

Arizona 4-H Celebrates Centennial in 2013

Kirk Astroth, Ph.D., Director, Arizona 4-H Youth Development, University of Arizona, CALS Cooperative Extension

Almost 100 years ago, a small group of 18 boys gathered in a field near Chandler, Arizona under the tutelage of George Peabody, a caring adult member of the community, and they started a 4-H club. From these humble beginnings, the concept of a youth development program founded on the values of strengthening the head, heart, hands and health of each and every member took hold and spread across the state.

Soon, 4-H clubs started cropping up in a number of communities. By 1914, there were 87 4-H members enrolled in Maricopa County who were active in 12 clubs — 7 corn clubs, 3 cotton clubs, and 2 grain sorghum clubs. Pima County got its first 4-H club in 1914, and Victor Ball of San Xavier Boys' Corn Club was the winner of the 1914 Corn Club Contest. By 1915, total enrollment had grown to 318 members in 43 clubs. It was at this time that the first State 4-H Club Agent was hired — Leland Park who was hired on January 1st. Agnes Hunt was hired as Assistant State 4-H Club Agent. Girl's canning clubs were also started this year. Pigs and poultry were added as projects in 1916. Cochise County got its first 4-H club in 1917.

4-H was growing rapidly enough that by 1917, 3 District Club Agents were hired to help administer the 4-H program. In 1917, the first Farm Boys' Encampment was held at the state fair — the first 4-H camp. The program continued to expand throughout the state, and now in 2013 Arizona reaches about one in every 10 young people in the state — approximately 185,000 youth reached by Arizona 4-H. And for the first time, the state owns its very own camp—The Harold & Mitzie James 4-H Camp and Outdoor Learning Center on Mingus Mountain near Prescott.

To celebrate these 100 years of growth and progress, Arizona 4-H is planning a wide variety of events, activities and celebrations to mark the anniversary. Each county will have a variety of ways to get involved in marking our 100 year anniversary—from birthday parties, to historic displays to parades. The signature and culminating event will be held on Saturday, October 12, 2013 at the Crowne Plaza San Marcos Golf Resort (<http://www.sanmarcosresort.com/>) in Chandler—right where it all began 100 years ago. Built in 1912, this luxury hotel is a perfect venue for our centennial gala since it is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. The gala will provide us opportunities to recognize alumni, supporters, and friends of 4-H along with an inspiring keynote speaker and University of Arizona President Ann Weaver Hart (invited).

The Arizona 4-H Hall of Fame has been revived and each county will be able to nominate at least four new inductees who

will be honored at a gala event in the fall. Applications are on our special centennial website (<https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/centennial>). We will also recognize Arizona Centennial families with a combined 100 years or more of membership and/or volunteer service in 4-H. Clubs are also encouraged to perform 100 hours of community service to celebrate our anniversary. These clubs will also be recognized at the fall gala. We are challenging everyone—clubs and individuals—to contribute at least \$100 to the Arizona 4 H Youth Foundation as a part of the centennial.

As a part of Arizona's Centennial Celebration, we want to hear your 4-H story! Tell us a little about your experiences in 4-H and how they impacted your life. For example, you can upload a favorite photo from your 4-H days and tell us something you remember about the day it was taken! Or tell about a personal triumph you remember, and how you felt when it happened. What was the greatest challenge you mastered in 4-H? What was your favorite project, and what made it special? Did something turn out in a way that you never expected? Who made a difference in your 4-H experience? Which of their actions or statements stand out in your memory? Do you think 4-H changed you as a person? How?

This year will be a unique and exciting year in Arizona 4-H. Plan on getting involved at the local level and let everyone know that 4-H is alive and thriving here in Arizona. Contact your county Extension office for details and ways to get involved, or visit our website.



**TOUCHING KIDS' LIVES
WITH SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
...SINCE 1913!**

How did Arizona 4-H touch your life? Share your story with us at extension.arizona.edu/4h/centennial



Celebrating the Past ... Creating the Future
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
The University of Arizona

