

Cooperative Extension Centennial Celebration

Your Trusted Partner... Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

As Cooperative Extension marks 100 years of working for Wisconsin, the following is an excerpt from Cooperative Extension in Grant County – The First Forty Years by Wilfred Pierick, written in 1963.

4-H Club Work

From the standpoint of number of 4-H members, there was an "up and down" movement during the era covered in this particular chapter, but the general overall trend was upward. Membership rose from 649 in 1942 to 855 by 1950. The rise in number of 4-H clubs during this period of time was from 35 clubs to 44 clubs.

Adult leader numbers totaled 112 in 1950, double that of a decade ago. There were also sixty-nine 4-H junior leaders in the county as of that date.

Adult Leaders Organize—Recognition of a need for an adult leader's organization was first expressed by Extension agents in their reports as of 1945. Up to this time, there was no formal organization, and adult leaders had only an annual planning meeting at which to get together at one time, other than perhaps training meetings or a summer picnic.

So, in 1946, the Grant County 4-H Adult Leader's Association was organized under an official Constitution, with formal officers, and with plans for regular bi-monthly meetings. The first officers of the new association were Claire Jerrett, Lancaster, president; Mrs. C.O. Manue11, Platteville, vice-president; and Mrs. Leo Zenz, Lancaster, secretary-treasurer.

Banker's Sponsor Banquet—The Grant County Banker's Association, in the same year that the adult leaders organized, sponsored the annual county 4-H adult leader's banquet and recognition program for the first time. This event has been an annual affair to this day. The support

of the county bankers to the 4-H program through their sponsorship of this event has undoubtedly been of considerable effect in building up the adult leadership program in the county. It is one of the means by which the 4-H adult leader is made to realize their importance to the 4-H program and that their voluntary services are appreciated by both the Extension Service and by the people with whom they work.

Special Leadership Meetings—A "Leader's Workshop" was held at Platteville Teacher's College in 1946 for county 4-H leaders, agricultural leaders, and rural school teachers. One of the purposes of the workshop was to acquaint the rural school teachers of the county with 4-H club work. Emphasis was also put on leading games and teaching leaders how to organize demonstrations with club members. Recreation and music were the topics for a leader training event held in Lancaster this same year.

In the latter part of the forties it was the practice for Grant county to have about two adult leaders and four junior leaders at an annual State Leader's Conference, held in Madison.

The District Leadership Camp, the forerunner to the present day State 4-H Club Week, was attended in 1949 by twenty-four Grant county 4-H leaders and members, and in 1950 by thirty-two in all. The 1949 event was held in Madison and the 1950 camp at Lake Geneva.

Claire Jerrett, Lancaster; Mrs. George Johnson, Lancaster; Paul Rasque, Boscobel; and Esther Heil, Cuba City; all attended a State Leader's Training Camp held at Green Lake in 1949.

Four-H Newsletter—Regular newsletters to 4-H members, leaders, and families were first published by Wally Voskuil in Grant county. The name "4-H Echo" was given to this publication following a 1944 contest held for the express purpose of finding a name for it. Winner of the contest—the person submitting the name "4-H Echo", was Theodore Griswold of Livingston.

Health Activities--During this period of time, health received almost annual emphasis in the county 4-H program. The County Nurse's Office, the County Medical Association, and the County Dental Association cooperated in various ways with this program in different years. Among these were assisting with planning the county 4-H health program for a particular year, sponsoring contests, offering awards, and assisting with the judging of county 4-H health contests.

Emphasis in a particular year varied from dental health to chest X-rays or from quality milk and fly control to improvement of personal health habits.

The Franklin Livewires 4-H club of Platteville was winner of a county 4-H club health contest in 1947 and were the recipients of a two-day educational trip to Madison. Second place went to St. Andrew's 4-H club of Tennyson and third place to the Hurricane Hustler's club of Lancaster.

Individual county health winners in 1943 were Glen Egan and Mildred Gilbertson; in 1944, Lloyd Nelson and Helen Egan; and in 1945, Carol Butson and Leonard Fuerstenberg.

Donna Mathews, Mt. Hope, Cardinal 4-H club, and John Edge, Jr., Franklin Livewires, Platteville, won a trip to State Fair in 1947 for their individual 4-H health improvement programs. In 1949 and 1950, the individual health winners were awarded trips to a State Health Camp. Nineteen-forty-nine winners were John Thornton, Bagley, and Charlotte Edge, Platteville. Dorothy Reed, Lancaster, and Mervin Jentz, Platteville, were the 1950 winners. It appears that these trips to the State Health Camp were sponsored by the County Medical Society. At least this was true of the 1950 trip, according to records.