmaster is a former 4-Her. With a challenge in hand, Susan was off. Susan got in contact with Superintendent Burmaster via email. Below is a little more than we knew before about Superintendent Burmaster's 4-H experience. Thanks for your work Susan!



Elizabeth Burmaster

Background: Burmaster was a member of the Frederick 4-H Club in Frederick County, Maryland from approximately 1963-1968. Projects included sewing and cooking. Receiving the Best First Year 4-H Record Book Award receiving recognition at State Fair Fashion Review for an apron were her standout memories.

"What did you bring to your adult life from being involved in 4-H?"
Organizational skills, the understanding that success is the result of the balance between our heads, hearts, health and hands.

4-H helped Burmaster prepare for her current job through gaining experience with interpersonal skills, public speaking, and working in an organized way with others.

Superintendent Burmaster wrote, "4-H is appropriate to today's society as it gives young people the opportunity to develop their own individual skills, as well as work with others in service to the community."

There was so much more to ask, but it will have to wait. This we do know—Superintendent Burmaster is another successful adult paying tribute to all who made the 4-H program worthwhile when she was a member. If you are reading this, this warm fuzzy is for you, recognizing that you are helping to keep the 4-H fires going.

4-H Present: More than we Imagined



A member of Sheboygan County's Squirrel Dodgers lights up the show!



Mask-making at 4-H Arts Camp is truly a team effort.



Planning for the 2006 NAE4-HA National Conference to be in Milwaukee is presently on Frank's mind.



Older youth help younger members learn at a 4-H project day.

2002-2003 WAE4-HYDP Board of Directors

Fast Fact

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