



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

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“STRENGTHENING 4-H PROJECT
SUPPORT”

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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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From the Heart of the Editor: A Clothing Project Epic

Merry Klemme, Kewaunee County

“My first project was a scarf. I simple square of material, sewn one inch from the edge all the way around, and then the threads are pulled out of the outside edge to make a fringe.”

M. Klemme

Reading Rene’ Mehlberg’s article in this issue took me back (waaay back) to my early 4-H days. My mother was the general leader of my 4-H club, the Merry Belles – all girls, and my dad was the general leader of the Jolly Joes – all boys. Both of my parents were the general leaders for their clubs for over 25 years. I was a “leader’s kid”, but I had a rich 4-H experience because of it.

I gained my love for drama from 4-H due to the many roles (a robot, maid, movie star) that I had in productions our club did for the Music and Drama Festival, still a popular event in Sheboygan County.

But probably the most lasting skill (besides all those positive life skills like teamwork, communication, etc.) I learned in 4-H was how to sew. My Mom was my first leader, teaching me how to peddle that foot peddle and guide the material (usually old flour sacks – see I really AM old!) – through the old Singer sewing machine. My first project was a scarf. I simple square of material, sewn one inch from the edge all the way around, and then the threads are pulled out of the outside edge to make a fringe. This is obviously something I have used many times in my life!

The second project was a gathered skirt. This consisted of three panels of material, sewn together and gathered at the top. Now here’s the hard part – the skirt had to have a waistband sewn on the top and the trick was to do that without puckering the gathering. Then I learned to hem the skirt – not too short, my father said. Hemming IS a skill I have used hundreds of times in my life (as a opposed to fringing).

Eventually I moved on to aprons, dresses, blouses, shorts. I remember the day when my mother, who I thought knew everything, said I needed to work with the neighbor lady because I was ready to learn more advanced skills. I didn’t want to go, but Mrs Wimmler taught me I could do things I never imagined I could do. And working with another leader helped me create a bond with a woman who later told me, after my Mom had died and I was Director of Head Start (where her grandson went to school) that my Mom would be so proud of me. She couldn’t have given me a more meaningful gift.



Mind you, I never won top prize at the dress revue, I never went to State Fair, but I did get a few blue ribbons. But best of all I got to hear

my Mom tell my older sister that she should be more like ME when she was cutting out her material. My sister didn't follow the rules. She was a free spirit and that cost Mom a lot of wasted material. I, on the other hand, was very "gold" in my cutting practices. I followed the RULES.

When my daughters joined 4-H, I became their clothing leader. I distinctly remember the day when Beccie, age 12 at the time (now she is 32 with three kids of her own), was sewing a dress she was making for the Clothing Revue. She was sewing small pleats into the front of a green and white dress and I had urged her to take out and redo several of them. She did that, but as I came back into the room, she was sitting at the machine (electric Singer now) sobbing. It was then that I knew that sewing shouldn't be taken so seriously. We took a break, went to McDonalds, and came back with a better attitude. She did win a top prize at the Clothing Revue and went to State Fair, but more importantly, she learned sewing should be fun.

My other daughter is a free spirit like her aunt. She hated sewing but every once in a while she decided to do something creative, such as buy all the neck ties she could find at St. Vincent DePaul, and make herself a skirt from them. As she worked in the sewing room, I cringed in the other room, knowing that I would have to untangle the material, thread and machine when she finally decided that she really didn't want a neck tie skirt and abandoned the project. I recently found that tangle of ties in a box she left behind after getting married this last fall and threw them away.

"But the moral of this story is 'some 4-H projects live forever and create warm places in your heart'."

M. Klemme

But the moral of this story is "some 4-H projects live forever and create warm places in your heart". Several times in my adult life my sewing talents have served me well.

When I was a young mother of two with one on the way, I moved with my husband to an army base in New Jersey. He was a private in the army and we were poor. But I had taken along my sewing machine and a huge box full of material. I made all my children's cloths including coats, my maternity clothes and clothes for our new baby boy. I remember that time in my life as very hard, but also as one of the best times in my life. I had the TIME to create things for my children.

Recently I was going through photo albums of when my children were growing up. Nearly every formal picture of my daughters had them dressed in clothes that I had sewn.

When my oldest daughter announced she was getting married, I said we would have to start looking for her dress. She shyly (maybe slyly) smiled at me and said, "I was hoping you would make my dress. You have made every important dress for me in my life." Well, how do

you say no to that? Five thousand beads and 2000 sequins later, I cried as she walked down the aisle.

Since then, I also made my daughter-in-law's wedding dress. She decided in June to move the wedding up from October to August 2nd. No problem! I was only trying to finish my last 6 credits of summer courses for my Master's degree. But we survived and I cried again.

This last summer, I sewed my little fingers to the bone again, making my younger daughter's wedding dress, plus eight bridesmaids dresses and my granddaughter's flower girl dress. What a labor of love! What a joy to be able to do that. All because my Mom started me out on that fringed scarf, blah blah blah years ago.

This got to be a very long story to make a simple point. 4-H project skills can be a lasting way to connect with the most important people in your life. And nothing is more valuable than that.

"4-H project skills can be a lasting way to connect with the most important people in your life."

M. Klemme

The Next Issue of *Entre Nous*

The Spring issue of *Entre Nous* will focus on Building Capacity for Community Youth Development, so start writing your articles now. The final due date will be May 1, 2001. But 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.

Having Fun With Learning Activities

Paula Huff, Oconto County, led her colleagues in a puzzle activity, teaching teamwork and communication skills.



Another Day, Another Chance

Wayne Brabender, Past, Past
Editor

“By helping you, perhaps I was trying to lift up my life a trifle. Heaven knows anyone’s life can stand a little of that.”

– *Charlotte’s Web* (*Charlotte the spider to Wilbur the pig*)



*“In spite of the weather,
Groundhog Day is my
favorite ‘holiday.’”*

W. Brabender

As I’m writing this we’re still in the midst of the “six more weeks of winter” predicted by Jimmy the groundhog in Sun Prairie after he saw his shadow. I believe it was the only sunny sunrise we had this winter and it had to come on February 2!

In spite of the weather, Groundhog Day is my favorite “holiday.” By February 2, I’ve made it through the annual madness called the Christmas season. I’ve survived the snows of December and the frigid blasts of January. I’m starting to see newspaper articles about baseball’s spring training. February is a short month so March doesn’t seem far off and March, of course, means *spring!*

But the main reason I love Groundhog Day is the movie, *Groundhog Day*. If you’re not familiar with it, here’s what it says on the jacket of the videotape I own:

“A weatherman caught in a personal time warp on the worst day of his life, in Punxsutawney, PA, to cover annual Groundhog Day festivities. But on his way out of town, Phil is caught in a giant blizzard – which he failed to predict – and finds himself stuck in small town hell. Just when things couldn’t get worse, they get worse. Phil wakes the next morning to find it is Groundhog Day all over again . . . and again . . . and again.”

My favorite comedic actor Bill Murray plays Pittsburgh Channel 9 TV weatherman Phil Connors. His love interest is the beautiful Andie McDowell who plays Rita, the new cheery producer at the station. And comedian Chris Elliot plays a smart aleck cameraman. Together these three are sent to Punxsutawney to cover Phil the groundhog’s annual prediction. If he sees his shadow, it means six more weeks of the white stuff.

It’s Phil the weatherman’s fourth trip to cover the groundhog. At this point of the movie, Phil is an arrogant prima donna who thinks only of

satisfying his own selfish wants and needs. As Rita says, “You’re egocentric . . . that’s your defining characteristic.” For example, he does *not* want to stay an extra second in what he calls a boring little town filled with “hicks.” When asked by the landlady at the bed and breakfast if he is going to stay another day, he sarcastically retorts in weatherese, “Chance of departure, 100 per cent!” Then while on his way to Gobbler’s Knob where the festivities are held at daybreak, Phil walks past a poor elderly beggar, pretending to have no money. He then blows off an old classmate that he sees on his way to the park.

At the park Phil gives a sarcastic introduction to the moment that the groundhog is pulled out of his pen and consulted on the weather. When he gives an equally sarcastic wrap-up for his viewers, Rita says, “Let’s do it again.” Phil refuses and walks away. “Prima donna,” mutters the cameraman. Rita agrees.

The weather team tries to return to Pittsburgh but is forced to return to Punxsutawney by the blizzard. Phil whines throughout the day about his many impositions and goes to bed early to get an early start out of town the next day.

Only there isn’t a next day. When the alarm goes off at 6 a.m., the same local radio jocks are making the same lame jokes about Groundhog Day and the cold weather that he heard yesterday . . . actually today.

“Now the movie moves to the heart of the matter . . . how Phil is going to cope with the “problem” (opportunity?) of reliving the same day, over and over.”

W. Brabender

Phil is clearly afraid. He thinks he’s going crazy. When he meets the very same people on the way to the park again, he tells Rita, but she thinks he’s playing on trick on her. She suggests he get his head examined. He does, but X-rays show nothing wrong. A psychiatrist is no help, either.

Phil then seeks consolation from two local guys over drinks at a bowling alley. When Phil asks them, “What would you do if you were stuck in one place and everyday was exactly the same and nothing you did mattered?” they had no response. He was describing their lives, too.

Now the movie moves to the heart of the matter . . . how Phil is going to cope with the “problem” (opportunity?) of reliving the same day, over and over.

At first Phil realizes that if there is no tomorrow, there can be no consequences for his actions. Nobody will remember what he did! So Phil decides to break all the rules. He steals money from a Brink’s armored truck, buys a Mercedes, and then prances around in Western garb like tough guy Clint Eastwood. He eats anything he wants and smokes packs of cigarettes. He doesn’t even floss his teeth!

Then Phil realizes the power of the knowledge he can accumulate each day to get what he wants . . . like sleeping with Rita. So he asks Rita to describe her perfect guy. She gives a laundry list of qualities – intelligent, supportive, fun, romantic, courageous, kind, sensitive, likes animals and children, plays an instrument and loves his mother. Phil is none of these things, of course, but by learning about her likes and dislikes a little bit each day he thinks he can set her up to think that he’s wonderful and she’ll go to bed with him.

He finds out her favorite drink and toast (“To world peace”), her love of 19th Century French poetry, and her favorite ice cream (Rocky Road). He pretends that these are *his* favorites, too. The ruse works well enough to coax her to his room at the bed and breakfast. Rita is surprised that she has anything in common with him. “I’m just amazed,” she says, “how I started the day with one expectation and ended with a totally different one.”

Phil moves in for the kill. “I love you,” he says. His line had worked with another attractive, but gullible, woman earlier in the movie. Rita sees through it. “You *love* me?” she says. “You don’t even *know* me. This whole day has been one big set up. Is this what love is to you? You’ll never love anyone but yourself.” She slaps him and leaves.

Phil doesn’t give up easily. In the following scenes we see Phil get slapped again, and again, and again.

When Phil realizes it will never work, deep depression sets in. His daily broadcasts at the groundhog festivities become darker and bleaker. “This cold, gray day will last you for the rest of your lives,” he tells viewers. We see him smash the same radio/alarm clock with his fists several days in a row. He kidnaps the groundhog and drives off a cliff with it, thinking that if he kills himself and the rodent there will be a different tomorrow. But there isn’t.

“But there are signs that Phil is changing. The more he knows Rita, the more he’s truly falling in love with her.”

W. Brabender

He electrocutes himself in the bathtub, steps in front of a moving truck, and jumps off a ledge to his death. Later he tells Rita that he’s been knifed to death, shot, burned and hung, “and everyday I wake up without a scratch.”

But there are signs that Phil is changing. The more he knows Rita, the more he’s truly falling in love with her. Once when she’s dosing off for a nap, he looks at her fondly and whispers, “I think you’re the kindest, smartest, prettiest person I’ve every met in my life. I’ve never met anyone who’s as nice to people as you are. I don’t deserve someone like you. If I did I swear I’d love you for the rest of my life.” She hears none of this, of course. These are the first words that he says from his heart, without strings attached.

It marks a huge breakthrough for Phil. For the rest of the movie we see this wonderful transformation from jerk to gem.

The same old man that he once ignored, he now befriends, sharing his money and feeding him at the diner. The homeless man still dies, despite Phil's superhuman efforts to revive him as he lies unconscious on the cold pavement. "It was just his time," says the emergency room nurse later. "Sometimes people just die." Phil can do a lot, but he's not God.

Phil is suddenly nice to his co-workers, bringing them coffee and rolls at Gobbler's Knob. He asks them for their ideas and is genuinely interested in their families. He quotes Chekov for his viewers, praising winter as a beautiful and valuable part of life. He studies books and learns how to play the piano. He helps others in the community, like the three old women who have a flat tire, the man choking at a restaurant, and the boy who falls out of a tree. ("I've caught you every day and you've never thanked me!" he chides the boy as he cradles him in his arms after breaking his fall yet one more time. The boy doesn't thank him this time, either. He just hops down and runs off. Not to worry. Phil will be back tomorrow to make sure he doesn't hurt himself again.)

"No matter what happens tomorrow or for the rest of my life, I'm happy here now, because I love you."

W. Brabender

He learns how to sculpt ice and creates a stunning portrait of Rita. How did you do that, she wants to know. "I know your face so well I could have done it with my eyes closed," answers Phil.

Of course Phil gets Rita in the end, but not until his transformation is complete. That happens when he tells Rita, "No matter what happens tomorrow or for the rest of my life, I'm happy here now, because I love you." And he really means it this time.

When the day breaks again and he realizes it's February 3, he says to her: "You know what today is – today is tomorrow. It's here! Is there anything I can do for you *today*?"

End of movie, but not end of story.

I've watched *Groundhog Day* the movie every year since it came out in 1993. Usually I watch it alone, just to feel good about life. Sometimes I watch it with my wife Chris. This year we invited friends over to watch it with us, and that's when I realized what a great trigger film this is. It triggers valuable discussions that seldom come up in conversations.

The use of movies to trigger ideas is certainly not new. For years as part of her *Raising Responsible Teens* program, Trisha Day of our State 4-H Staff has encouraged parents and their kids to view movies together to address serious topics like sex. The movies, says Trisha,

can spark conversation and provide the “teachable moments” that parents sometimes need.

After watching *Groundhog Day* our little group had a terrific discussion about what day we would choose if we had one day to live over and over. Early in the movie, Phil bemoans the day *he* was given. (Why couldn't it have been the day he had on the Virgin Islands with a beautiful stranger drinking pina colodas on the beach, he asks. “That was a *pretty* good day,” he says.) But by the end of the movie he calls this Groundhog Day “the *best* day of my life.”

Everyone in our group agreed that any day would work for us. There's lots of room for improvement every day of our lives.

It's a great concept, isn't it? The chance to do it over and over again during our lives until we get it right . . . because tomorrow is another day, because tomorrow is another chance.

WAE4-HYDP.... Our Association

Kim Reaman, WAE4-HYDP President, St. Croix County

WAE4-HYDP is the professional association that brings us all together for the same cause.... a love of working with youth in Extension programs. It doesn't matter whether you are based in a county or on campus, whether your primary interest is in livestock, the arts or community organizing, the thing that brings us all together is our desire to provide opportunities that make a difference in the lives of youth and their families.

There are many ways you can be involved in WAE4-HYDP.

- ◆ Be an active member. Participate in the Association semi-annual ETN and the Annual meeting held at the WAEP Conference. Respond to surveys conducted by the board or committees. It can be as simple as sharing your thoughts when asked.
- ◆ Participate in a WAE4-HYDP committee. The committees meet face to face during the WAEP Conference and conduct the rest of their business through ETN or phone conferences. I think committee work is a lot of fun because it provides a chance to work with others from across the state. You get to know people in a different light. Thinking a committee might be an “okay” way to contribute...here's a description of the WAE4-HYDP committees and their primary function:

- ✓ Awards & Recognition – This committee gets to plan the awards banquet and select the recipients to receive awards!

WAE4-HYDP Committee Meetings at WAEP

*Tuesday, April 3
Old Committees at 3:30 pm
New Committees at 4:30 pm
Locations will be posted!*

*National Conference
Committee is meeting at 5:30 pm right after the other committee meetings.*

If you've not attended a committee meeting in the past, please feel most welcome to attend the “old” and the “new” committee meetings. Attending the “old” committee meeting, as a new member, is a great way to get up to speed on what's happening!

What a great way to learn about all the exciting work being done with youth in Extension.

- ✓ Communications & Entre Nous – You don't necessarily have to write articles...you just have to find others who like to write and encourage them to submit to Entre Nous. This committee also gets to work on layout, design and publication of Entre Nous. Talk about great practice for a 4-H newsletter...
- ✓ Clover Shop – Like to shop? Well then, this is the committee for you. Members on the Clover Shop Committee select 4-H promotional items to be sold through the Clover Shop. You'll also get some marketing experience here.
- ✓ Membership – This committee handles the “enrollment” for members into the association. The latest effort they have been working on is student membership and figuring out ways to market to students.
- ✓ Professional Concerns — Interested in finding out what's on people's minds about their work? Want to have your finger on the pulse of what makes their job satisfying or trying? This is the committee you'll want to check out.
- ✓ National Conference – Promote the national conference, plan State's Night Out, find special gifts for our honorees...that's just part of what you get to do with the National Conference Committee. It's great fun and a wonderful way to get to know many of the other WI members who will be attending national conference. This committee meets at a different time than the other committees because there can be a lot of overlap in people!
- ◆ Next year, when someone approaches you about running for an office...say YES! President-elect was a great position to meet other 4-H youth development professionals from across the North Central Region. It's also provides exciting professional development opportunities through JCEP (Joint Council of Extension Professionals) conference and PILD (Public Issues Leadership Development). If president elect is too much at the time, what about secretary, treasurer or district representative on the WAE4-HYDP Board? Those are all two-year terms and don't require quite the commitment as president elect but they can be an equally satisfying way to give to our association.

I hope to see all of you at WAEP, April 3-5, in LaCrosse.

“Which Is The One That You Earn Money?”

René L. Mehlberg, Winnebago County

“When I joined my local 4-H club, I had no idea what I was getting into, what 4-H projects were or their important history with Wisconsin 4-H, or how 4-H would shape the rest of my life.”

R. Mehlberg

When I was eight years old, my mom asked if I wanted to join 4-H or Girl Scouts. My question was, “Which is the one that you earn money?” After she said 4-H, 4-H became my final answer.

When I joined my local 4-H club, I had no idea what I was getting into, what 4-H projects were or their important history with Wisconsin 4-H, or how 4-H would shape the rest of my life.

After the first year of Exploring in which we had a very strong Exploring leader, I decided to sign up for Clothing and Photography. These were two projects that had my interest plus we had two strong project leaders in each.

These two projects I enrolled in throughout my 4-H career and in both I excelled. My photography leader, who is still active in the club where I was a member, helped me out immensely. She had a darkroom in which she would at times help members enlarge photos. Not having a good quality 35 mm camera, she allowed me the use of an old one with varying lenses. She would take the photo members to county workshops and events. This is where I learned the basics of photography and skills that I continue to use every time I pick up a camera. If one visits my apartment, you can see many photos taken during those ten project years.



Clothing was the other main project. Shortly after I enrolled, our leader moved but was still in the county. Instead of having a club contact, I had a county contact. She still worked with me during those first beginning years. I remember going over and having fun while working on my sewing projects. The project skills I gained are truly life-skills. I received my first college job, working in the theatre costume shop, all because I can sew. I free-lanced making slip covers when I needed money because I can sew. I can hem or alter clothing if it doesn't quite fit because I can sew.

Project support for the clothing project in my county as in many others includes the clothing review activity. The clothing revue activity taught me poise, confidence, and modeling techniques, not to mention leadership skills and employment for seven years with State Fair Clothing Revue. The skills learned are used more often than one would guess. In fact, I'm teaching basic modeling techniques to two high school classes who are modeling for an area mall.

In high school I had to write a paper about the most important decision that I had made. When I was sixteen, I realized it was joining 4-H.

Four-H gave this country girl many opportunities and taught her skills that she may not have otherwise gained.

I still consider joining 4-H as one of the most important decisions that I have made. Now working for 4-H, I have learned that it isn't the money that will keep me part of the organization. What will keep me involved is helping youth and families learning project and life skills, just as I was taught over 10 years ago.

Ed-Ventures Workshop

Ian Meeker, Bayfield County

***“Now I see the secret of the making of the best person, it is to grow
in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth”***

Walt Whitman

In the spirit of strengthening 4-H Project Leadership an Ed-Ventures workshop has been designed to introduce adults and junior leaders to the educational design of outdoor adventure activities. This workshop will take place on June 16 and 17th at the Great Lakes Visitor's Center located on the shores of Lake Superior just 2 miles west of Ashland.

The intention of this workshop is to introduce participants to the concepts behind adventure education and how this format of learning can be successfully used as a vehicle for introducing the four ships:

Leadership Stewardship Partnership Citizenship

Goals of this Ed-Venture workshop

- Introduce how to effectively teach leadership and use the new WI 4-H Communication curriculum with Adventure Programming.
- Integrate adventure based activities into positive group partnerships
- Improve technical and interpersonal skills.
- Address issues related to safety, liability and planning
- Discuss the importance of low-impact and active stewardship
- Learn Group facilitation techniques
- Have Fun, Learn new skills and meet good people

Participants will paddle a 34 foot Voyager Canoe on Lake Superior. Through the process of paddling this craft, participants will experience



the efficiency of a coordinated effort. Their guide, dressed in character, will take them back to a time when beaver pelts were to top hats what leather is to Nike shoes. Participants will sample dried meat, hear stories about the presence the Voyaguers and the fur trade in the area.



The second half of the training will focus on an the design and delivery of an orienteering course and the natural teaching metaphors of orienting yourself to your surrounds, finding out where you are before setting a goal and implementing your action plan.

Participants will be introduced to the format of running good initiatives, how to manage an initiative and most importantly what to look for that you can bring up during the process portion of the activity when participants describe what they learned.

Once everyone has had an opportunity to experience these two events we will gather as one group for the most important activity of all, the preparation of the evening feast. Groups will be allocated food with a few suggested recipes but what and how they choose to prepare this meal is entirely up to them.

Preparing and sharing food, one of the most basic expressions of building community, will be the vehicle for sharing time, conversation, laughter while participants apply in another format the same skills of teamwork, planning and communication they experienced throughout the day. Please pass the word along about this workshop. It is our intention to create this workshop so that everything, minus the 34 ft

Voyager Canoe can be replicated back in the home clubs and counties of the participants.

This Leader workshop is intended for adult and youth leaders to participate side by side. Priority during registration will be given to county's that send both a adult and youth delegate.

Logistics

Cost is \$20.00.

Dorm housing is available and ranges from 13.50 nt/single to \$25.00 nt/double

Deadline for registration is May 15th. To register call Ian Meeker at the UW Extension Office in Washburn, WI, 715-373-6104 or e-mail ian.meeker@ces.uwex.edu.

More Fun With Learning Activities

Karen Sipple, Clark County, led this activity called Flip Flop where our colleagues got really close. Thank heaven for deodorant and mouth wash!





2000-2001 WAE4-HYDP Board of Directors

Fast Fact

WAE4-HYPD works in conjunction with the University of Wisconsin-Extension – an EEO/Affirmative Action employer. WAE4-HYPD provides equal opportunities in programming, including Title IX and ADA requirements.

Please call (920) 388-7185 to make requests for equal access to the materials within.

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