



# iowa 4-H volunteer

belonging...mastery...independence...generosity



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## Note

from Chuck Morris



Iowa State University Extension is in transition as restructuring progresses and staff roles change to support the new system. Throughout this transition, 4-H's commitment to youth, families, and volunteers will not change. 4-H will continue to focus on extraordinary learning experiences and capacity building for positive youth development.

4-H is committed to providing a high quality youth program that offers opportunities for youth to develop skills they can use now and throughout their lives. Families are encouraged to be active participants in the 4-H experience.

The need for committed, skilled, trained volunteers is more crucial than ever. As 4-H moves forward through the transition, we believe that our strong volunteer base will be the foundation to help 4-H maintain its promises to youth and their parents.

In this newsletter you will read about how important family involvement is to 4-H members and their experience, some tips to involve families, and an idea from Clinton County on how to involve the whole county 4-H "family" in a 4-H Fire Up.

You also will read our 4-H Promise to Kids and 4-H Promise to Parents. I encourage you to use these as your

( Story continued on page 6 )



In 4-H, adults share talents, skills, and quality time with youth.

### The 4-H Promise to Parents Participating in 4-H provides your child with

1. a fun place to make new friends
2. choices
3. great trips and events to attend at the local, county, regional, state, and national level
4. a safe place to learn and do new things
5. educational opportunities that develop skills to use now and in the future
6. a safe place to learn and practice leadership, citizenship, and communication skills
7. opportunities to give back to the community through service
8. scholarship opportunities
9. high quality, trained, caring volunteers and staff
10. opportunities to engage the whole family in learning and fun

### The 4-H Promise to Kids Participating in 4-H provides you with

1. fun
2. friends
3. choices
4. great trips and events
5. a safe place to learn and do new things
6. leadership, citizenship, and communication skills
7. service opportunities
8. scholarship opportunities
9. adults who care about you
10. MORE FUN

4H 3028 August 2009

## 6

## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN 4-H

1. Volunteering
2. Parenting
3. Communicating
4. Supporting home learning
5. Decision making
6. Community involvement



4-H families teach youth skills.



Dallas County Clover Kids observe an experiment.



4-H families participate in a potluck meal.

### How Are Families Involved in 4-H?

Families get involved in 4-H in many ways. They attend meetings, bring snacks, help with fund-raising, serve as chaperones, teach skills—and so much more. No matter what form family involvement takes, it's important to youth and improves their 4-H experience.

#### Try Six Ways to Involve Families in 4-H

1. **Volunteering.** Parents or grandparents may serve as chaperones on field trips, help with group communication, or teach a skill for a project workshop.
2. **Parenting.** Families establish age-appropriate expectations for youth and talk with youth about their interests and activities.
3. **Communicating.** Families read the 4-H newsletter together, review record-keeping skills, and ask questions about 4-H experiences and events.
4. **Supporting home learning.** Caring adults discuss project work with youth and may help youth practice their 4-H presentations.
5. **Decision making.** Adults may serve on a 4-H advisory committee, a county extension council, or serve as a committee guide.
6. **Community involvement.** Families link to community resources, such as fine arts, organizations, or government agencies; and encourage participation in community service.

#### Follow Best Practices to Encourage Family Involvement

- Meet and greet families and youth.
- Share something about yourself, such as hobbies, interests, or background.
- Get to know the family. Learn the names of family members and other special people in their lives. Get to know their interests, talents, and skills.
- Show concern for youth and their families. Reach out to all families, not just those who are already involved. Show appreciation for family participation.



Youth and adults learn together at a small engines workshop.

## Always 4-H for the O'Rourke Family

By Maggie O'Rourke,  
Penn Prize Winners,  
Madison County

My family got involved in local and state level 4-H programs as soon as my daughters Klaire and Katera were old enough to sign up and enroll. Actually, that's not quite accurate. 4-H started way before then for me.

I grew up in eastern Iowa on a large livestock farm and started in 4-H as the youngest of five daughters, all showing 4-H beef cattle at the Iowa County Fair in Marengo. It was truly a family affair then with my siblings and parents. Many great memories and lessons came from that early experience.

The 4-H program has been a great way for our family to spend time together. My daughters were very involved with the Penn Prize Winners 4-H Club and served in many leadership positions. Both girls showed horses and 4-H calves

and completed many static projects throughout their years in 4-H. My husband, Tom, was always behind the scenes, assisting with any projects and helping out wherever he was needed. The girls commented that their dad may not have been a horse enthusiast or grown up with 4-H, but he was always there to help and watch them compete.

I volunteered as a project leader for many years, and Tom always assisted with woodworking projects that were fundraisers for our local clubs. Klaire was a state 4-H council member during her last years in high school and served as a House of Representatives page during her junior year, using the skills she learned from leading and serving in 4-H.

When it came time to head to college, Klaire and Katera wanted to stay involved with 4-H. Both girls were members of Collegiate 4-H at Iowa State University and currently serve as youth members of the State 4-H Equine Advisory Committee, which assists with planning and volunteering at the

State Fair 4-H Horse Show every year. In addition, they both are certified Iowa 4-H and Open Horse Show judges.

Klaire graduated from ISU with a major in agriculture business and works for Channel-Bio, a Monsanto company. Katera graduated this spring from ISU with a degree in accounting and will begin studying for the CPA exam.

I still serve as the superintendent for the yearly Iowa State Fair 4-H Horse Show, and our family continues to support Katera as she shows American Saddlebred horses around the state.

All the blessings and benefits of growing up with 4-H are too numerous to mention in this short article. Our family truly appreciates the opportunities and values that the Iowa 4-H program has provided.

## Volunteers: Blog All about It

Participate in the Iowa 4-H Volunteer Blog at [blogs.extension.iastate.edu/Iowa4Hvolunteer](https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/Iowa4Hvolunteer). Stay up to date and give us your feedback.



## Clinton County 'Fires Up' with a Countywide 4-H Meeting

By Jacki Luckstead, 4-H Youth Development Specialist

**Question:** What's a good way to energize 4-H members, introduce county council members, and model a 4-H meeting with all its parts — pre-meeting activities, introduction, short

business meeting time, and recreation following the meeting?

**Answer:** Have a countywide 4-H "Fire Up" meeting!

On Nov. 2, 2008, almost 200 Clinton County 4-H members, leaders, friends, and family members came to the Fire Up meeting, in the beef arena on the Clinton County Fairgrounds. Posters with 4-H club names were on display, to help members find and join their club for the meeting.

### Here's what we did.

- During pre-meeting activities, 4-H'ers conducted working exhibits and made snack mixes.
- 4-H members, leaders, and parents were asked to write "Why I Like 4-H" statements. They were told that their statements may be used in media releases.
- County council members led the Pledge of Allegiance. They introduced themselves and their 4-H clubs, who cheered for them.
- Roll call was a club chant. Clubs made up chants about their club or about 4-H.
- Clubs had 30 minutes for individual club business meetings.
- County announcements brought the meeting back together.
- 4-H teams participated in Club Olympics after the meeting.

When the meeting was over, many people said, "Do this again!" It was an exciting way to start the 4-H year. I hope that other counties will have a 4-H Fire Up meeting.

## Marshall County 4-H'ers Talk about Family and 4-H

Mark Pfantz, Central Iowa 4-H, tenth grade

Mom and dad had been in 4-H when they were young, so the three of us just naturally followed in their footsteps. My oldest brother started our sheep flock and all the perennial gardens on our farm. I like hogs and sheep, and my sister had tons of different projects. Besides her animals, she completed things like sewing a huge horse blanket for her Tennessee Walker and making stress balls with balloons and flour.

Being in 4-H and doing projects is a lot of hard work and takes up a lot of time, but our family has always helped each other out, and in the end completed lots of cool projects, shared a lot of laughs, and created memories that will last forever.

Lori Roseland, Gilman Rustlers, eighth grade

My family has always encouraged me to be involved in 4-H. We live on a hog farm, so my father takes a lot of time to teach me about caring for my swine projects and how to train them for the fair. My brother and I have learned a lot about responsibility through caring for our pigs. We also have other animals that we show at our county fair, like goats. My father teaches us about milking the goats and how to keep them healthy. My mother is always there to help with the paperwork as well as be a 4-H leader. 4-H is the one activity that involves the whole family, which provides us with many opportunities to spend quality time together. I also love camping at the fair and being able to spend time with friends there.

Calvin Halverson, Timber Creek Champs, eighth grade

My dad is really cool and awesome! He is a livestock specialist and serves on the Iowa State University Extension council. He takes me to the 4-H meetings every month and usually stays with me. My dad teaches me to wear my 4-H shirt to every meeting and for

all 4-H activities, like when we helped at the Pizza Ranch to raise money for the 4-H ribbon auction. He helps me with my presentations and he always helps me at the fair.

He was in 4-H and he is providing me the opportunity to learn the things he learned, like taking care of livestock. He also helps all the other kids in 4-H in other counties that he works for. He can get so busy, but he tries to make time for me. Sometimes, my mom helps me too. Someday I want to be just like my dad!

## 2010 State Volunteer Retreat Is Feb. 26-27

Plan to attend the 2010 State Volunteer Retreat at the DMACC Ankeny campus Feb. 26-27, 2010. The retreat brings together 4-H volunteers, staff, parents, and intermediate and senior 4-H members to network and learn about innovative programs that help bring fresh perspectives and activities to Iowa 4-H programs.

On Friday evening enjoy networking, fellowship, and hands-on activities. Workshops and more networking fill the day Saturday. A wide variety of workshops will meet the needs of both new and experienced volunteers, staff, and 4-H members.

Registration materials will be ready in mid November. Watch your county newsletter and the 4-H Web site ([www.extension.iastate.edu/4H/volunteers/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4H/volunteers/)) for more information.

## Plan to Attend North Central Region Volunteer Forum

Nebraska will host the 2009 North Central Region Volunteer Forum Oct. 1-4, 2009, in Lincoln. The Volunteer Forum is an opportunity for adult and youth 4-H volunteers and extension staff to gain knowledge and teaching skills that they can share with their volunteers and youth back home. A variety of workshops will be available as well as educational tours, speakers, and

networking opportunities. Additional information is available at [4h.unl.edu/volunteers/forum.htm](http://4h.unl.edu/volunteers/forum.htm).

### How Has Your 4-H Volunteer Experience Influenced Your Life?

We often hear about how volunteers influence the lives of 4-H'ers, but did you ever think about how being a 4-H volunteer influences your life? If someone asked you that question, how would you respond?

Below are some answers from Iowa 4-H volunteers who participated in the North Central Region's volunteer impact study in 2008.

*"It has given me the chance to make many friends and meet some really neat and talented young people, and encourages me to keep giving back to my community."*

*"I have met people I would not have met otherwise. It has given me such a good feeling, watching children grow and mature. It is awesome to watch a shy child gain self-confidence."*

*"It enhanced my appreciation for what children can do if encouraged. It was a very fulfilling volunteer experience that helped me to be more organized, goal oriented, and focused in my actual job."*

*"It has made me see the value in helping young people be all they can be and how they can benefit from being in 4-H by gaining life-long skills."*

*"I have looked at life with different eyes since becoming a volunteer. I have given to those who want to learn what life has given me. I enjoy sharing my experiences with others."*

*"I have become more aware of the leadership roles our young people are qualified to assume and my life has been enriched by the opportunities presented to youth in 4-H."*

*"My volunteer experience has helped me both professionally and with my family. I seem to look at kids in a different light and try to encourage all to be the best that they can be."*

*"I feel a great sense of excitement and pride when youth accomplish something they never thought they could do. It is wonderful to see kids work through a project and feel proud of what they can do. This keeps me volunteering in school and church, as well as the 4-H program. I believe youth can be encouraged to do great things."*

*"I have gained many professional and personal contacts and friendships through my 4-H experiences. I promote leadership development and communication skills in my classroom at school as well."*

*"It has given me insight into the lives of young people, and every time I work with these young people, I'm inspired by what they can accomplish. They renew my spirit."*

*"Working with kids keeps my mind nimble and curious."*

*"I have received many new friends/families and made contacts with other organizations with 4-H club members volunteering in the community. I have learned respect for other leaders, and the knowledge they have shared with me. I have seen club members succeed in school and their careers. My life is full helping members and teaching skills."*

*"[4-H] made me more aware of how many people are needed to encourage and guide our youth in a positive direction."*

*"I have learned just as much from the kids as I feel that I teach the kids."*

*"It has grounded me and taught me values to live my life by."*

*"My intimidation of working with youth was eliminated. I realized I had knowledge to give about things I never considered before."*

*"I am amazed at the goal setting, steps for working toward those goals, and leadership skills needed as a leader that apply to my work, parenting, and other organizations I work with. Truly, 4-H teaches life-long skills."*

*"[4-H has] enabled me to teach, be a role model, and provide service to my community in one volunteer activity. I was new to the community and looked for a way to get to know my new community. 4-H was familiar so that is where I started."*

### Monsanto and National 4-H Council Support Volunteers

Monsanto and National 4-H Council are continuing their partnership to support 4-H volunteer training. Iowa 4-H received a \$2,000 grant to support the fall 2009 statewide 4-H volunteer training "Supporting Family Involvement: Best Practices for 4-H."

Iowa 4-H requires 4-H volunteers identified as organizational or project leaders to attend training twice per year—in the spring and fall. To accommodate busy volunteers and their schedules, the training is offered face-to-face, via DVD, or online. Monsanto funding will support development of training materials, including print materials, production of the DVD, and IT support for development of the online training. Iowa 4-H appreciates the continued support of Monsanto and National 4-H Council.



**(Notes from Chuck Morris  
story continued from cover)**

program recruits new members and retains current members.

And finally, you will read some wonderful quotes from volunteers as they reflect on how their 4-H experiences have influenced their lives.

There are changes ahead, but together all of us—4-H members, families, volunteers, supporters, and staff—will work together to meet the challenges and continue to provide a high quality, positive youth development program for Iowa's youth.

**... and justice for all**

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## 4-H Calendar at a Glance

### Sept. 15, 2009

- Final deadline for North Central Region Volunteer Forum, Lincoln, Nebraska; [4h.unl.edu/volunteers/forum.htm](http://4h.unl.edu/volunteers/forum.htm)

### Oct. 1–4, 2009

- North Central Region Volunteer Forum, Lincoln, Nebraska

### Nov. 15, 2009

- 2009 Pioneer Grant reports due in ISU Extension county office

### Dec. 1, 2009

- 2010 Pioneer Grant applications due in ISU Extension county office

### Feb. 5, 2010

- Early Bird deadline for State Volunteer Retreat

### Feb. 12, 2010

- Regular deadline for State Volunteer Retreat

### Feb. 26–27, 2010

- State Volunteer Retreat, DMACC Ankeny Campus

The Iowa 4-H Center always needs volunteers with all sorts of talents. Call (515) 795-3338.



### Online Volunteer Training Now Available

If your county's 4-H Volunteer Training dates do not fit with your schedule, try the 4-H Volunteer Online Training!

Go to <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4hvolunteers> for the Fall 2008 training. Check out this new opportunity even if you've gone to your county's face to face training.

**Take your first online adventure!**

## Check It Out – The 4-H Web Site Is Getting a New Look



### Iowa 4-H Growing and Learning Together.

That's the theme for our new and improved Web site, where you'll find news and information for kids, teens, parents, and volunteers. We're beta testing this fall and will unveil the new look in October.

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4H>