

Marks Remarks by Mark Rowen Lincoln County Educator 10-2-09

The new 4-H year starts with the celebration of National 4-H Week, October 4 -10. During this week 4-H members, leaders, volunteers and parents will be participating by assembling window displays, walking in parades, singing or announcing at school functions, wearing 4-H T-shirts, and hosting other activities. All the celebration is to show others the wealth, fun, and friendship the 4-H program offers to its members. 4-H is the largest out-of-school program in the world.

There are 12 clubs in Lincoln County with a total enrollment of over 200 members. Adult volunteer club leaders provide a positive learning environment for these members. In the club setting, members learn valuable life skills through activities and participation. Clubs provide social, mental/cognitive and also physical development in a positive and safe environment. The guidance from caring adults allow children to practice leadership, public speaking, social graces, nutrition, citizenship, community service in addition to keeping physically fit.

Projects are an area in 4-H that are unlimited. Besides the classic projects like livestock and cooking there are shooting sports, entomology, dog, cat, aerospace and rocketry, engineering, computers, electric, geospatial, sports fishing, bicycling, and others. Many interests a child may become a project. Members showcase their projects for the year at county achievement days, usually in August, and may be awarded an opportunity to advance to the state level. Awards on the county and state level provide incentive for those with a competitive nature.

The traditional 4-H program is available for children age 8-18 before January 1 of 2010. Cloverbuds is a 4-H program for children age 5-7 to learn and develop with age appropriate materials and with a trained adult. This program requires 4-H clubs to have a leader trained specifically for Cloverbuds. Not all clubs have trained leaders for this program.

Watch for 4-H members on Wednesday, October 7. This day has been designated 4-H T-shirt day across South Dakota. If you see a member with the 4-H T-shirt- ask them what projects they displayed and why they like 4-H. You may be surprised at the response. For more information about the 4-H program in Lincoln County go to the Lincoln County website at lincolncountysd.org click on the Extension office, and browse the information or contact the Extension Office at 764-2756 and ask for Kelley or Mark.