



THE POWER OF 4-H “102nd YEAR - 1902 - 2004”

4-H youth programs are operated locally through a partnership among local and county governments, Michigan State University Extension and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Head - 4-H promotes kids and adults thinking and learning together.

Heart - 4-H fosters caring, important relationships.

Hands - 4-H focus is hands-on-learning.

Health - 4-H activities promote a healthy balance of obligations to school and community and kids learn to make healthy lifestyle choices.

GENEVA WRENS 4-H CLUB “4 - H - TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER”

Geneva Wrens 4-H Club was formed in 1949 by families of Don Gould, Fred Riemer, Beatrice Funk. First meetings were held at the Geneva Center School and Don Gould home. As the club grew the meeting place was changed to the Geneva Township Hall, which is still used today for the club and project meetings. There were about 30 members in the 1949 era with all the local farm families participating. Today average enrollment tops some 150 members, with 42 volunteer project leaders and some 55 projects offered locally. Geneva Wrens 4-H Club is one of some 20 Van Buren County 4-H Clubs.

Parents are encouraged to get involved with their kids in 4-H activities, BUT you don't have to become a 4-H volunteer when your children join 4-H. An exciting benefit of 4-H is the opportunity for total family involvement.

In **2003** the Geneva Wrens 4-H Club saw 11 members graduate from High School and these young people are now enrolled in college or trade schools where they are furthering their education. Many of these are still active, as time permits, in this 4-H Club and in 4-H activities in their furthering education. Members that have reached the age of 20 have now gone through the Leader application process and are leading projects within the 4-H program.

We are fortunate that we are keeping our teen-age members active and working to further the 4-H program through many Community Service Projects that they have initiated themselves and involved other members. Geneva Wrens has a member recognized “2004 Outstanding 4-H'er”, representing 4-H and Geneva Wrens in many upcoming events during 2004. Geneva Wren's 4-H'ers are “great” role models for kids and adults. Many of our members continue to excel, locally, regionally, state wide and nationally in some of our offered project areas.

4-H is a most rewarding program for all of the members and leaders involved and new ideas continue to arise through imaginative minds and ideas. 4-H'ers are enthusiastic, in learning, sharing, and building their own character. They learn life long skills in leadership, stewardship, community involvement, home and family living, and become the Leaders of tomorrow.

It's a powerful thing, when kids team up with adults to learn new skills, improve their communities, explore the wonders of today's world, prepare for tomorrow's opportunities and have fun.

4-H brings people together for the fun of learning by doing, sharing and working toward common goals, and helping kids take leadership for their lives and the decisions they make.

4-H is when boys and girls develop into responsible, caring citizens. It's where families can experience hands-on activities in many interest areas. It's where people can expand their horizons.

4-H is where kids and adults come together and share and expand their talents and interests.

Michigan 4-H History:

Michigan **4-H** can be tracked to a South Haven man, Liberty Hyde Bailey (1858-1954) who studied Botany and Horticulture at what is now Michigan State University. Bailey was an advocate of teaching youth practical skills by "hands on" experience. **4-H** philosophy of "Learn by Doing" came from Bailey and he served on National Committee which established the Cooperative Extension Service through Smith-Llever Act of 1914. Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum, 903 S. Bailey, South Haven.

4-H Clubs began forming in Michigan in 1908 with agricultural. Now **4-H** clubs exist in Michigan rural and urban areas. Michigan boast 200,000 youth, 30,000 volunteer leaders and over 150 project areas in all 83 counties. Nationally, **4-H** your programs involve more than 5.4 million young people from all 50 states and many U.S. territories. Van Buren County, Michigan, as more than 1,000 youth enrolled in 21 clubs and 300 adult and teen volunteer leaders.

4-H offers fun, sharing and educational opportunities through local, state, national and international events. Older teen opportunities promote and develop leadership skills as **4-H** Volunteers sharing their skills with younger **4-H**'ers. Many opportunities abound for the teens with programs and scholarships which include Capitol Experience, 3 days at State Capitol, working with legislators; Citizenship Washington Focus, 7 days at Nation's capital interacting with legislature and **4-H** members from all over the nation; Exploration Days, 3 days at MI State University, exploring education and fun activities and opportunities to be recognized state wide through state awards program; National 4-H Congress - 1 week in Atlanta, Georgia, interacting with 4-H'ers from all over the world. There are numerous programs in addition to these available for all ages of members. Members that participate in these programs, tell others and encourage members to attend events.

4-H Leaders are **ALL VOLUNTEER**, and many opportunities abound for them also, through educational and fun workshops provided by MSU and Kettunen Center in Tustin, MI, as well as Kellogg Biological Station. These workshops are funded through local, county and state scholarships. Many short-term and long-term volunteer opportunities exist for adults. All **4-H** volunteers who have ongoing, unsupervised access to children aged 19 and under, go through the MSU Extension Child Well-being Volunteer Selection Process and upon completion YOU can decide your activities and time frame working around your family and job.

Join 4-H TODAY

4-H is open to everyone aged 5 to 19. 4-H is an equal opportunity organization.

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