



Introducing York County's 4-H Clubs

Maine's Oldest Consecutive 4-H Club ***Four Leaf Clover***

Maine's oldest consecutive 4-H club has deep roots. Consider the Goodwins:

- Alyssa and Kayla Goodwin are current club members.
- Their *father*, Richard, Jr. was a member and is currently an active parent.
- Their *grandfather* Richard (sr), was a member of the club.
- And their *great grandmother*, Hazel, was in the club and is currently a club leader.

"We have several multi-generational families in the club, as well as many first generation youth, and we appeal to a diversity of youth and families," says Else Cook, club leader.

There are similar examples of deep roots within this sturdy and successful club, which is now 90 years old, having started in 1918, combining an existing Homemakers Club (for girls), and Potato club (for boys) to form "Four Leaf Clover" club. At that time the club had 20 members.

Today the club boasts 25 members, and an extremely active corps of parents.

"We have great parents, and they provide so much help to the leaders and the club



members," says Judy Kelly, mother of Emily and Sarah.

Four Leaf Clover is a general club, meaning club members may choose to be involved in a full range of projects and activities. Almost anything goes. Club members are currently involved in puppetry, rabbits, career explorations, community service, to name only a few.

At a recent meeting, members discussed what they liked best about 4-H:

Mandy: "Friendship."

Jeremy: "The great leaders and other kids."

Teddy: "Field trips."

Nicole: "Meeting new people and interacting with the younger kids."

Alyssa: "My daddy and grandpa were in 4-H, and now I am too."

Emily: "Sleeping over at the fairgrounds."

They also shared what they have learned in 4-H.

Emily: "I've learned that animals need a lot of caring."

Nicole: "I received a scholarship, and it's helped me to choose a career."

Sarah: I did a presentation at my school board meeting.

Teddy: I did a demonstration on TV, on channel six."

Mandy: "I learned that I could stand up in front of people and do a demonstration."

According to Else Cook one of the most rewarding parts of being a leader is the experience of "watching the self confidence and self esteem grow in so many of the children over the years." "I see so much growth and change in these kids, it's just incredible," said Cook.

The club meets twice a month, once on Saturday, which is usually a field trip or

special events meeting, and once on Monday, which is typically a business meeting with at least one demonstration by a club member. At a recent meeting the club president was unable to attend, and one of the club members casually and successfully stepped into the role of leading the meeting.

This month the club held a raffle at the annual meeting, and club members were on hand to witness their parents and other community members participate in our democracy. The club also will be donating trees to help beautify the community.

This is a skilled, committed club with wonderfully talented youth, committed and engaged parents, and an incredible group of leaders.

