

**NEW FAMILY  
ORIENTATION  
TO  
GEAUGA COUNTY 4-H**



PREPARED BY:  
PAMELA WEISEL  
EXTENSION EDUCATOR  
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
GEAUGA COUNTY

### **4-H Motto**

"To Make the Best Better"

### **4-H Pledge**

"I pledge my head to clearer thinking,  
my heart to greater loyalty,  
my hands to larger service,  
and my health to better living,  
for my club, my community, my country, and my world."

### **4-H Colors**

green and white

### **4-H Emblem**

Green four-leaf clover with a white "H" on each clover leaf,  
standing for Head, Heart, Health, and Hands



More Than You Ever  
**Imagined!**



## **What is 4-H?**

4-H is a fun, educational program where young people have the opportunity to learn by doing.

### **OHIO 4-H MISSION STATEMENT:**

Ohio 4-H youth development creates positive environments for diverse youth and adults to reach their fullest potential as capable, competent, caring and contributing citizens.

### **A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE IN OHIO 4-H PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES...**

- for a positive relationship with a caring adult
- for a welcoming environment
- for mastery and competence in a chosen activity or subject matter
- to value and practice service to others
- for an emotionally and physically safe environment
- for self-determination
- for engagement in learning
- to see one's self as an active participant in the future

## **How did 4-H start?**

4-H programs began around 1900 as a way to teach families improved farm and home living practices. Clubs were small groups covering a single project such as beef, corn, gardening, or canning. A.B. Graham organized a club in Clark County, Ohio, in 1902.

## **What is Ohio State University Extension?**

The Cooperative Extension Service is a cooperative effort between the United States Department of Agriculture, land grant colleges (OSU in Ohio), and the county extension services. Ohio State University Extension carries up-to-date information from the classroom and laboratory to the counties and takes back to the university problems that can be addressed through study and research. The program areas covered by the County Extension Service include agriculture, horticulture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, and community development. Educators who specialize in these areas conduct the programs in each county.

## **How is Extension funded?**

Financial support for Extension services comes from county government, through county commissioners, state government, through Ohio State University, and federal government, through the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Private individuals, businesses, and foundations also provide financial support through donations.

The 4-H program is funded by donations from 4-H Boosters and supporters of the Geauga County 4-H Endowment fund.

## **Who is in charge of 4-H?**

County, Region, and State 4-H professionals who are staff members of Ohio State University Extension are responsible for the 4-H program. The 4-H Extension Educator in Geauga County directs and manages all aspects of the county program.

## **What is a 4-H volunteer?**

A volunteer is anyone who contributes time, energy, expertise, and talent to 4-H. Volunteers serve as club advisors, camp counselors and deans, committee members, project judges, and in various fund raising capacities. All volunteers working directly with youth must complete an application and screening process through Ohio State University Extension.

## **What 4-H programs are offered in Geauga County?**

Gauga County 4-H offers a club program, a camp program, and an international exchange program. There are also opportunities to participate in region and state programs and events.

## **What is the age range for participants?**

Eligibility for 4-H Cloverbud membership begins when a child has reached age 5 *and* is enrolled in kindergarten as of January 1 of the current year; 4-H club membership begins when a child is age 8 *and* in the third grade as of January 1 of the current year. 4-H membership ends December 31 of the year in which an individual attains the age of 19.

## **When do 4-H programs take place and what do they offer?**

Community clubs organize in winter and early spring. Enrollment deadline is April 15. Members may join at any time of the year, but if they wish to enter a project at the fair, they must enroll by this date. (Participating in the fair is an *optional* activity for club members.) Members must enroll in at least one project.

- Clubs may organize around one project or may incorporate several projects into the club work.
- Clubs vary in size, depending on the project and leadership available. (Recommended minimum number is 5)
- Number of meetings held and length of meetings is determined by the membership. (Recommended minimum number of meetings annually is 8.)
- Meetings may include business, educational, recreational, social, and community service activities.
- 4-H projects are made up of 3 types of experiences; hands-on activities, organized activities, and leadership/citizenship activities. Projects are organized by specific subject areas such as companion animals, clothing construction, gardening, or wood working. There are over 200 projects.

## **4-H programs, continued**

Camp program organizes in early spring. It is a week-long residential program held in July at Camp Whitewood. Registration is due in June. (Dates vary slightly each year.)

- Campers between the ages of 8 to 14 participate in hands-on learning experiences through a variety of recreational and educational programs in an outdoor setting, such as swimming, boating, crafts, shooting sports, and conservation.
- Counselors are teen volunteers, age 15 and up, who complete an application, screening, and training program. They work throughout spring and summer to develop leadership skills and plan the camp program.

*Note:* The camp program is open to everyone, and is not limited to 4-H club members.

International programs include opportunities to be part of a delegation to Japan or be a host family for a student from another country. Applications are due in February and experiences are scheduled during July and August.

- International programs provide exchange opportunities for youth and adults.
- Youth between the ages of 8 to 19 may apply to be delegates to Japan.
- Families may apply to serve as hosts to youth from 25 different countries. Ohio State University provides a selection and match process, orientation and handbooks.
- Scholarships are available.

*Note:* The exchange program is open to everyone and is not limited to 4-H club members.

## **What other events and activities are offered through 4-H?**

Many opportunities are available to participants of 4-H. For more information about these county and state programs, call the Extension office.

### *Geauga County activities:*

- 4-H promotion events are part of 4-H Week in March and the Geauga County Fair in September. These are sponsored by the 4-H Advisory Committee, open to the community, and a great way to learn more about 4-H.
- Health and Safety Communication Contest is a public speaking experience open to all 4-H members.
- Demonstration Contest is a speaking and demonstration experience open to all 4-H members.
- Safety Poster Contest is a chance to learn and display knowledge.
- Scholarships for college students available.
- Teen leadership and team work experiences are available through the Junior Leadership Club, 4-H camp counselors, and 4-H representatives on the Jr. Fair Board.
- Volunteer Appreciation banquet and Member Recognition ceremony are held each fall.

## **4-H events and activities, continued**

### *State activities:*

- Ohio 4-H Teen Conference offers workshops and a chance to network with teens from around the state.
- Ohio 4-H Volunteer Conference offers workshops and a chance to network with volunteers from around the state.
- Buckeye Leadership Workshop is a spring camp for adults and teens focusing on recreation and leadership.
- Philanthropy Camp, new in 2006, is a spring camp for teens that explores giving potential.
- Conservation Camp is a summer camp for teens that focuses on land use planning and leadership training.
- 4-H Leadership Camp is a summer camp for teens that provides leadership and citizenship training.
- Sea Camp is a summer camp for teens that focuses on marine-related skills, crafts, and activities such as fishing, snorkeling, and aquatic science.
- Companion Animal Science 4-H Leadership Academy, new in 2005, is a summer session for teens that focuses on animal nutrition, behavior, and health.

*Note:* There are many opportunities for individuals and teams to compete in regional and state clinics and contests as well as the Ohio State Fair.

## **Where to find additional information about 4-H**

Ohio State University Extension office, Geauga County  
14269 Claridon-Troy Rd., Burton, OH 44021, phone 440.834.4656

Information and publications available at the Extension office include:

- Contact information for clubs and advisors
- Camp registration forms
- International program materials
- 4-H Ohio Family Guide
- Samples of 4-H project books and resource books, along with order forms
- 4-H Fact Sheets
- Event and opportunity applications and instructions

Visit the state Ohio 4-H web site at: [www.ohio4h.org](http://www.ohio4h.org)

Access the Geauga County Extension web site at: <http://geauga.osu.edu>

### **References cited in the proceeding information:**

1. "New Family Orientation to 4-H", prepared by Kathy Blackford, Ashland County
2. "Forty Questions You Always Wanted Answered About 4-H", prepared by Kathryn Cox, Ph.D. and R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D.
3. "4-H Ohio Family Guide"
4. "Ohio 4-H Youth Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"