

Camp Counselors Create Friendships, Memories

Karen Clinch and
Monica Rentschler
Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center
Camp Counselors

We are more than just your average teenagers who hang out at the pool or the mall all summer long with their friends. We are teachers, friends, janitors and music conductors. We are 4-H Camp Counselors, and we love it! By saying we are teachers we mean everyday we try to teach our campers something new in a way that will inspire them to keep learning. We talk to them, help them, and become some of their best friends. We meet all kinds of different people from many different backgrounds. By janitors we don't mean we clean the toilets, it's more we help campers keep their cabins clean and comfortable. As music conductors we lead campers in fun and silly songs. We may not be the best singers, but at camp our most important motto is, "Don't Judge."

As camp counselors there isn't a day goes by we don't learn something new. Often a camper's wonder and enthusiasm about something as simple as a line of ants is enough to help us learn new things about the campers and ourselves. The learning possibilities are endless and bring about the curiosity of a child in everyone. 4-H camp has taught us a lot, all of which will help us in our future as we pursue careers and families. We have learned patience, kindness and leadership.

Although camp is full of learning experiences and good times, there are also many challenges along the way. As counselors we have the difficult job of being a child's friend and



Karen Clinch (left) and Monica Rentschler (right) were camp counselors at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center last summer.

being the responsible adult. We encounter many difficulties as role models to these campers. As teenagers we have learned to put aside what we want to do by doing what is best for the camper. The job, as you can see, is sometimes stressful but in the end we look back and realize the awesome time we had at camp. The benefits outweigh the challenges by far. One great benefit for teenagers in high school is volunteer hours for being a counselor. Our job as a counselor is 100 percent volunteer and 100 percent fun! The greatest benefit, though, is meeting new and interesting people including other counselors whom we have developed a special bond with throughout our summers at camp. Knowing what each person has been through helps us to help each other along the way. We have created friendships and memories that will last us a lifetime. As we look back on our days as

counselors we see these people and realize they are the reason we keep coming back. The campers, counselors, mentors and staff are the heart of camp.

Our experiences as camp counselors have taught us to appreciate the differences in people that make them who they are. 4-H camp has been a big part of our lives and it continues to be. It can be a big part of yours, too. So come out next summer to 4-H camp and experience the excitement of being a camper or a counselor!

4-H Camp Counselors are youth ages 15 and older who assist with cabin supervision and leading of camp programs. Counselors can attend camp for free! If you are interested in being a camp counselor next summer, watch upcoming NEBLINES for more information, go to 4h.unl.edu or contact Bernie Lorkovic at 472-6717.

4-H Speech Updates

The speech workshop will be held Tuesday, Feb. 24, 6:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. We will focus this year on beginning speakers. The workshop will teach youth how to pick out a topic and talk them through writing a speech. Check future NEBLINES for more detailed information!

Depending upon building availability, the 4-H Speech Contest is temporarily set for Sunday, March 14 at the State Capitol. Keep checking the NEBLINE for updates!

For more information about the 4-H speech program, call Deanna at 441-7180. (DK)

Beef Weigh-In

The Lancaster County 4-H and FFA beef weigh-in will be held Friday, Jan. 16, 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center. All market steers and heifers must be brought in for tagging, weighing and noseprinting. For more information contact Deanna at 441-7180. (DK)

4-H Pistol Clinic and Leader Certification Nov. 28-30

A 4-H Pistol Clinic and Leader Certification will be held Nov. 28-30, at the Custer County Fairgrounds in Broken Bow. This clinic is designed to help the beginning pistol shooter learn the basics and to provide the advanced pistol shooter with one-on-one instruction. Adult volunteers may also become certified to teach pistol to 4-H youth by attending this clinic.

Instruction will be provided by Erich Buljung, Olympic pistol coach. During his career, Buljung has received 31 gold medals, 16 individual silver medals, and has set two world records in addition to his 1988 silver medal in air pistol competition in Seoul.

Cost of the training is \$40 per 4-H member for the entire clinic, \$25 if attending Friday only. The fee for leader certification is \$40 for the three days.

For more information and/or to register, contact Tom Dittrich at (402) 368-2980 or via e-mail at tdittrich@citilink.net. (TK)

4-H Shooting Sports Leader Certification Workshop Dec. 6-7

Local certified shooting sports leaders are needed in Lancaster County. If you or someone you know are interested in participating in this program, plan to attend the Nebraska 4-H Shooting Sports Leader Certification Workshop. It will be held Dec. 6-7 at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center near Gretna.

Adult volunteers and junior leaders can choose one of seven disciplines to become certified. Muzzle-loading, wildlife, archery, rifle, shotgun, pistol and re-loading will be offered. Participants will learn under expert instruction.

Registration fee is \$43 per person, the fee includes meals and materials. Lodging is available. Cost for lodging is \$15 per person per night.

For more information and registration materials see the 4-H Shooting Sports Web page at 4h.unl.edu or contact Bernie Lorkovic at 472-6717. (TK)

NOVEMBER

Trudy Pedley

Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council are proud to announce Trudy Pedley as winner of November's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Trudy has been a member of 4-H Council for eight years, photography project leader for the Western Pride 4-H club for three years, assistant leader of the former Kountry Kids 4-H club for three years and superintendent of the 4-H Demonstration Contest at the County Fair this past year. Her term on 4-H Council has just ended.

Trudy was a 4-H'er for more than 10 years in clubs led by her parents.

"I like being a 4-H volunteer because you work with some awesome people," Trudy said. "The extension staff and other Council members have been wonderful to work with."

"My favorite experience volunteering at the County Fair was working in the food booth. I enjoyed working with 4-H'ers, leaders and parents from all over the county. You get to see so many people because they all seem to stop by the food booth."

She helped move the County Fair to the Lancaster Event Center. "There was a lot of excitement in planning and setting up displays that first year. Each year got better," she said. (Note: 2003 was the third year the County Fair was held at the Event Center.)

A Library Media Specialist at Raymond Central, Trudy lives in Lincoln with her husband, Barry. Their daughter, Laura, was a member of Western Pride, and they have a son, Andrew. Trudy also volunteers at her church, Capital City Christian Church.

Something most people don't know about her is she is a "Trading Spaces" (or any home improvement show) addict!

Congratulations to Trudy. Volunteers like her are indeed the heart of 4-H!



DECEMBER

Tonya Beach

Lancaster County 4-H and 4-H Council are proud to announce Tonya Beach as winner of December's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Tonya has been the Clover Kids leader for The Malcolm Clovers 4-H club for one year. (Clover Kids are 4-H'ers age 5-8.)

Shelly Everett, leader of The Malcolm Clovers, nominated Tonya, "Because of her love and kindness in leading our Clover Kids. She brings her past experience with 4-H along with her sweetness to teach our young generation so much."

"I like being a 4-H volunteer because it allows me to work with children, including my own daughter, McKenzie," said Tonya. "The children have a great time learning the valuable lessons in the Clover Kid program and I enjoy being a part of that."

She created a 4-H banner which the Malcolm Clovers used in Malcolm's 4th of July parade. "My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer was watching our group march in the parade," Tonya said. "We gave the youth the opportunity to march the route by themselves to demonstrate the responsibility and respect they learned in 4-H. Needless to say, they did wonderful!"

Congratulations to Tonya. Volunteers like her are indeed the heart of 4-H!

