

D's Notes

Aug 8, 2016

I would like to thank all those who volunteered and supported 4-H throughout the year and during the fair to create a positive experience for our youth. Kansas State Extension Director, Daryl Buchholz sums it up very nicely in the following article.

Fairs and Positive 4-H Experiences

We have entered into county fair season and the time when much of the focus of the public is on those sights and sounds, including 4-H.

I've had the good fortune through my experiences to gain perceptions of 4-H that are vastly different from my perceptions of years earlier. I've come to understand how 4-H is both an organization AND a program. I have a greater appreciation for impacts that a 4-H experience has on persons, young and old. I know that the 4-H organization can operate vastly different across the U.S. And, I've come to appreciate the different forms of 4-H experiences and the influence such experiences have on expressions of positive youth development, citizenship, leadership, and life skills development among those involved.

The public has an appreciation for the tradition and history of 4-H club work that gets media publicity primarily at fair time. Beyond that, the 4-H program and broader learning experiences are much, much less known and understood. If you agree with that, how can we gain greater participation of youth and volunteers in the broader 4-H club experiences? It's great that our 4-H youth get such great exposure for their projects and accomplishments, yet I believe the message leaves some of our potential advocates woefully short of understanding how the 4-H experiences foster development of all the positive outcomes for the youth involved.

I congratulate all the professional faculty and staff, the dedicated parents and volunteers, and all who provide the educational programs and projects behind the 4-H organization. I applaud those who provide the learning experiences that encourage and assist young people in experiencing the elements of leadership, community service, caring for others, and contributing to the social infrastructure, in addition to perfecting a project to take to the fair.

The outcomes of 4-H are so much more than the purple ribbons at the fair, or other experiences that recognize a winner. The best part is that those young people who may never experience being a winner, will still reap the benefit of having belonged and experienced positive youth development. For in the [Essential Elements of 4-H](#), tried and proven to create those positive outcomes for youth, no where does it say that winning is necessary to gain those positive outcomes.

Thanks for all you do to keep the focus of our educational work on the youth and volunteers, and seeing that the 4-H club experience is designed in such a way to give EVERY youth in Kansas an opportunity to benefit by becoming involved.

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If you are planning to enter the Kansas State Fair, pre-entries are due before August 15.

If you have any questions, call Hodgeman County Extension Office at 620-357-8321.