

Memories...

Jayhawkers club began in 1950

Nina Melroy was the charter 4-H club leader for the Busy Jayhawkers 4-H Club which was started in 1950. She and Bill Donovan were the two leaders that worked to start the club. The club met as a community of families that lived in that area of the county. The Busy Jayhawkers started with about 9-10 youth at first. The club met in the families' homes at first, then they met at a local school (which now is on display at the SPPA grounds in Almena). County and city governments and officials were always cooperative with all the 4-H groups. The club was once asked by a state 4-H specialist why they picked a Jayhawk as their name. Mrs. Melroy is quick to point out that the members wanted to be identified as Jayhawks with the state of Kansas rather than a bunch of "wild-cats".

It was about this time that several club leaders worked to help them start their club, in particu-

lar leaders from the Cedar Ridge in Almena at that time Mae Baker and George Rumsey were involved.

When the fair was being held the clubs exhibited in outdoor arenas uncovered, and a building called "Floral Hall" which was in rather poor shape since when it rained they would have to get the exhibits out due to a leaky roof. Soon, in the mid 50's, the clubs worked with the county to support the building of the county 4-H Building to be used by the clubs and community during the fair.

Mrs. Melroy knew they had a good thing going because the parents knew it was a big world out there and their children needed to be exposed to a variety of experiences and that 4-H clubs could help them expand their involvement. Nina has noticed that the 4-H members have seemed to excel and have expanded into leadership and community responsibilities as they grow older.

Being a counselor shows leadership

By Katrina Wentz

As a nine year member of the Prairie Dog 4-H Club, I am very active in many of the activities 4-H offers. Such as County 4-H Days, Discovery Days, County Fair, State Fair, and as a counselor at the State Rock Springs 4-H Camp.

The most memorable event for 4-H this year was being a counselor at Rock Springs. This was my third year for being a counselor, but only my first as a Senior Counselor. To be a counselor, you must be responsible, caring, fun, and capable of being a good leader. Some of the responsibilities of being a counselor are to know the locations of activities, taking care of money, making sure the kids have everything they need, know where they are at all times, if they need medicine to make sure they get it, and all at the same time make sure that you yourself don't go insane! Nah, really, it sounds like a lot, but really, it's one activity I really enjoy. My favorite thing about being a counselor is getting to know the kids. After being their idol for three days, they really remember you, and if they have a good experience they're sure to come back. In other words, whether the camper has a good or bad experience, it is pretty much all on the counselor's shoulders. The campers are going to remember, that's just the way kids are.

As a counselor this year, I was in a position that wasn't the most pleasant for the campers nor I. I had a group of 9 to 11 year old girls, who are just

developing and beginning to grow up. My Jr. Counselor is older than I am, but was more at the stage of the campers' development. So, in other words, it seemed as if I had a few extra campers, instead of just my eight girls. With those kind of responsibilities added on, anyone could go insane! However, I think my experience of having a hard time with my Jr. Counselor make me realize that there are a lot of people in the world like that and I'll be dealing with it my whole life, especially if I advance into the psychology field as planned.

All in all though, I believe my campers had fun at Rock Springs even with the problems we had. When we were at breakfast on the last day of camp, I asked my girls if they had fun and if they were planning on coming back next year, and they all replied with 'yes'. Then I asked them what their favorite part of camp was and about half of them replied with, "You! You were my favorite part! We love you!" You can't imagine how I felt after all the stress I'd been through, and then being rewarded with those words. Also, several members of the staff thanked me for being a great leader and pulling my group through, because if it would have been someone with less experience, the group probably wouldn't have made it as a whole. I am very proud that I am capable of being a good leader, and I plan on continuing it through the rest of my life, with the 4-H motto, "To Make the Best Better."

Shooting Sports provides opportunities

By Jake Kramer

This was my eleventh year in the Prairie Dog 4-H Club. I have been in the Shooting Sports program for the last nine years, and as an archer I was very pleased last spring when I earned the opportunity to participate in the National Archery Competition this summer. I was on a team using compound bows with Shine Fischer and Will Wilhite. After doing well at the Kansas State Shoot, which was held in Emporia, the National match was held in Columbia, Missouri, and let me tell you, was the weather miserable there! It was extremely humid, almost so bad that you could hardly breathe. All of that aside though, I found this meet to be a very awesome experience. There were three days worth of shooting, and many interesting people to meet from different states who all shared the common love for this wonderful sport. Our team did well by getting an overall fifth place medal out of fifteen teams.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the local archers that came and participated in the Norton Archery Club's lake shoots, and the other business and club folks who helped us raise money for this trip. It all helped us tremendously on our journey (which was a long one!) and our stay (which was almost too short). I would also like to thank John Baker. He is a wonderful instructor, a fine archer, and toxophilite himself. And thanks to Duane and Joyce Fischer for hauling us all down there and back, and putting up with our shenanigans.

I do encourage all of you archers in 4-H to push yourselves to get better and hopefully you can

make it to this awesome meet as well. I am looking forward to my last year in archery with anticipation. I have learned much that I can take with me and the memories will be treasured.



Joshua VanSki, Norton County 4-H Council president, and Jack Lindquist, K-State "KARC" director, placed the Norton County Centennial candle in the state 4-H birthday cake during the ceremony at the Kansas State Fair.

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