

News Release
Donna Wice, 4-H Coordinator
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966-4829

National 4-H Week October 5-11

Across the country, 4-H will celebrate National 4-H Week 2003 Sunday, October 5-Saturday, October 11. National 4-H week, celebrated annually, provides recognition to more than 6.6 million youth involved in 4-H programs and more than 6.3 million 4-H volunteers. In the state of California there are more than 27,000 4-H volunteer leaders and serves more than 144,000 youth.

In Mariposa County the 4-H members will be wearing their uniforms to school, church, doing presentations at schools & clubs, and inviting their friends, young and old, to join this wonderful Youth Development Program.

From food preservation to sheep to forestry, we have had over 50 volunteer leaders each year in Mariposa who have pledged their head, heart, hands, and health toward improving their members, the community, and themselves. By pledging their heads, 4-H volunteer leaders contribute their knowledge and expertise to strengthen the 4-H Youth Development Program, and to help the young people of our community to grow into responsible adults.

A state-wide 4-H committee has developed a new 4-H mission with program criteria. The new California 4-H mission statement is: 'The University of California 4-H Youth Development Program engages youth in reaching their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development'.

The 4-H Youth Development Program is an educational program to assist youth in their development by providing learn-by-doing educational projects, developing skills, leadership, citizenship, and partnerships for programming and funding which will benefit youth throughout life. It also strengthens families and the local community by working together as a team. 4-H is just not animals, the Mariposa 4-H Youth Development Program is adding new projects each year to expand our youth's knowledge. For this upcoming year, some of our projects are Marine Biology, Hi 4-H, CA Envirothon, chess, gardening, rocketry, poultry, sheep, and more.

4-H also offers conferences, leadership and officer training, camps for leaders and members, and outreach programs. During the 2002-03 program year, Mariposa County Health Department with

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Prop. 99 funds along with Yosemite Bank, County Bank, Pizza Factory, Sierra Telephone, Mariposa Title Co, Ironstone Concours 4-H Foundation sponsored "Camp Tweety". This camp is offered to 4-H and non-4-H youth in 4th-5th-6th grades. This overnight camp was held at Camp Sugar Pine in Oakhurst. It was a great success and plans are already in the making for another Camp Tweety in 2004.

Camp Mystery is also offered to our 4-H members. This camp has been held at the Lions Camp Pacifica in Ahwahnee for the past several years. This camp is sponsored by the 4-H Council plus this year we received a mini grant from Mariposa County Health Dept. Prop 99 funds.

Along with 4-H clubs and projects, the youth program offers the School Enrichment Program, "Ag in the Classroom" which is sponsored by the Mariposa County Farm Bureau and County of Mariposa. During this past year, 14 teachers were able to check out incubators and curriculum to study Embryology, Butterfly Gardens to watch the life cycle of the Painted Lady Butterfly, Root-View Gardens, Honey-bee Life Cycle, and Entomology curricula.. Over 625 students at five county schools and two homeschools had 'hands-on' experience with this program. Several new topics are being added for this school year such as 'TWIGS' a curriculum focusing on Gardening and Nutrition, Junior Master Gardener, and dairy cows & products.

If you would like to join 4-H as a member or project leader or have use of the 'Ag in the Classroom' materials, contact the UCCE office at 966-4829 or drop by the office at 5009 Fairgrounds Rd. For youth joining 4-H to attend local 2004 fairs with their 4-H projects, enrollment must take place by November 15, 2003. Enrollment fees are \$10.00 for youth and \$5.50 for volunteer leaders.

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