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Blue Ribbon 4-H Youth ‘Making Their Escape’ to the Puyallup Fair !

In uncertain times traditions can be very comforting. That’s certainly true for the partnership between the Puyallup Fair and Washington State University Extension’s 4-H Youth Development Program. Building upon 109 years of tradition the Puyallup Fair and WSUE 4-H Youth Development have planned another exciting year for you to ‘MAKE YOUR ESCAPE’. With that kind of history you might just think that you’ve seen it all before. But you’d be wrong! Our 4-H member’s accomplishments are so exciting and our young people shine so brightly it is indeed a new experience every time you visit the State 4-H Fair. Yes, we stand firmly on our traditions of young people growing the best tomato or raising the finest dairy heifer or preparing a meal in front of a crowd of spectators. But just as likely today you’ll see a 4-H member displaying extraordinary digital photos or using GIS/GPS navigation tools or watching their mini-bot climb a pole. Our Washington State 4-H Fair spends 17 days basking in the shining light of our 4-H members’ achievements! 4-H members from all

across the great State of Washington will gather in Puyallup to shine brightly for you.

A uniquely American innovation, the 4-H Youth Development Program blossomed at the turn of the 20th Century to improve life in rural areas by introducing improved methods of farming and homemaking. During World War II, the 4-H Program directed much of its efforts toward victory gardens, civilian defense, salvage (recycling) programs, war bond campaigns, and food production and preservation. The victory garden program and our later emphasis on food preservation firmly established 4-H in urban areas by the mid-1940’s.

Since 1948, 4-H has had an international program. Washington 4-H annually hosts more than 50 youth from Japan, Korea, and 60 other partner countries, sending Washington youth overseas as well. Whenever you travel around the globe, you will see the familiar 4-H clover emblem. These 4-H exchanges build life skills in young people including citizenship, empathy, tolerance and mutual understanding that translate into real work skills that employers are seeking in our global economy.

As families moved from the rural areas to cities in the 1950’s and 1960’s, 4-H moved right along. Today, Washington State University Extension 4-H Youth Development serves young people in cities, suburbs, towns and rural areas with life skills education in emerging issues. These include prevention programs, natural resources, animal sciences, family living, leadership, citizenship, environmental stewardship, the arts, and service learning. Washington youth are involved in 4-H in organized 4-H clubs, special interest groups, in-school programs, short-term projects, and home school programs.

Young people “learn by doing” in 4-H. Often the knowledge youth gain through 4-H lead directly to a career. Youth learn to define and solve problems facing themselves and their communities. The interest-driven project is the foundation of the 4-H Program. Flexibility in the type of learning offered, and the variety and number of activities are the keys to 4-H success.

One of Washington 4-H’s long-standing partners in “Learn by Doing” is the Washington Fairs system. From its earliest beginnings at the turn of the 20th Century, and continuing into the 21st Century, the Washington State Fairs system has been the showcase for the achievements of 4-H’ers! Our State 4-H Fair is delighted to be the guest of the Western Washington Fair – best known as The Puyallup Fair. It is the Puyallup Fair’s support that makes our State 4-H Fair possible. We are quite literally a ‘fair within a fair’.

The State 4-H Fair is the public showcase for the Washington 4-H Youth Development Program. Our State 4-H Fair takes very seriously its responsibility to highlight the talents, achievements and abilities of our state's fine young people. In an increasingly complex, technical and impersonal society 4-H Youth Development adds the personal, mentoring touch in the lives of young people. Participation in the State 4-H Fair enhances the total 4-H experience.

The Washington State Fair system, and the Washington State 4-H Fair in particular, contributes to life skill development by teaching young people sportsmanship, cooperation, leadership, time management, team work, responsibility, knowledge development, positive personal interrelationships, respect for self and others, and communication skills. And of course, 4-H members also have fun while they learn.

The Washington State 4-H Fair, a collaborative community event, showcases and promotes the achievements and talents of our youth as they build successful futures. We accomplish this by:

- o Providing educational experiences relating to projects, activities, personal skills and accomplishments;
- o Providing recognition and inspiration to 4-H members and leaders toward greater achievement;
- o Providing an opportunity and challenge to broaden relationships with others youth and adults and with other 4-H programs;
- o Provide a dynamic and comprehensive review of 4-H and its accomplishments to the people of the State of Washington.
- o Educating and engaging the community.
- o Developing leadership skills.

The role of Washington State University Extension 4-H Youth Development in the lives of our young people, our families, and our communities has never been more vital and dynamic. Young people are increasingly influenced by values and information far outside their families and communities due to global media. As the family's influence is challenged in the lives of children, the 4-H youth-adult partnership bolsters and strengthens community support of youth and connects young people more strongly to their communities. 4-H Youth Development is an effective partner with parents in the positive development of their children.

Washington is an increasingly diverse state. Youth of color now account for 38% of the total 4-H enrollment. WSUE 4-H Youth Development is well positioned to grow with the diversity of our state and collaborate with

families and communities to ensure a brighter future of all of Washington's young people.

4-H leads the way in assisting young people as they explore their world through experiential learning leading to career opportunities. 4-H has a 109-year tradition of helping young people build their futures. WSUE 4-H Youth Development honors its past, stands solidly on its successes, and looks eagerly to the future.

The entire 4-H Program joins with the State 4-H Fair Board in thanking the Puyallup Fair for their longstanding friendship and support for our state's young people.

I sincerely hope that you will thoroughly enjoy yourself as you 'MAKE YOUR ESCAPE' to the 2011 edition State 4-H Fair. We want you to have an exciting, enjoyable, and educational experience with 4-H – and you'll be amazed to see how well our traditions blend with the future.

Pat BoyEs
Director – 4-H Youth Development Program

2010 STATE 4-H FAIR SPONSORS

Thank you to the following for their generous contributions to the 2010 WA State 4-H Fair:

Prime Sponsors

Western WA Fair
WA State 4-H Foundation
WSU Extension

General Sponsors

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