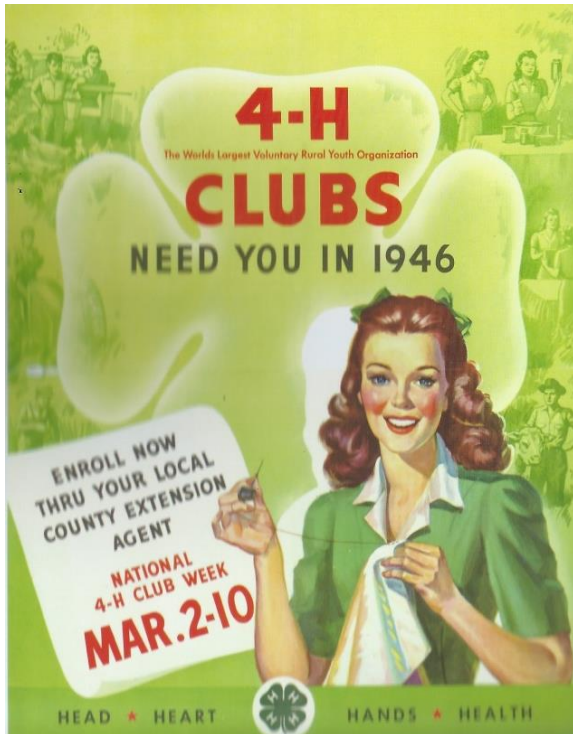




# National 4-H History Preservation Program

September, 2014 Newsletter  
Volume V Issue VIII

National 4-H Week, October 5-11, 2014



From 1946 through 1980 a new theme and new poster were introduced every year during National 4-H Week.

Why was it started? When and why did it change from spring to fall?

The Federal Extension Service at USDA developed a "4-H Mobilization Week" which was held annually in the spring from 1942 through 1945 as a means of recruiting 4-H members and focusing their activities to support the war with Victory Gardens, canning, increased crop production, scrap drives and sales of war bonds. This was a very successful campaign which significantly increased membership and helped tremendously with the war effort. In 1945 they looked back in their membership records and saw a similar member increase during World War I and a great drop in participation the following year. Not wanting to repeat that historical episode, they decided to turn their mobilization experience into a National 4-H Week in order to continue recruiting new members every year.

The answer to the second question is 1964.

According to a feature in the March 1964 National 4-H News by Fern Kelley, Assistant Director, 4-H, FES/USDA, considerable study and analyses were done before the change was made. That year, instead of being in March, National 4-H Week was held September 26 to October 3; in the future it was to be held the week in which October 1 occurred. In 1968 it was finally decided that it should be held in the first full week of October each year.

There seemed to be a number of good reasons for the change. In most states, the local recruitment and club reorganization period was in the fall. An increasing number of states were moving to fall enrollment and a fall date for National 4-H Club Week made sense. Local 4-H Club leaders were also calling attention to other problems they were having because so many different youth programs observed a promotion week during the spring. This was causing problems for clubs competing with other groups for window display areas or newspaper space in their re-enrollment drives. The fall dates also allowed for nationally prepared reports and statistics to be more timely or up-to-date than the spring date.

It must have been a good move as the fall date has held since 1964. This October we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> autumn National 4-H Week October 5-11.

**To make a contribution to the National 4-H History Preservation Program;** please go to <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com> to see your options, or mail a check payable to **National 4-H Council at:**

National 4-H History Preservation Program  
National 4-H Council  
c/o Wells Fargo Bank  
PO Box 75375  
Baltimore, MD 21275-5375

Please write **4-H History Preservation Program** on the memo line of your check.

## Contemporary 4-H History: History Website Supports 4-H National Youth Science Day

National Youth Science Day celebrates 4-H'ers across the nation taking part in a single-themed series of scientific experiments and tasks; this year it focuses on aerospace engineering. Taking place on October 8, the 4-H NYSD 2014 National Science Experiment will be "Rockets to the Rescue!" developed by the University of Arizona.

In support of the 2014 theme, the National 4-H History Preservation Program has researched and written a new segment on "Astronauts, Space and 4-H" for National 4-H History Preservation website <http://4-HistoryPreservation.com/History/Space/>.



The famous aviatrix Amelia Earhart (center left) was one of the major guests and handed out awards to delegates attending the 1932 National 4-H Club Congress.

The 4-H program's involvement with space can be traced from Amelia Earhart and Admiral Richard Byrd through astronauts Neil Armstrong, James Lovell, Ellison Onizuka, Jerry Ross and Peggy Whitson (a few of the NASA astronauts who were 4-H members); from a 4-H space television series with NASA – "Blue Sky Below My Feet" – to National Space Camp, National Youth Engineering Challenge events and now, 4-H National Youth Science Day. Space, indeed, is an important part of both 4-H history and 4-H today.

We would love to hear if and how you used 4-H History in space in your science day program this year at: [Info@4-HHistoryPreservation.com](mailto:Info@4-HHistoryPreservation.com).

With the 2015 theme, thousands of youth will focus on one scientific mission: feed a community plagued by natural disaster. Youth will be responsible for

building an aerodynamic food transportation device that can develop large amounts of food to disaster victims. While participants will learn STEM concepts like previous NYSD experiments in past years, they will also learn a powerful and valuable lesson in nutrition and how to help solve current, global issues such as providing relief services in the wake of natural disaster.

## National FilmFest 2014 Features 4-H History



National 4-H History Team's Tom Tate, left, presents second place "Voices of 4-H History" Category winners Eric Glaze and Ben Sanders of Ohio with their award at the 2014 FilmFest 4-H.

For the second year, the 2014 National 4-H film festival included a category "Voices of 4-H History" which was designed to encourage today's youth to capture the rich stories of 4-H history. The national 4-H History Team provides leadership in this effort each year, including monthly conference calls for youth and adults interested in learning more about this "Voices of 4-H History" activity. In addition, the History Team provides prize money for the winning "Voices" entries.

When we asked Kelsey Hibl, North Dakota 4-H exhibitor and FilmFest participant, about this experience she said, "The thing I took away from this was realizing the deep history of 4-H and how it really has affected people from across the country for generations and generations. It also surprised me how little 4-H has changed, but also how far 4-H has come with incorporating new technology and this generation's personality, even though it is still focused on the simple things such as being with friends and learning something new."

Second place winners Eric Glaze and Ben Sanders from Ohio said "We learned that while it may be possible to put all your footage into a film, that doesn't mean you have to or should. There was a lot of good content that we had recorded, but we had to

pick and choose the relevant and most interesting parts to put in the short film. The most challenging part was trying to take two and a half hours of video footage and cut it down to only five minutes of content.”

Five films from the “Voices of 4-H History” category were selected for viewing at this year’s festival. The finalists are now available in an on-line screening room at <http://4h.missouri.edu/FilmFest>. Click on the “Top Films for 2014” button. Then scroll down to “Voices of 4-H History” and click on the films you wish to view.

Those given special recognition were:

**First Place:** Clay Ferguson, San Leandro, CA, “100 Year Anniversary: 4-H and the Alameda County Fair.”

**Second Place:** Eric Glaze and Dan Sanders of Waynesville, OH, “A Centennial of Extension with Dr. D. Howard Doster.”

**Third Place:** Kelsey Hibl and Brittany Berger from Dickenson, ND, “Voices of Stark County 4-H.”

Also shown during this year’s FilmFest 4-H were: “4-H State Day in Vermont” by Champlain Shamrocks 4-H Club, of Grand Island, VT, and “The History of Oliver County” by Wilton Henke, of Stanton, ND.

“We can’t wait to meet speakers each year and come home and tell our family and friends all about our experiences, who we meet and what we learned. The part we love the most has to be meeting other conference attendees from across the country that are just like us and make the long drive to Missouri worth it. We have made some lifelong friends,” stated a participant who traveled 20 hours to attend.

Plans are already underway for National 2015 FilmFest 4-H. We urge you to encourage young filmmakers to get involved. Learn how at: <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/voices>.

#### 1949 4-H Week Message from the President:

“I congratulate you on your theme for this year, ‘Better Living for a Better World.’ May that theme become increasingly significant during your 4-H Club Week, March 5-13, and throughout the year. The things you grow and the jobs you do in Learning by Doing all add up to more skilled farmers, better homemakers, more useful citizens and more able leaders. These, in brief, are what make for better living and a better world.” Signed: **Harry S Truman**

## “Hands-On 4-H:” Alumni Get an Edge From Club Experience

In 4-H, youth can learn valuable skills for work and life. A 1939 issue of *National 4-H News* highlighted a group of young adult 4-H alumni who had graduated from college and started their careers.



National 4-H Fellows: Lillian Murphy, center, and Wilmer W. Bassett, Jr., left, with Guy L. Noble, National Committee on Boys’ and Girls’ Club Work at USDA in 1939.

Lillian Anne Murphy of Indiana and Wilmer Bassett of Florida had been selected as National 4-H Fellows. Murphy was a county home demonstration agent and Bassett a county assistant agriculture agent. Both received fellowships of \$1,000 for nine months of study at USDA in Washington, DC – a new experience in their early extension careers.

For information on National 4-H Fellows visit [http://4-HHistoryPreservationProgram/History/Fellowship Program](http://4-HHistoryPreservationProgram/History/FellowshipProgram).

Marjorie Griffin, former Iowa 4-H member and Iowa State University graduate, became foods editor of the *Detroit Times*. John Rohlf, a former South Dakota 4-H livestock and dairy member, had also graduated from Iowa State and was employed by the South Dakota State Agriculture Experiment Station as assistant editor in charge of the station’s publications.

Lola Hutcheson, a farm girl and 4-H sewing project member from Kansas, sang on the “Farm and Home Hour” radio program that launched her singing career. Georgia 4-H alumna and state champion bread maker Mary Lou Myers was elected president of the College 4-H Club at Georgia Southwestern

College. The rising sophomore was majoring in home economics and planned to become a home demonstration agent.

Youth learn and develop knowledge and skills in many areas in 4-H. Ask leaders and parents in your club who were 4-H members to share how 4-H influenced their lives and career choices. Ask members to talk about what they've done in 4-H that they might like to do as a career.

**Sign up to receive 4-H History News Feeds at:**  
<http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/news/>

### **Maryland 4-H'er Helen Bovbjerg's Superb Voice Captivated National Congress in the 1950s**

Helen Bovbjerg, of whose operatic talents The Washington Post once called a "master class in vocal production" and the El Campo Citizen, TX, called "truly an accomplished vocalist" was a Brandywine, MD, 4-H'er before she climbed to international musical fame as a lyric soprano. Along the way, she entertained National 4-H Congress delegations in 1954, 1956 and 1957.



1956 National 4-H Congress talent winner, Helen Bovbjerg with John Weicher, Conductor of Chicago Symphony when she was chosen to sing with the orchestra at Symphony Hall.

"Helen has always been an outstanding 4-H Club member," according to Merle Howes, MD State 4-H

Leader at the time. She carried projects in cooking, freezing, sewing, grooming and tobacco husbandry during her six years with the Woodlane Senior 4-H Club; \$179.23 profit from her tobacco harvest was applied to college.

Helen began her musical career at age five with piano lessons but she didn't like to practice. Her parents, who had good voices and loved to sing, supported her musical interest but did not encourage it as a career. As government workers, they lobbied for a "more stable future." It was her high school music teacher, Mrs. J. Moorehead, who convinced them that Helen "needed to sing and hopefully have a career doing what [she] loved most." They relented, but required that she continue taking piano lessons; "One day you'll thank me," said her mother, which Helen has done many times throughout her brilliant career as performer and teacher. "Helen has a genuine desire to contribute to the world's work," said Moorehead; "she is a teenager who is a credit not only to 4-H, but to her generation."

Helen called music her "lifetime project" because she saw it as her career. She pursued that project at the Peabody Institute of Music in Baltimore, MD, and the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, where she received her Bachelor and Master Degrees in Vocal Performance and also the Performer's Certificate in Voice. With a German Academic Exchange scholarship, she did post graduate studies at the Music Conservatory in Stuttgart and with three Rockefeller Grants, she had additional training in Rome, Munich and Hamburg to help polish her vocal artistry.

At the 33<sup>rd</sup> National 4-H Club Congress in Chicago, in 1954, she represented Maryland as "the most talented 4-H member" and sang at the "Share the Fun Breakfast," sponsored by U. S. Rubber Company. In 1956, she was chosen as National Talent Winner and for the 35<sup>th</sup> 4-H Congress, was invited to solo with the esteemed Chicago Symphony and conductor, John Weicher, in Orchestra Hall; the concert was sponsored by the Singer Sewing Machine Company. Perhaps the highest recognition of her growing talent came at rehearsal that year with the renowned Symphony when, after singing her numbers, the orchestra musicians rose and greeted her with "Bravos" and great salvos of applause. At the 36<sup>th</sup> National 4-H Congress in 1957, Helen joined trumpeter, Wilbur Jensen, 4-H'er from Oregon (see the June issue), to perform with the Chicago Symphony for the 1,500 delegates; the concert was again sponsored by the Singer Sewing Machine Company.

That same year, Helen toured Germany and Austria as soloist with a German-American chorus from Rochester, N.Y. and received the McCurdy Scholarship Award at Eastman. After graduating from Eastman in 1959, and continuing studies for two years at the Music Conservatory in Stuttgart; this led to her first professional opera engagement in Ulm, Germany, followed by contracts in Kiel, Luebeck and Wuerzburg. Of Danish heritage herself, Helen also performed professionally in Denmark and later in Switzerland and Italy. By her count, this 4-H alumna has sung at least 35 professional operatic roles in 464 performances in Europe and the US. However, probably her largest audience was some 50,000 celebrants at a mid-1950s July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration in Hyattsville, MD.

For the past 33 years, Helen Bovbjerg Niedung has been Professor of Voice at Edison State College (now Florida SouthWestern State College) in Ft. Myers, FL, and conducts a private Studio of Voice in her home in Cape Coral. In 2008, she received the Florida State Music Teachers Association's highest honor, the Excellence in Teaching Award. She is a member of many music-related professional and charitable organizations, giving much back to the field that has provided her with lifelong employment and fulfillment.

"My words of wisdom to share with young people who want to have a career in music is: unless you can't imagine yourself doing anything else in the world and you are willing to sacrifice to do it, I don't recommend going into music for a career. Today, there is so much competition out there. Our music schools are producing many fantastic performers and unless you know someone or have some good contacts, it's very difficult to get a job. Music is being cut out of our public schools, so even becoming a music teacher in the schools is becoming a thing of the past. I advise my students to choose another field, such as Business Administration and keep music as an avocation. Music is a tough business to get into as a profession. You have to be exceptionally talented and, especially, you have to have good luck! I was lucky that I had help from my 4-H experiences singing with the Chicago Symphony and that I was in Germany before The Wall came down and Americans were still being hired by German opera companies. I was lucky to have the career that I have had – and am still having – and I will always be grateful to 4-H for helping me to climb my ladder to success!"

## 4-H History Website Visitors



Three years ago on September 10, 2011, the National 4-H History Preservation website started using a visitor counter. This counter does not tally up "hits" on the site, but displays the actual number of visitors to the site. Your History website has had over 78,000 visitors from the United States with California residents visiting 5,373 times, followed by Ohio with 4,174 and Texas with 3,900. International visitors came from 147 countries! We're proud of this outreach as it indicates that people are interested in 4-H History, and we look forward to increasing those numbers in the next few months.

We encourage states which have 4-H websites to help promote 4-H history to visitors to your local site by adding a link to the national history site. Graphic link banners are available at <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/Connect/>.

## 4-H and Schools Connected for More Than 100 Years



September means 'Back to School' and in many areas 4-H is a big part of that joyous time. There are school projects supported by 4-H, and areas where 4-H is held in the schools with thousands of youth served by 4-H in After-School programs. The relationship of 4-H and schools goes back to the

very beginnings of 4-H well over a century ago. County school superintendents in several states started Boys' and Girls' Club Work in the schools before it was even called 4-H. To learn more about the connection between those early schools and 4-H go to [http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/History/1-Room\\_Schools/](http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/History/1-Room_Schools/).

## Using 4-H History to Strengthen the Future of the Program



When the National 4-H History Preservation leadership team explains why we are researching and documenting 4-H history to a current state or county Extension staff member, often we use the phrase: “the more you know about the history of 4-H, the better you can understand your current position and do a better job in the future.” Most of our 80+ volunteers in the national history preservation program are retired from a career in 4-H and all sincerely believe this to be true.

Throughout the 100+ years of 4-H, professionals have always been out there on the cutting edge with experiential learning. The programs may be new. The audiences may be more diverse. The needs may be different. But the underlying principles of 4-H in many ways have remained the same and will continue because they have been time-tested and they work!

The history preservation team has a goal of making accessible as much of the national 4-H history as possible to everyone through the 4-H history preservation website and 4-H history outreach programs. Coupled with this is our hope that an understanding of the importance of 4-H history – and of history itself – will become an integral part of every state and county orientation program for new Extension 4-H staff, 4-H Foundation staff and other program supporters. Hopefully, the information provided through the National 4-H History Preservation program will help you to accomplish that goal.

Please let us know what information on the history website you have used and whether there is information you are seeking that does not yet appear on the site. Share your stories of how you've used the website to conduct new staff training in your state or county at [info@4-HistoryPreservation.com](mailto:info@4-HistoryPreservation.com).

[Taken from the “Preserving 4-H History” section of the 4-H history website: <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/History/Preserving.asp>]

### Contact the 4-H History Preservation Team:

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