

# 4-H + 'C': Confidence

Achievement Days Is Just That For Participants Who Utilize Valuable Lessons With Their Entries

BY **RANDY DOCKENDORF**  
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For Payton Vellek, just competing at Yankton County 4-H Achievement Days marked a big accomplishment.

The fourth-year member of the Mission Hill Hillers admits she suffered from shyness when she started 4-H. Now, the 12-year-old feels a great deal of confidence.

"I used to be scared of my own shadow," she said. "Since I started 4-H, I have felt a big change. 4-H has changed my life."

An animal lover, she competed in the livestock categories of goats, sheep and swine. But she also showed her well-rounded talents in photography, horticulture and home environment.

She has also participated in judging schools and has won the Jake Hoffner Perseverance Award, given to the 4-H youth that is hard-working, perseveres to the end and never gives up.

Such a maturing process doesn't surprise Lauren Fosheim, the Yankton County 4-H/youth development director.

"4-H brings so much confidence," she said. "One of the best things about the 4-H clubs and Achievement Days is that they are county-wide and cut across the different communities. 4-Hers work together and build friendships."

Fosheim said she can relate to the Yankton County 4-Hers. She experienced a similar growing experience when she participated in 4-H at Day County in the northeast part of South Dakota.

"I grew up with this (4-H) program, and I had friends from different towns and clubs," she said. "You gain shared experiences. You have similar goals and lasting friendships because you are doing the same experiences. The 4-H people all build one community."

Fosheim marked her third Achievement Days at Yankton County, and her second full year with the program. She has seen major growth and maturity in the 4-Hers from one year to the next.

"The 4-Hers are going through a big developmental stage," she said. "They are moving through elementary, middle school and high school. The older members of the program are very active, and I'm planning to build up the junior leaders program."

The junior leaders, comprised of ages 13 and older, play a key role, Fosheim said.

"They're a small but mighty group," she said. "They are the core of 4-H, and they demonstrate strong leadership skills. They're the ones who will step up for any activity. They exert a huge impact on our program."

A number of Yankton County 4-Hers shared examples of how the program has given them new skills.

Morgan Nielson, 16, is an eight-year member of the Mission Hill Hillers. She has gained poise through new experiences — particularly raising and showing livestock — that require her to perform in the spotlight.

Last year, she won the overall senior girl in her first year in that age division. She is taking a Focus



**Dogs R Us club member Kate Katterhagen of Yankton displays her entry in the Cultural Education division, which garnered a purple ribbon during Yankton County Achievement Days. Katterhagen created the poster for her Spanish class at Sacred Heart School, where it also garnered honors.**

RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

trip to Washington next June.

"I used to be shy and nervous, but now I have a lot of friendships and have gotten more confident," she said. "I have shown sheep and

cattle, and when it comes to showmanship, you need to stand out to the judge."

She has taken her performance to the next level by competing at

the South Dakota State Fair.

"It's a whole different experience," she said. "Here, at Achie-

**CONFIDENCE** | PAGE 12B



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## Former 4-Hers Give Back

For Some Achievement Days Alums, The Annual County Event Is A Chance To Help The Newest Generation

BY **RANDY DOCKENDORF**  
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Landlords lease out their houses or apartments. Car dealerships lease out their vehicles.

Harrison Hawley leases out his livestock.

The Burbank cattle producer may live in Clay County, but he held a special interest in the recent Yankton County 4-H Achievement Days.

"I raise calves, and I lease them to neighboring kids. The kids work all summer to get the calves ready for Achievement Days," he said. "I usually lease them to 4-Hers in the Burbank area who don't have their own livestock, but this year I have some cattle here at Yankton County."

Hawley's livestock have shown a good track record. He noted his animals won top honors at last year's Clay County 4-H Achievement Days in Vermilion.

Hawley's decision to lease cattle to 4-Hers will open up avenues not currently available, said Lauren Fosheim, Yankton County 4-H/youth development director.

"It provides a good opportunity," she said. "It's a chance for kids who aren't on the farm, or who don't have animals, to show livestock."

Now 24, Hawley participated in 4-H until he graduated from high school. He now wants to pay forward all the opportunities he gained through 4-H.

"I enjoyed it, and I want to help keep these county fairs alive," he said. "There are a lot of really good people here — some of them are friends that you don't



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Enjoying a short break at the Yankton County 4-H cattle barn are (from left) Luke Heine of Vermillion, Harrison (Harry) Hawley of Burbank and Myles Nielson of Mission Hill. Heine judged the sheep round robin competition during Yankton County 4-H Achievement Days, Hawley leased livestock to 4-Hers for competition and Nielson serves as a club leader for the Mission Hill Hillers. All three men are 4-H alumni working to pass the torch to the next generation.

see the rest of the year."

Nothing beats hands-on experience, particularly with livestock, Hawley said.

"It's a really good learning tool," he said. "There are things here that you never learn anywhere else. It takes a lot of responsibility."

Hawley was joined in the Yankton County 4-H cattle barn by Myles Nielson of Mission Hill and Luke Heine of Vermillion. Nielson's family competed at Achievement Days, while Heine judged round-robin showmanship competition the next day.

Heine saw many similarities between Yankton County's Achievement Days and his home Clay County.

"Yankton (County) is a little bigger than Clay County," Heine said. "They're run about the same, but they're slightly different."

So what was Heine looking for when he entered the ring as a judge? For him, it's about the livestock.

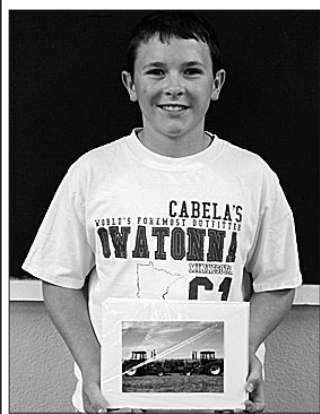
"When it comes to showmanship, (the 4-Hers) need to make themselves invisible," he said. "I'm not looking at them, I'm looking at their animal. They're showing off what's in front of them. There's nothing wrong with (the 4-Her) looking good for a presentation. But show off your animal, not yourself."

Heine said he comes from a large 4-H family. For him, Achievement Days and the state fair represent the culmination of a year's work.

"It's the highlight of the summer," he said.

4-H faces challenges in keeping up

**ALUMS** | PAGE 12B



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