

Volunteering In The Panhandle

Solutions Through Helping!

Provided By Your 4-H Extension Agents in Northwest Florida

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Welcome to Volunteering In The Panhandle!

Letter From The Editor



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The summer is almost over, and I tend to think of this as the time of year that I am about to “get a break”, but we all know that isn’t true. In fact, with the current 4-H year coming to a close, and the dawn of a new one on the horizon, we have a lot to look back on and a lot to look forward to. Riddled with meetings, newsletters, flyers, events, and fair time activities we are looking at our busiest time of year yet!

That’s why in this issue we are looking at the experiences and coping strategies of local agents that will help us keep our lives in perspective, and learn to do what we can, not what we think we can!

Included are success stories, comical anecdotes about where we find ourselves when we’ve been stretched too far, and of course, the life saving techniques that, if we

will employ, they will make all the difference in the world!

In closing, I beg you to enjoy these last few weeks of summer. Take the time to enjoy the moment, for the time draws near that will *have* to reflect and project! Relax, do something for yourself and your family, and don’t be afraid to say “I’m sorry. I don’t have time for that”.

As always, thank you for your commitment and dedication “*To Making The Best Better*”.

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Affirmative Action Basics for Florida 4-H Volunteers



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Affirmative Action- we've all heard that term, but what does it mean and what does it have to do with 4-H? The term affirmative action was first used in 1961 when JFK signed the Federal Civil Rights Law, requiring all arms of the Federal government to be equal opportunity employers.

Affirmative action is taking positive and proactive steps to insure access and availability to all persons without regard to race, gender, nationality, ethnicity, creed, or disability. Unfortunately, 4-H has a history of discriminating against minorities, so it is important that we take extra steps to make sure our program is available to everyone, no matter what the color of their skin.

Each April, 4-H agents must submit an affirmative action report to the state 4-H office. This report is then forwarded to USDA. The report lists the racial make-up of each club in the county, as well as the ethnic make-up of the community that club serves. Any club whose membership does not match the ethnic membership of its community must take extra steps, called "All Reasonable Efforts." Most agents will work with the club leader to document that these steps have been taken. We are required to do all of the three following steps:

1. Use mass media to inform the public about the club and how to join
2. Send personal letters to minorities who could be potential members of the club, inviting them to participate and join
3. Make personal visits or calls to minorities who could be potential members of the club, inviting them to participate and join

This may seem like an overwhelming task, but your 4-H agent can help you plan an "All Reasonable Efforts" campaign to meet these requirements. Look for more articles in the future about working with minority audiences to help you recruit minority members for your club!

Health Before Hands Except After Heart?



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As to the age old question of the chicken before the egg or vice versa, I found myself wondering a similar question as I was lying awake at 2:30 AM awaiting the start of the day at the Camp Ocala State Archery Match this past weekend. My mind wandered aimlessly as the medications for my bronchitis was continuously clouding my mind. Did I pack everything that the kids need? Did I read the rules carefully? Do the kids understand what they are supposed to do? Are they being too rowdy and keeping the male chaperones up? Are

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they going to get enough sleep? Are my volunteers okay? Did I warn them enough that this would be a long, difficult trip to the match? This thought process occurred for



more than an hour as I finally realized that I was doing my 4-Hers, volunteers, and myself much more harm than good. I never questioned the fact that maybe I should not be at the

match because of the Dr.'s threat to a hospital stay just days before. More importantly, I never thought twice about the time and energy that I and my volunteers have given tirelessly in preparing for events such as this.

Then, like a ton of bricks on my already heavy chest, a thought occurred, "As the 4-H Agent, I should be setting a better example between being organized versus Type A controlling and cranky due to sickness". If I am hired to teach youth about Head, Heart, Hands, and Health then what conflicting messages am I sending at this very moment? Shallow breathing, crankiness and not putting my own health first? Missing the Heart in this great opportunity and fellowship with my kids because I was ill, stubborn, and cranky? How is that the 4-H way? My Heart is always in the game. But where is my Health and why did I decide to put it last?

Still considered one of the newer agents by most individuals in our organization, I realize too often how much I still need to learn about making this "4-H Agent's best better". The "balance of life" conversations that come up between the experienced and new agents still haunt me on a regular basis. Balancing Head, Heart, Hands, and Health must start at the agent's level before the lesson can travel any further. I know better, don't I? Some days, yes. Some days, obviously not.

Fortunately, this past weekend was a great learning lesson for all of my crew. My 4-Hers had a wonderful time, showed good sportsmanship, visited a new 4-H camp setting, and enjoyed demonstrating their archery skills. Best of all, the lesson I learned has helped me put my 4-H perspective back in alignment. When guilt or disappointment starts to creep up on you because of Health and you might miss an event or two, remember to focus on the 4 "H"s and the Heart of your fabulous volunteers. There should be no worry when you need to take a back seat and let your trained and dedicated volunteers help you through the day!

Clocks and Calendars – Keeping Up With What Matters Most



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As a new agent, I have been inundated with so many requests for events, meetings and phone calls that I have often found it overwhelming to keep up. I have devised a few techniques for keeping up with the dates for things so that I don't forget and I also have been able to track important people and events through the effective use of a calendar and a phone log*. My rules of thumb are easy: first, keep only one calendar. I use a format that allows for 15 minute increment times and the entire week



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is visible at one time. This way, I can leave it on my desk open to the current week. I can easily glance at the week and determine if I have an event coming up to plan for or one to attend. I also print important emails and attach reminder cards to the actual day so that I have the pertinent contact information in the same place as my appointment. This has saved me time and effort when I was on my way to an event and needed to call at the last minute to confirm directions or say I was on my way.

My other invaluable tool that never leaves my desk is my phone log. I record every call that I make or that comes in to the office so that I have a record of who I have spoken to. I refer to the phone numbers given and leave myself space for notes about the call to refresh my memory about a discussion that I have had with a volunteer. Again, the ability to effectively track my calls, the content of the conversation and have the number in a single space is a sanity and time saver.

So why do I share this with you? Because, as you all know Extension Volunteers are required to keep up with their volunteer hours. I know that this must be an aggravation for those of us who are less organized, and even for those of us who are. If you have a phone log and a good calendar, then you will be better able to log your volunteer hours correctly and report ALL of that valuable time that we so greatly appreciate!

*For a copy of my phone log, please feel free to call or e-mail me!



Managing 4-H Volunteers – How To Keep Our Help!



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Why do adults volunteer for 4-H? There are a variety of reasons, ranging from the opportunity to help their family, learn new skills, help the community, meet new people, develop leadership skills, community recognition, utilize their own skills and knowledge, and/or to learn more about community efforts and activities. So, as current volunteers it is beneficial to have a plan in place to recruit, train, and retain these needed volunteers. Not to replace us, but to aid us.

4-H has provided us with this plan. Allow me to introduce some of you, and re-introduce others of you to the ISOTURE model. We must Identify, Select, Orient, Train, Utilize, Recognize, and Evaluate ALL volunteers. Here's a brief description of how to use the model.

Identify - We must identify the volunteer based on a good fit for the volunteer and the program/project. It is necessary to create a job description at this time.



Selection – Volunteers must be recruited, screened, and placed in the appropriate position. This will require them completing an application, background checks, a personal interview with the volunteer, and

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then an appropriate placement. (Agents should and WILL help you with this step!)
Orientation – We must portray the true expectations we have for the volunteer. Orient him/her on the organization of 4-H and the specific program goals.

Training – It is absolutely necessary that we provide continual training to our volunteers. We must set up a regular training schedule (monthly, quarterly, etc.) that are both project and program specific, so all of the needs are met.

Utilization – We need to utilize the volunteers based on the skills they have and develop throughout this process. Program support and training is necessary and we must move them through the volunteer process, so they do not become stagnant or bored.

Recognition – An absolute necessity is to recognize the volunteers for their achievements.



This may occur formally (appreciation banquet) or non-formally (face to face thank you), but they must be shown or told they are appreciated for long term retention.

Evaluation – For volunteers to be successful, we must evaluate the volunteers regularly. This will require good communication, an open door relationship, and feedback to and from the volunteer. Formal evaluations may be done annually or biannually; if appropriate. This step will help the agent handle problems immediately before they become unmanageable.

It is important to remember that you are not in this alone. You should never try to follow

this process without the help and knowledge of your local 4-H agent. However, agents are busy, and knowing the process can help you help us stay on track and get you more volunteer help!

Do You Know What Your Kids Are Saying?



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Franklin County Extension Director

I recently read several articles about what parents need to know when it comes to understanding the abbreviations/codes commonly being used today to communicate by texting, Instant Messenger, chat rooms and emails. As the parent of an 11 and 16-year old, I was shocked by what was considered standard, popular, text terms, or acronyms. Many of which I didn't have a clue about what they meant.

As we move farther and farther into the age of technology we are asked to change the ways we communicate with youth and parents in our roles as volunteers. So, I decided that I would pass on to you some of the "cleaner" abbreviations and acronyms that are considered common. A number of these codes have sexual meanings, so I'm avoiding them and giving you some resources to check if you'd like more information. Hopefully after you read these you won't feel as clueless as I did when I read them. Hopefully this knowledge will help us to communicate more effectively



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and carefully when we may be out of our element!

The following is a partial list of the top 50 Internet acronyms parents need to know.

Note: I did not include any of the vulgar or sexually explicit ones. So you will have to look them up yourself.

- 1337 – Elite
- 143 – I love you
- 182 – I hate you
- ADR – Address
- IAYM – I Am Your Master
- KFY or K4Y – Kiss For You
- KPC – Keeping Parents Clueless
- LMIRL – Let’s Meet In Real Life
- MorF – Male or Female
- MOS – Mom Over Shoulder
- P911 – Parent Alert
- PAL – Parents Ate Listening
- PAW – Parents Are Watching

Here are some of the 50 most popular text terms. I thought it was interesting that these terms are much ‘cleaner’ and far less sexual.

- 2moro – Tomorrow
- 2nite – Tonight
- BRB – Be Right Back
- B4N – Bye For Now
- DBEYR – Don’t Believe Everything You Read
- FWIW – For What It’s Worth
- GR8 – Great
- ILY – I Love You
- ISO – In Search Of
- J/K – Just Kidding
- L8R - Later
- LOL – Laugh Out Loud
- NP – No Problem
- OIC – Oh I See
- OT – Off Topic

- THX or TX or THKS – Thanks
- SITD – Still In The Dark
- TTYL – Talk To You Later, or Type To You Later
- TYVM – Thank You Very Much
- VBG – Very Big Grin
- WYWH – Wish You Were Here

Of course there are many more abbreviations/acronyms out there being used. So if you found yourself as clueless as I was, here are some Internet sites to visit for additional information on “terms” kids are using to communicate with one another in the electronic world.

The Top 50 Internet Acronyms Parents Need to Know:

<http://www.netlingo.com/top50/acronyms-for-parents.php>

The Top 50 Most popular Text Terms and IM Shorthand:

<http://www.netlingo.com/top50/popular-text-terms.php>

Internet Acronym Dictionary:

<http://www.garde.org/Acronyms/>

E-mail, Online Chat and Text Messaging Acronyms:

<http://www.sharpened.net/glossary/acronyms.php>



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Archery Keeps 4-Her's On Target



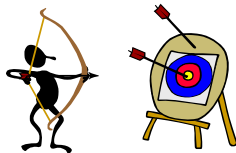
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Leon County 4-H Agent

Archery is perhaps one of the oldest means by which early settlers used to hunt to secure food for their families. They also used the bow and arrow to protect their home and families from potential intruders or wild animals. Today, archery while still being used as a method for hunting has grown into a favorite recreational sport enjoyed by youth and adults of all ages.

The Florida 4-H Shooting Sports Program offers archery as one of its disciplines with the goal of using the bow and arrow to teach youth Life Skills. Life skills are noted as being the competencies that assist youth and adults in functioning well in the environments in which they live. 4-H focuses on developing skills that are healthy and productive for youth and their communities.



How do archery and other shooting sports teach Life Skills? Research has shown youth that are or have been actively involved in a 4-H shooting sports program will learn:

1. Responsibility
2. Self Confidence
3. Discipline
4. Sportsmanship
5. Leadership
6. Team Work

7. Goal Setting
8. Decision Making
9. Listening skills
10. Problem Solving
11. Communication
12. Evaluation
13. Concentration/focus

Additional research done on the effects of active involvement in 4-H by youth indicates that the more internal assets and life skills youth build, the more likely they are to grow up healthy, confident, responsible, and will be less likely to be involved in risky behavior. Active participation in 4-H shooting sports helps Leon County youth develop their assets and Life Skills.



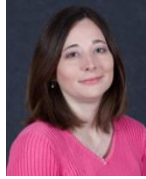
References: Targeting Life Skills, M. Norman and J. Jordan (2006)

Florida 4-H Shooting Sports, A. Fuller, J. Cullen, B. Hill. (2007)



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What Did You Do To Touch The Life Of A Child Today?



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You know the old saying, “It takes a village to raise a child?” Well, research shows this is true. Youth need to feel like they belong to the community. They need to have opportunities for long term consistent relationships with adults other than their parents. Seems like common sense, but it is something that our communities are sometimes lacking. A sense of belonging includes:

- Positive relationship with at least one caring adult,
- An inclusive environment,
- A safe environment.

Youth need to know they are cared about and accepted by others. They also need to experience a sense of physical and emotional safety and to feel a sense of connection to others in the group. Research also suggests that a sense of belonging may be the single most powerful positive ingredient we can add to the lives of children and youth.



So, what can you do to touch a child’s life? Give of your time and talents. Volunteer in youth programs such as 4-H. Show interest in youth that you know or meet. Genuinely get to know them and call them by name when you see them. Parents,

extended family, neighbors, teachers, community leaders, and other caring adults who spend time with youth can all provide positive, caring relationships and can help youth develop positively and avoid negative, risky behaviors. You can touch the lives of youth today just by the little things you do.

Introducing 4-H To The Navy Community



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Walton County 4-H Agent

Escambia County 4-H is pleased to announce that thirty one new 4-H volunteers

have joined our program from Pensacola Naval Air Station and Corry Naval Air Station. Team leaders from both bases completed



the 4-H 101 training at the Mayport Navy Air Station in Jacksonville. At this training the new 4-H volunteers completed action plans for their 4-H programs and events which will be held at the Youth Center at

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Pensacola NAS and the Child Development Center at Corry Field.

Following the training in Jacksonville the volunteer core team leaders



and 4-H agent, Kay Brown, taught volunteers and staff at each Navy Base the 4-H 101

curriculum to prepare them to implement the action plans developed at the state-wide training.

The action plans include organization of 4-H primary and project clubs, use of online enrollment for adult volunteers and youth.

Both sites will participate in a Healthy Lifestyles program using the Xtreme Cuisine curriculum from the Florida Department of Agriculture. Also, teams will incorporate the 4-H financial literacy programs which correspond with the “Navy Saves” project. They plan to contribute to the traditional 4-H program by participating in the Florida 4-H Centennial Celebration at the Langley Bell 4-H Center with clubs exhibits, club banners, and club booth.

Corry NAS will have a 4-H youth at the Escambia County Commissioner meeting for the presentation of a 4-H Centennial Proclamation. The Navy 4-H Clubs plan to participate in County 4-H Events and 4-H Day at the Capital.

The Navy 4-H Program plans to reach out to the community through 4-H events and activities and educate the community about military life. Other outreach plans for the community involve traditional 4-H club volunteers mentoring 4-H Navy club volunteers. There are plans for joint volunteer training, community service, intermediate and senior teen mentoring, and joint teen retreats and lock-ins at Pensacola

NAS Youth Center and Langley Bell 4-H Center. Corry NAS plans to host a Healthy Lifestyles volunteer and staff training in August. This is a great sharing of facilities and knowledge from the two 4-H volunteer groups.

According to NAS Pensacola Public Information Officer, Mr. White, there are approximately 2500 active duty personnel with families stationed at these bases. The Navy, like other branches of the military, is committed to providing quality child and youth programs for families. This is an important

support service because families are often far from their extended



families and must relocate many times during their tour of duty. 4-H is a perfect partner, the 4-H projects are easy to transport to their next duty assignment. The 4-H club environment provides a continuity and stability that can ease the transition for families.

Learn By Doing

Items of Interest, Calendar of Events, Training Opportunities & More

Chaperone Training

The Northwest District is planning two volunteer chaperone trainings in September. The training will last about four hours and is intended for agents and volunteers who will later train other volunteers in the chaperoning procedures of Florida 4-H. For more information on the training, dates, times, and locations please call your local extension office. Contact information is located in this newsletter.

Southern Region 4-H Volunteer Forum – 4-H Volunteers.....A Southern Tradition



The mission of the Southern Region 4-H Volunteer Forum (SRVF) is to increase the capacity of volunteers and salaried staff to contribute to the achievement of the mission of 4-H Youth Development and the Cooperative Extension system. This extraordinary weekend conference educates and prepares participants to share the information they learn and practice the skills they develop, through participating in the forum, at home in their own 4-H program and other activities. Participants benefit from the experiential learning activities that require them to discuss, use, and apply what they learn. The ultimate application is for individuals and teams to teach others. You are cordially invited

to join the 80-100 other Florida volunteers and staff as they migrate to Rock Eagle 4-H Center on October 1-4, 2009.

Come and join in a great learning experience! Conference registration is due August 15, 2009.

FUNDRAISING

WHAT'S INSIDE A PACKAGE OF PET TREATS?

Something for everyone in the 4-H Community! Inside each package of Best In Show Pet Treats for 4-H fundraising you'll find:

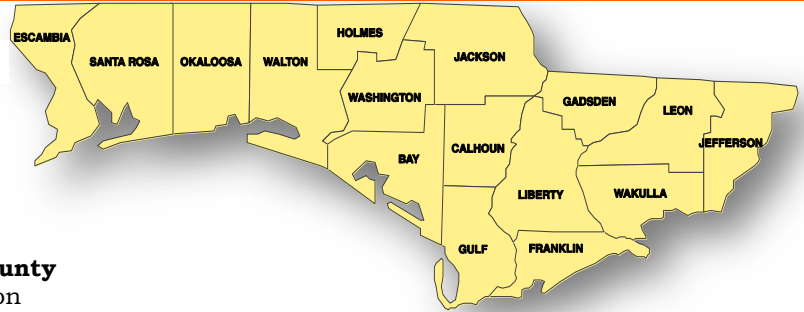
- 4-H Camp
- 4-H Curriculum
- 4-H Competitions
- 4-H Awards
- 4-H Community Service
- 4-H Stability and Growth

We are proud to be the Gold Sponsor of this year's Florida 4-H Congress. Please look for us there and plan on attending an important Informational Session on Tuesday morning. Make some history -- help develop a solution to funding challenges -- and choose to participate in Florida's first-ever statewide pet treat sale this fall. We look forward to meeting you at the 4-H Congress!

Visit: www.pettreats4youth.com

Learn By Doing

Items of Interest, Calendar of Events, Training Opportunities & More



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University of Florida IFAS Extension Volunteering In The Panhandle *Solutions Through Helping!*

*Information Provided By Your 4-H Extension Agents
In Northwest Florida*

