November 26, 2019

Dear 4-H Leader,

**Thank you to all who attended the annual Adult Leaders Banquet.** The county recognized several volunteers for their years of service. We still have a vacant spot on the executive board for the Adult Leaders Group. Please consider nominating or running for this position if you are in District #4: Helping Hands, South Byron, Wonder Workers or a county leader. This position would be committing to attend the 3 annual leaders meetings and an executive board meeting approximately every other month. If you are interested in running or would like to nominate someone to run please contact Tracy Keifenheim at tracy.keifenheim@wisc.edu or 920-929-7730.

**Countywide club officer workshop**

Thank you to the 32 youth who attended the annual 4-H Club Officer Training! I enjoyed the energy in the room and hearing your thoughts on 4-H in Fond du Lac County. In the general sessions, youth had an opportunity to learn about their leadership style and how to work with other leadership styles. They learned ways that they can make their meetings more successful, participated in games and ice breakers they can lead at club meetings or activities, and participated in a wrap-up reflection activity that they can bring back to their clubs. In the officer sessions, youth learned what is expected of them in their officer role and received strategies on how to be successful in the roles. If your club officers were not able to attend materials will be put in mailbox slots in the office. There will be an officer check-in meeting in the spring to help support the youth in these roles! Clubs represented at the training were: Armstrong, Brandon Tanagers, Calumet, Campbellsport, Creative Clovers, Forest Hills, Ledgers, South Byron, Taft 23, Weeping Willow and Wonder Workers.

**Charters**

Thank you for completing the club charters, calendar of activities, audit, and updating bylaws. They are a tool for planning and guiding your club and also reporting success. They have been reviewed at the county level and submitted to the state office. Every family in your club must receive a copy of your club calendar and bylaws. You can send them via paper copy or electronically.

Please look for future dates for the **Annual Leader Training** in the February Newsletter. At least one volunteer from each 4-H club or group is required to attend the annual training to maintain your charter. One training was held in November. Clubs/Groups still needing to attend are Armstrong, Brandon Tanagers, Busy Bees, Green Valley, Rosendale, South Byron, and Welcome.

The University of Wisconsin Madison, Division of Extension recently released new guidelines for branding and logo use. If you need access to the new logos to use, please contact the office and we can get you the logo. Co-branding is requiring that the 4-H Clover always appear with the UW-Madison Crest on printed and web materials produced by Wisconsin 4-H clubs, groups, and offices, such as:

* T-shirts
* Pens and pencils
* Banners
* Yard signs
* Posters
* Newsletters
* And more

Risk Management Reminders - As clubs plan for the new year you are reminded that lifeguards are required when youth are swimming or participating in water-related activities, including canoeing, kayaking, and boating. This includes a camp, club program, or hotel. For more details, visit: <http://4h.uwex.edu/about-4-h/policies/>

We have injury insurance for all enrolled youth. It does not cover injuries sustained while downhill skiing, tobogganing, sledding, and tubing. If your club is participating in these activities this winter, purchase the coverage at <http://www.americanincomelife.com/>. If you have questions call the UWEX office.

What is a volunteer’s responsibility if there is an accident or injury at a 4-H activity? These are the steps to follow:

- Contact 911 if life-threatening

- Contact parent or guardian

- Take participant for care

- Contact UW-Extension

- Complete incident report form (copy is enclosed). Send this to the UW-Extension office to be placed on file and shared with insurance providers as needed.

This process should be used with all accidents, no matter the severity.

The **Family Learning Day committee** is off to a great start and they are looking for youth and adults to lead sessions. Please talk to a few youth members and encourage them to lead a session. A leader directly asking a youth (and encouraging them that they would do an awesome job) is the best way to get our youth to expand their leadership roles. The presenter registration is now on our website under Events and the **deadline for presenters is December 15th.** The committee will be meeting again in person in February but will continue to work on tasks to prepare for the event.

The Creative Arts Festival committee will be meeting on Thursday, December 5th at 6 pm at UW Oshkosh Fond du Lac Campus. After reviewing the survey results we will be holding the 2020 Creative Arts Fest on Saturday, March 28th. Registrations are due March 2nd. Look for more information online at <https://fonddulac.extension.wisc.edu/events-activities/>.

**I am looking for youth to be on this committee**. My goal is to have the committee behalf adults and half youth. **Research shows that youth feel more comfortable and feel more welcome when their opinions are valued and listened to, when they have equal decision making power, and when multiple youths are present**. If you know a youth member who enjoys the Communication and Arts Festival, please reach out to them and encourage them to join this committee. I would also love to contact them and send them a formal invite.

How do you know who is enrolled in your club? If you are enrolled as a club organizational leader, co-leader, club manager or club enrollment coordinator, you can access 4HOnline to get information about your members. See the enclosed step-by-step process. If you do not remember your club password, contact Tina Engelhardt at the UW-Extension office.

You can access 4hOnline to find your **club roster**. Check it regularly to see if previous members have not enrolled so you can contact them. Look for new families so you can include them in communication.

**Club activities** are highlighted in the *Club News* section of the newsletter. It’s easy to have your **club news** included also. Just have your secretary or reporter mail or e-mail their secretary minutes or report (and photos) to tracy.keifenheim@ces.wisc.edu at the Extension Office. With new youth taking office, this is a good time of the year to get them into the habit of sending the notes in. Highlights and pictures are also shared on the 4-H Facebook page! Please encourage the officers to send the updates and photos by the 15th of the month. I realize not all of the clubs have met by the 15th of every month, if this is the case for your club please get the updates in as soon as you can to get them in that month’s newsletter.

Sincerely,



Tracy Keifenheim

4-H Program Coordinator

UW-Madison Division of Extension, Fond du Lac County

 **Idea Corner**

We would love to include something fun, educational, or different that your club has tried in the next Leader Letter! The “Idea Corner” can be a regular article in our Leader Letter where leaders share new ideas that were successful and/or a helpful resource where you found that idea!

You can submit a paragraph yourself or you can ask a youth to write it up. Your idea doesn't have to be a huge, groundbreaking idea, just something that you feel that other leaders might appreciate. Remember, sometimes "the little things are the big things." -- Author Wilferd A. Peterson

Please submit ideas for next month’s Leader Letter by December 15th to Tracy at tracy.keifenheim@wisc.edu. Anyone who has submitted an idea will be entered in a drawing for prizes two times a year and will be pulled at the April and August General Leader meetings.

**RESOURCE OF THE MONTH**

**Youth and Adult Facilitation Tips from an Expert (A Book Report of Sorts!).**

By Ron Jakubisin, Positive Youth Development Extension Educator

Just to clarify, I'm not the expert being referred to in the title! I have had a few decades of experience in facilitating team-building activities, ice-breakers, and group brain teasers but I feel I am always learning, always refining, but still working on 'expert' status. I have learned a lot from author Tom Jackson, M. Ed. who published a series of books, his first being Activities That Teach (copyright 1993 by Tom Jackson. Library of Congress-in-Publication Card number 93-161619). The book is filled with leadership and life skill lesson-based activities which include life skill topic, the time needed, supplies and process questions for the activity facilitator. I have found Tom Jackson's books at the library, as well as for purchase on Amazon and eBay.

I use his books constantly and re-read his tips on what he identifies as the active learning process and how to facilitate activities. I’d like to share my ‘take-aways’ and tips that I learned from his books.

The active learning process when using team-building activities/games is most effective when these benchmarks are achieved:

1. The general concept is presented to the group
2. Activity is undertaken by the group, the facilitator does not offer solutions but can encourage the group to stop and process progress, success/roadblocks on their own
3. Group explores actions and consequences (positive and/or negative) during the activity
4. Group discussion is held immediately following the conclusion of the activity
5. General principles are discussed
6. Specific life applications are derived from the general principles
7. Life applications are internalized by participants
8. Students act on what they have learned (or understand how they can act on what they’ve learned)

Probably the biggest pointer I can give, which is echoed in Tom's books, is that the process is just as important, if not more than finishing the activity. Time may have run out, or the group's progress hit roadblocks, like frustration, poor communication, etc. but there are lessons to be pointed out to the participants. As a facilitator, you celebrate progress, point out roadblocks and lead the group to see all sides of the activity. For example, Build A Tower (with straws and gumdrops) is a fun team building activity. Group One constructed the tallest tower, but argued, had a dictator, didn't follow a plan and two members quit altogether, whereas Group Two only finished two levels of a planned 6 level tower, but cooperated, honored all ideas, reached consensus and construction was as planned (they just ran out of time). One group had more problems with the process but finished, the other had an excellent process but didn't finish the goal. The facilitator's responsibility of for everyone to see successes and roadblocks and learn from the process.

Other tips for the facilitator include:

1. Be prepared for imperfection (observe process, not just finishing)
2. Create a physically safe space when doing activities (more important the more you have movement in the activity)
3. Create a psychologically safe environment for all (ground rules)
4. Establish a ‘freeze’ command (a word, clock alarm, whistle)
5. Challenge by Choice: you have the right to pass, but not the right to mess it up for others. If a participant doesn’t want to engage don’t let them sit out in the hall, make them stay in their group, and they can verbalize if they want to ‘pass’.
6. Don't give solutions to problem-solving activities, encourage exploring options, reaching consensus, trying options and evaluating progress with a participant's offered strategy.

Prepare and Practice! Facilitators need to understand their role and the basic steps mentioned in this article. First-time facilitator and youth facilitators should prepare and practice before leading a group activity. Have discussion questions ready ahead of time. Anticipate where there may be difficulties with the group or individuals and have scripted strategies to get the group or individuals engaged/re-engaged in the activity.

If you’d like more facilitator tips, strategies or picking effective activities that teach, feel free to contact Ron Jakubisin, Positive Youth Development Educator at Ron.Jakubisin@wisc.edu or call his office at 920-929-3144.