

4-H volunteer leaders are awesome!

The 4-H program relies on volunteer adult leaders to organize and lead groups of 4-H members. We currently have 51 trained and active 4-H Leaders in Morrow County. Research shows that youth who have a non-parental adult as a friend, teacher and mentor do better than youth without such an adult presence. As a 4-H leader and educator, you are in a position of great influence. You can channel members' curiosity, inspire new interests, and continually offer new opportunities for them to grow and develop into happy and productive adults. You can be the key to a young person's success.

A recent study showed that most 4-H leaders volunteer because they are interested in making a difference in the lives of young people. While some

4-H leaders have expertise in a particular content area, such as animal science, it is not a requirement. The 4-H program is always looking for quality, committed adult volunteers. If you are interested in exploring becoming a 4-H volunteer, please call or visit the Extension office.

Studies show that each 4-H volunteer gives an average of 200 hours of time annually to the 4-H Youth Development program. Looking at Oregon's 6,000 volunteers, that means 1,200,000 hours are given annually to help youth develop skills for a lifetime. Nationally, the current estimated dollar value of volunteer time is about \$20 per hour. Not only are 4-H volunteer leaders awesome, but the value of their time to Oregon 4-H is more than \$20 million annually.

What is 4-H?

What is 4-H? Friends, fun and learning about nature, cooking, growing plants, photography, animal care or working together to help others.

Who can belong to 4-H? Anyone kindergarten through 12th grade. You'll find 4-H throughout your county, state, country and the world. Kindergartners through third graders can join 4-H Cloverbud clubs. 4-H Cloverbuds is an informal educational program designed specifically for children in grades K-3. The program appeals to young children's natural curiosity, enthusiasm for learning and high energy levels by providing an opportunity for active learning in a non-competitive environment. In Morrow County, we have about 185 members in grades four through 12.

What you can do in 4-H? Members can be enrolled in animal science, natural sci-

ence, home economics and expressive arts project areas. If you can think of it...we will try to make it happen.

What do you do in 4-H? It depends on you. 4-H members may be a friend in the same grade or school, or include people from other communities.

Clubs decide how often to meet and elect officers to conduct club business. Your club may decide to be active in the community, raise money for charity, become involved in recycling projects or build nature trails. You can go on field trips or to 4-H camp. The choices grow as you get older.

Does 4-H cost a lot? There are no national dues or required uniforms. The state requires a \$15 per member enrollment fee, \$30 family

maximum, which goes to help county 4-H programs, such as lowering costs of state publications. There is an additional \$5 per member county enrollment fee that goes toward project materials and insurance in most clubs. Your 4-H club may decide to collect dues to fund special activities.

How do you join 4-H?

It's easy. Choose the project you like. Ask some friends or brothers and sisters to join you. Ask parents, grandparents, adult friends or neighborhood adults to be your leader. Several adults can share this responsibility. You need only two members, but you can have as many as you like. Determine the projects your club would like to enroll in and visit the Extension office or call an agent for help. There are also numerous active clubs that welcome new members.

4-H is Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow and "Learning by Doing." Learning how to set goals and work toward those goals; responsibility—for an animal, finishing projects, choosing how much to learn and deciding how involved in 4-H to be—leadership, decision-making, cooperation and how to present yourself and ideas to others. For information about the 4-H Youth Development program, contact the OSU Extension office in Heppner, 541-676-9642.

"As we approach fair time let's all try to keep in perspective what we are trying to accomplish with the 4-H program and projects," reminds a local 4-H Extension agent. "'Winning' should not be the goal. Doing the very best we can should be the goal. If 4-H members have worked hard on their projects all year, doing well in their classes will come."



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