

4-H Stories excerpts ...

To learn more about 4-H Stories and how to submit your story, go to: www.maryland4h.org
Click on Faculty and Staff then 4-H Stories



A Golden Story A furry new friend helped a young girl get over the sale of her 4-H market pig. “Everyone at sometime will have something special come into their life that changes them forever. It may be an event, person, gift or day, but what ever it was, life from that moment on will be different for you. For me, my time came on my 13th birthday. It was a day I will never forget for I received the dog of my dreams, an eight week old, nine-pound ball of fur, Golden Retriever puppy, who soon became the love of my life and the best project in 4-H, that I could have ever taken.” Lexa and her furry friend Gabby grew and learned together, won many awards and had great adventures. Tragically, Gabby died young of complications from surgery. “As a result of my years in 4-H, I not only got out of it some very important life skills, but determination, self esteem, a job career, great friends as well as some of the best experiences in my life and to top it off, I got to share them with a very special pal who will always be a part of me.”
4-Her Lexa Lynn Loch, Dutton, Montana

Bacon and Eggs in a Sack “Henry and I were newlyweds in 1956 when we were asked to be adult leaders of the 4-H club he grew up in - the Redwood County Four Leaf Clovers. It was a big club, and over the 25 years we led that club, it grew to have over 60 members.” Camping was a favorite activity of the club members, especially making their own breakfast. “To this day, every time we see one of our former club members, they invariably bring up the camping trips and bacon and eggs in a sack, so we know that they served their purpose for fun, fellowship and skill building. We didn’t know then that we were also making memories!” Volunteer Mary Boots, Redwood Falls, Minnesota

What Ever Happened to Clarence Walker? “Gerald was one of those great 4-H volunteers who worked with FFA kids just as much as 4-H kids. He was a joy to be around and to work with. While the vast majority of 4-H volunteers *are* great to work with, there are a few that stand head and shoulders above the rest. Gerald was one of those great ones.” Clarence Walker, one of Gerald’s club members, was economically and developmentally challenged and needed all the help Gerald could give him. “With the financial aspects of Clarence’s swine project arranged for by Gerald Tate, the last item of attention was to get Clarence a wardrobe upgrade for the big swine show. Gerald took care of that by buying his “weed-whacker” shoes all day prior to the time he was to enter the arena. He did not want to get his new boots dirty. Clarence was so proud of those new boots that on the day of the big show he wore before he went into the arena, he put his new boots on. He did fine that day in the swine show, but he was proudest of his new boots.” Two weeks later Gerald died suddenly of a heart attack. At Gerald’s funeral, “...there was Clarence Walker standing there with a big smile on his face. He looked happy. I worked my way over to Clarence and immediately after the service I asked him what he was smiling about—why was he so happy? Clarence responded to me that he was happy that he knew Gerald Tate. He was happy that Gerald had helped him with his swine project. And most of all he was happy that because of Gerald’s generosity and unselfishness he was standing here at this man’s funeral—in a new pair of boots—(slightly used).” Jeff Goodwin, Colorado State 4-H Leader (Texas 4-H Agent when this story occurred)

My Favorite Part of the State Fair “A cornerstone of the Ohio State Fair and Ohio agriculture itself is the 4-H Youth Development program. I truly believe that the 4-H program is developing the leaders that will take Ohio agriculture into the future. And the 4-H extends its reach well beyond agriculture and livestock projects – 4-H is in every county in Ohio working with urban, suburban and rural young people on everything from communications, food and nutrition and fitness, to dog training, crop and vegetable production and livestock production. ... Every year I make a special trip to Columbus for the fair – and every year I walk away with a renewed sense of appreciation for programs such as Ohio 4-H and the All-State choir and band, as well as all the youth involved. In a world that continues to be inundated with video games and celebrity gossip, we witness kids who have chosen to excel in hobbies that require a tremendous amount of time, sacrifice and constant attention. I believe this dedication builds character, molding the youth of this nation into the kind of people we should want leading this country someday.” U. S. Senator Voinovich

Youth Can Do Anything! “She was just a little girl when I first met her. I know it is cliché, but she actually was hiding behind her mother’s skirt! As each year passed, she moved further and further out from behind that skirt taking on more and different roles and responsibilities all of which I knew was mostly because of her experiences in 4-H.” After having her teen conference idea voted down and feeling depressed, she was encouraged to not give-up and was eventually successful. “I feel like I made the impossible happen!” she said as we hugged at the end of the day. “You did.” I whispered in her ear. “You did.” Then she pushed away, spun around in a spiral and said, “I feel like I can do ANYTHING!” “You CAN!” I answered. “You can!” Years later after many challenges to get into and graduate from veterinary school a letter was received that read in part: “I can’t believe after all these years of struggles I made it. Some wise person told me, “You can do it, you can do anything you put your mind to!” I want to thank that wise person. Thank you very much.” Ron Drum, National 4-H Council (Massachusetts 4-H Agent when this story began)

4-H Stories

The wonderful stories shared by National 4-H Hall of Fame laureates at their induction became the inspiration for this project. The laureate's stories were inspirational, funny, sometimes "tear jerkers", always heartfelt and too valuable to be lost.

We're collecting stories for a book from the entire 4-H family including members, volunteers, agents/educators, state staff, donors, family members and others. The stories included in the book will be selected by the Editorial Team. Stories not chosen will be saved for future use. We're hopeful so many great stories will be submitted that several books can be published.

Here's what we're looking for:

- Stories from all 50 states sharing positive personal experiences on the value of 4-H, activities/events, learning experiences, funny situations, etc.
- Stories about 4-H folks who have inspired, motivated and made a difference in the lives of others
- Stories should include information about the setting/situation and approximate time frame and must include your name, address and contact information
- Three or more double spaced pages in a Word document using a 12 point Times New Roman font and one inch margins
- Send your story as an email attachment to: dtabler@umd.edu

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