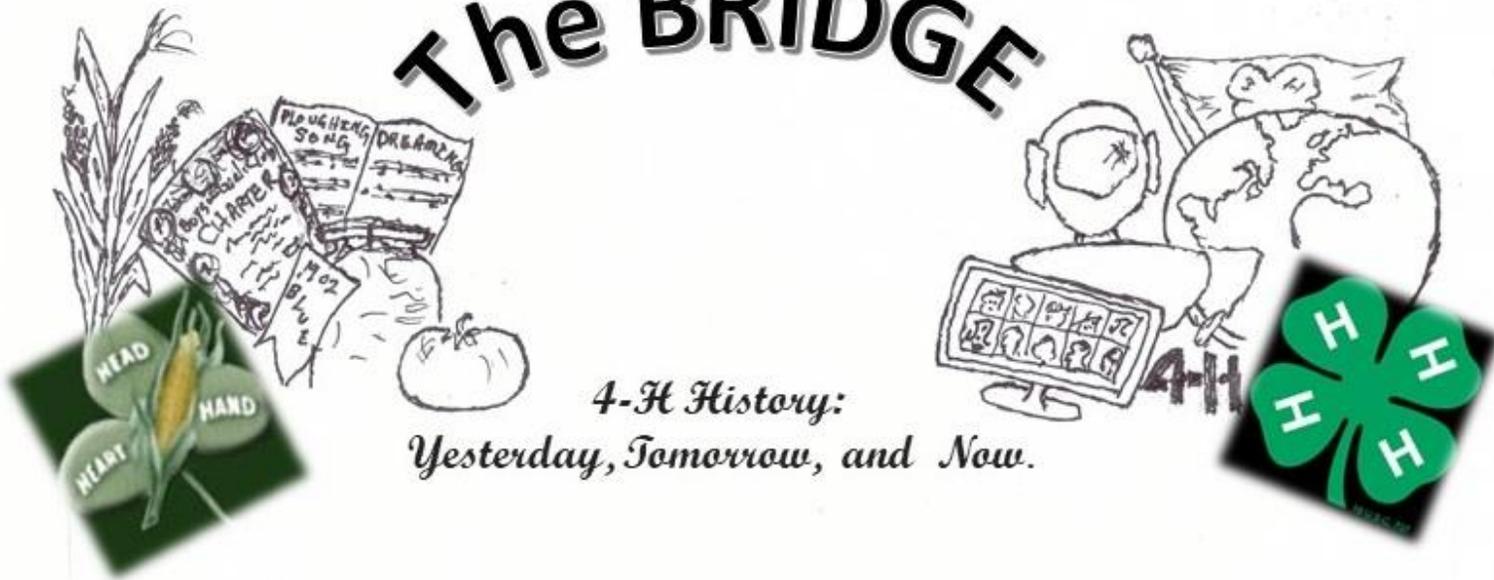


The BRIDGE



*4-H History:
Yesterday, Tomorrow, and Now.*

Vol. 13, No. 2

May, 2024

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A Peek into the 4-H History held in the National Agricultural Library

By Sara Lee, Director of Special Programs, NAL; Tom Tate, National Program Leader (Retired), Extension Service, USDA

Peek into the archival boxes housed in U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library (NAL) Special Collections and experience a sensory delight – neon-colored posters, vivid paintings of youth in action, sheet music waiting for voices to bring the lyrics to life, and radio/television spots with announcers ready to welcome you to 4-H. NAL Special Collections curates and archives items of enduring historical value related to the history of agriculture, USDA, and its affiliated groups. This includes significant physical and digital collections related to the history of 4-H.

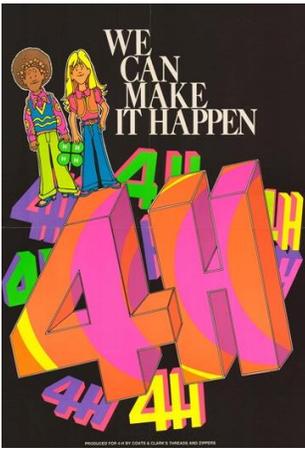


National Agricultural Library, 1970
Cover of [Extension Service Review](#)
National Agricultural Library call number:
1 Ex892Ex

COLLECTIONS

The [Elsie Carper Collection](#) includes pictures, correspondence, newspaper articles, reports, music, and posters spanning 1908 - 1994. Hundreds of the collection's black and white photographs cover most of the 20th century and capture agricultural and home economic activities, from tractor driving and animal exhibition to canning, baking, and sewing.

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[“We can make it happen” poster](#), 1974
[Elsie Carper Collection](#)

The [Payne/National 4-H Fellowship Collection](#) includes photographs, publications, scrapbooks, programs, monthly reports, newsletters and news clippings, and correspondence detailing various 4-H fellows. The Fellowship was one of the largest grants for study available to professional Extension workers, awarded from 1931 to 1969.

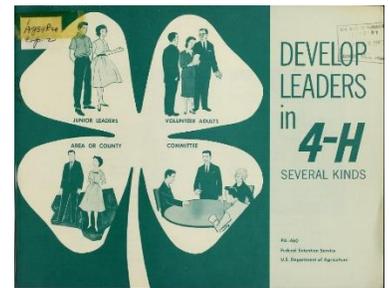
4-H artwork from the National 4-H Center was donated in 2021 after the sale of the building. Many of the 55 items were painted by William C. Griffith, who created 16 4-H calendar covers between 1953 and 1968 and 18 National 4-H poster illustrations. This made Griffith the most prolific artist of official 4-H paintings. Some paintings in the collection are original canvases.

“Finalists”, c1958
 William C. Griffith, artist



Scrapbook page of A. Lois Redman, 1958
[Payne/National 4-H Fellowship Collection](#)

NAL also collects [publications](#) (reports, circulars, training materials, etc.) related to the federal government’s involvement in 4-H through the Extension Service, now the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). These publications are housed in the main library stacks, and many are available in our online collections. The *Extension Service Review*, issued monthly by the USDA promoted and provided guidance on "the newest findings in agriculture and home economics" to county, state, and federal extension educators. Nearly 700 issues are available from 1920-1992.



[Develop Leaders in 4-H: Several Kinds](#), 1961
 V. Joseph McAuliffe, author
 National Agricultural Library call number: 1 Ag84Pro

HOW TO LEARN MORE

Onsite access to archival collections for research purposes is by appointment, Monday-Friday, excluding federal holidays. Email NALSspecialCollections@usda.gov or call 301-504-5876 with questions or for an appointment. NAL is on the grounds of the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center just outside of Washington, D.C.

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Please note that NAL is not the official archives or records management unit of the federal government. NAL's 4-H related holdings meet collecting criteria of NAL and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. You can find many state and chapter-level historical materials in the libraries and archives of their home states.

COLLECTION LINKS:

[Digitized publications](#)

[Elsie Carper Collection on Extension Service Home Economics and 4-H](#)

[Historic Posters from Elsie Carper Collection](#)

[Payne/National 4-H Fellowship Collection](#)

[Presentation: 4-H History at the USDA National Agricultural Library](#)



Minnesota's Plan for Saving 4-H History

By Bill Svendsgaard, Chair of Minnesota 4-H History Team; Hennepin County 4-H Educator (retired)

Editor's Note: Share what YOUR state is doing to help save our 4-H History. Send your articles to:

Editor@4-HHistory.com

PRESENT SITUATION AND OVERVIEW:

*The University of Minnesota Archives accepts and catalogs our Minnesota 4-H History. *We have expanded the collection from 20 file boxes to over 70 file boxes filled with printed materials and small boxes with memorabilia. * We struck gold, the Archivist is a 4-H alumna club member, is 100% supporting and exciting to help us and has met with our team many times. * Our Vintage 4-H History Committee continues to collect history and supports all Minnesota 4-H staff and participants with their efforts and questions. (history is always on-going) * We created a webinar which was viewed state-wide to ignite interests and assist them in finding, sorting, and gathering 4-H history. It is currently being programmed onto a website for anyone to access it.

HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

- A. We started a statewide "fire" on "Why save our history."
- B. We called in recruits "Named the team."
- C. We fanned the flames "Wrote objectives."
- D. We hosed them down "Tools developed."
- E. We controlled sparks "Identified observers."
- F. We kindled the ashes "To ignite new fires."
- G. We cleared the smoke for media coverage "Told our story."

WHO LIT THE FIRE, TO SAVE OUR 4-H HISTORY:

For many years, retired 4-H staff in Minnesota enjoyed meeting twice a year for their Vintage 4-H meetings. About five years ago, one member, **Wayne Carlson**, who is also a National 4-H Hall of Fame inductee, spoke to our Vintage 4-H about his concerns of losing our 4-H history. While working many years in the Minnesota State 4-H Office, he had submitted his records to the University of Minnesota Archives and realized then that very little other 4-H history had been collected. After his presentation, six of us formed the Minnesota 4-H History Committee to mobilize a force to save our 4-H history.

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First, we established “Why save our 4-H history.” We feared many current staff had little interest or time to ponder over the past when their work plates are spilling over. They needed a cause to believe in, react to and get help. Our message was:

- A. History binds us together and provides inspiration from others.
- B. It sheds information about communities and townships from the past.
- C. It helps us understand how experience-based education became the backbone of 4-H, past and present.
- D. It helps us learn how university research is, and was, transferred for application.
- E. It teaches us why 4-H has lasted more than 100 years, and that 4-H records and artifacts are being lost.
- F. We need to save our 4-H history for building on our future. History is also the present, not only the past.

Second, we named the team. Six volunteered to take on the charge: **Mary Ann Bannerman, Jim Lewis, Pat Morreim, Carol Skelly, Jim Simon** (not a former staff member but a collector of 4-H memorabilia and a 4-H alumnus) and **Bill Svendsgaard**.

Third, we wrote our objectives:

- A. Encourage every 4-H club, County and Regional program, and State 4-H program to determine what materials meet the test of historical significance and should be saved, whether in local offices, into museums or archives.
- B. Make public through any means available, ways that individuals or groups who have maintained or found 4-H history can contribute those items for evaluation and when appropriate submit for long-term preservation.
- C. Encourage the collection and preservation of oral histories relevant to Minnesota 4-H and continuing to record the voices and stories of Minnesota 4-H.
- D. Identify key volunteers (i.e. 4-H leaders, parents, teens, 4-H alumni) who will support 4-H staff and our team in preserving our 4-H history.
- E. Develop educational programming that gives meaning and significance to historical displays and to other media coverage honoring our 4-H past.
- F. Develop a comprehensive list of places that will receive, preserve, and make available to anyone interested in Minnesota 4-H history, materials of 4-H historic significance.

Fourth, we developed eight guides to help everyone preserve Minnesota 4-H History.

- 1. Looking for Firsts and Lasts (15 listed)
- 2. Keeping an Eye out for (17 listed)
- 3. Finding Past 4-H History Locations (14 listed)
- 4. Creating your History Saving Team (9 recommendations)
- 5. Creating a 4-H Club History Tree (2 pages of directions)
- 6. Creating a 4-H Leader Timeline (1 page of guidance)
- 7. Conducting an Oral Interview (2 pages of interviewee’s skill building)
- 8. Collecting Uncommon Savers as they Happen (12 listed)

NOTE: The complete set of the eight guides, **PRESERVING MINNESOTA 4-H HISTORY**, can be found at: <http://z.umn.edu/4h-history>.

Fifth, we identified observers: alumni leaders and members, staff, parents, elected officials, stakeholders, and the media.

Sixth, we supported new fires.

- A. By addressing areas of interest identified by our staff, such as discovering which counties have “Centennial 4-H Clubs” celebrating at least 100 years.
- B. We are presently developing a specific guide-sheet just for 4-H secretaries to help them know what to save when using new technology with current programming.

Seventh, we told our story.

- A. Some counties have held Centennial Celebrations covering their 100 years of serving youth and families, frequently covered by media.

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- B. Newspaper and video coverage of interviews of past 4-H alumni.
- C. Created a webinar that not only trains others on how to become local historians of their 4-H history, but also learn what our Minnesota 4-H History Team has accomplished as a continuing support in addressing challenges in finding and saving our 4-H history.
- D. Working with our Minnesota State 4-H Director, **Jennifer Skuza**, to tell our story of preserving our Minnesota 4-H history.

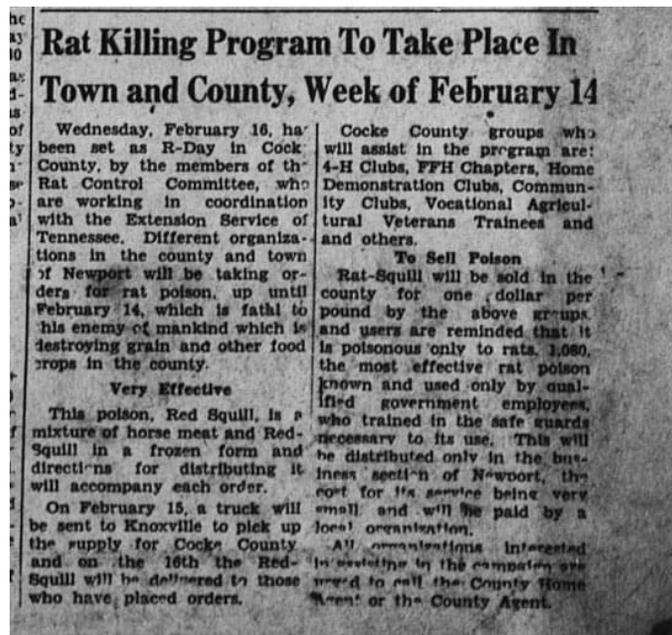


Now Here's a Fun Fund-Raising Idea to Consider!

By The BRIDGE Editorial Board

The following is a post recently seen on Facebook. It was shared with us by a BRIDGE reader from Tennessee. All we can say is, "Rats! Why didn't WE think of this!"

Just a couple more articles about the 4-H Club in Coker County. These articles are from Jan and Feb 1949. Yep selling Red-squill. Guess when the kids are whining about selling girl scout cookies you can tell them back in the day you sold rat poison. I think most of "us" had good hounds and barn cats to keep the rats away.



Rat Killing Program To Take Place In Town and County, Week of February 14

Wednesday, February 16, has been set as R-Day in Coker County, by the members of the Rat Control Committee, who are working in coordination with the Extension Service of Tennessee. Different organizations in the county and town of Newport will be taking orders for rat poison, up until February 14, which is fatal to this enemy of mankind which is destroying grain and other food crops in the county.

Very Effective

This poison, Red Squill, is a mixture of horse meat and Red Squill in a frozen form, and directions for distributing it will accompany each order.

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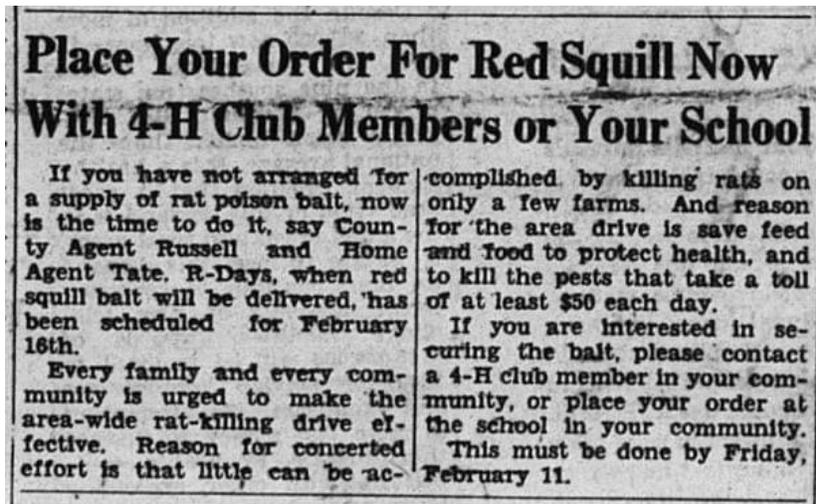
On February 15, a truck will be sent to Knoxville to pick up the supply for Cocke and on the 16th the Squill will be delivered to those who have placed orders.

Cocke County groups who will assist in the program are: 4-H Clubs, FFH Chapters, Home Demonstration Clubs, Community Clubs, Vocational Agricultural Veterans Trainees, and others.

To Sell Poison

Rat-Squill will be sold in the county for one dollar per pound by the above groups, and users are reminded that it is poisonous only to rats, 1,080, the most effective rat poison known and used only by qualified government employees, who trained in the safeguards necessary to its use. This will be distributed only in the business section of Newport, the cost for this service being very small and will be paid by a local organization.

All organizations interested in participating in the campaign are asked to call the County Home Agent or the County Agent.



Place Your Order For Red Squill Now With 4-H Club Members or Your School

If you have not arranged for a supply of rat poison bait, now is the time to do it, say County Agent Russell and Home Agent Tate. R-Days, when red squill bait will be delivered, has been scheduled for February 16th.

Every family and every community is urged to make the area-wide rat-killing drive effective. Reason for concerted effort is that little can be accomplished by killing rats on only a few farms. And reason for the area drive is save feed and food to protect health, and to kill the pests that take a toll of at least \$50 each day.

If you are interested in securing the bait, please contact a 4-H club member in your community, or place your order at the school in your community.

This must be done by Friday, February 11.



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4-H Fun FACT

May 1, 1991, was **4-H Day at the White House**. Maryland 4-H members went to the White House that day to play some tennis with actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, professional tennis star Pam Shriver, and President and Mrs. George H. W. Bush, all as part of the Second Annual Great American Workout. No word on who won, but the Editor has his money on the President. The 4-H Member swinging the racket in the photo is John DiBenio.



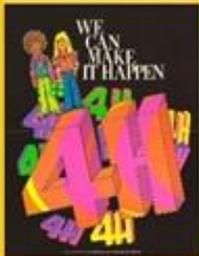
Tell Us Your 4-H History Story

Share your photos and stories of the history YOU made in 4-H!

We know you've made 4-H History. So, tell us about it! The world wants to know YOUR 4-H history! Send your articles to: Editor@4-HHistory.com

Submissions longer than 500 words must include a 500-words or less summary. The in-depth articles will be posted to our web-site and linked to the summary that will appear in the newsletter.

Thanks for reading The BRIDGE. Look for our next issue August 15, 2024!



The BRIDGE Editorial Board:

Sue Benedetti, Gwen El Sawi, Tom Tate, Jane Jopling, Bonita Williams, Betty Gottler, Linda Horn, Ron Drum

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