Part of the mission of 4-H is to teach life skills, and several local alumni were recently asked how their time in 4-H helped with their careers.

“I am a marketing/communications professional, and I definitely apply 4-H lessons in my work. I think the top two are my ability to multitask and work in a group and public speaking.”

- Joseph Navatto

“I am a surgical coordinator. If it wasn’t for presentations, I would not be able to sit in front of people everyday and articulate what they need to do and how to be properly prepared.”

- Erin Szakacs

“I am a producer, director, entrepreneur, and educator with an interactive outdoor theatre at a local middle school. Most importantly, my 4-H club nurtured my curiosity about the wider world. That curiosity has fueled all of my professional choices and will always serve as a career lodestone. 4-H helped me recognize the importance of contributing to a nurturing community, and I use the organization as a template for how people with differing interests can come together to create a larger cohesive society where all are respected and each niche is celebrated. Finally, 4-H presentations were an invaluable first stage in preparing for careers that are in the public eye.”

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“I am an officer at the Somerset County Sheriff’s Office and an alumnus of the 4-H Prep Club. 4-H just Kiddin’ goat club, WOOF dog club and 4-H Club leader. 4-H has had a substantial impact on not only my career but my entire life, providing me with life skills including the ability to speak with confidence to a room of people. The competitions enabled me to enhance my capabilities in a fun manner. I continue to lead with my head, heart, hands and health. The discipline, respect and organization taught over the years prepared me with the ability to accomplish tasks others wouldn’t dare to attempt. Not only did 4-H help instill many of the values I have but more importantly!”

- Shannon Snook

Several other young alumni are keeping in touch through email and the Somerset County 4-H Facebook page. Several will be volunteering at the fair, including Carolyn Rubinfeld, Alison Krahenbuehl and Ben Parker.

If you enjoyed your days in 4-H, now is the time to reconnect. Call the office at (908) 526-6644 or come to the Join the 4-H Open House on October 6 to learn about current volunteer opportunities.

- Dawn Gallagher

Join 4-H Open House
Learn about current club and volunteer opportunities

This year’s “Join 4-H Open House” will be held at the Ted Blum 4-H Center on Thursday, October 6, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

For more information, call the 4-H Office at (908) 526-6644 or visit www.4H4Tops.org.

Celebrate National 4-H Week
October 2-8, 2016
Club Milestones

Congratulations to members of the Radio Caucus Club car talking club. The club will be celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2016.

And here’s something to howl about both the WOOF and Wags ‘n’ Whiskers dog clubs are celebrating their 26th anniversaries this year.

Rutgers Celebrates 250 Years of Learning

The theme for this year’s fair, “RU into 4-H!” honors Rutgers, the nation’s eighth oldest institution of higher learning. Chartered in 1766 as Queen’s College and affiliated with the Dutch Reformed Church, the school was renamed Rutgers in 1825 in honor of trustee and Revolutionary War veteran Henry Rutgers. In 1864, Rutgers became New Jersey’s land-grant institution. State legislative acts in 1945 and 1956 designated Rutgers as The University of New Jersey. Today, Rutgers is one of the most significant and diverse comprehensive research universities in the nation. 4-H is part of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station at Rutgers.
A Trip Down Memory Lane

Two former Somerset County 4-H members recently shared some fond memories of their days in 4-H.

Grace Riordan reflected on her days in a home economics back club in the 1960s and early 1970s:

“My parents enrolled me in 4-H when I was 9, along with my sister, Nina. This was before 4-H Prep existed. We started in the cooking and sewing club and named it the All Thumbs Club.”

Grace has many fond memories of the fair. “I recall my first sewing project for the 4-H fair, a popover blouse and a drawstring tote bag which won a blue ribbon.

“Setting up our booth was a big deal for us. Deciding on a theme, the colors, and displaying all of our projects, both food and fabric. In those days, we brought our baked food for judging at the fair on Wednesday morning and then displayed it at our booth, covered in plastic wrap on plates.”

Grace and her club members also participated in one of the first Food ’n Fun Luncheons which was covered by the Somerset Messenger-Gazette newspaper.

“Another highlight of those years was attending 4-H summer camp at Stokes State Forest, when Ted Blum was the 4-H agent. I remember him asking, ‘Are you ready for some bug juice?’”

At the camp, we made many friends while swimming at the lake, hiking the paths, making little ceramics and singing songs at the night-time bonfire.”

Alumnus Daniel Lang shared the following:

“My greatest 4-H moment was the first time I realized how much of a family the members of 4-H can be. I was in the Go-Kart Club and during a just-for-fun pre-competition race, I ended up crashing. I snapped a piece of steel on the frame of my go-kart, which I thought meant that my fair was done before it had really started.”

Daniel said that he was being consoled by his mother when the father of another club member came over to help and spent several hours trying to fix Daniel’s go-kart. When that didn’t work and Daniel’s hopes of competing at the fair were fading, several other dads came to Daniel’s aid.

“These men had spent a lot of time to get the go-kart track ready so that they could watch their own children compete. At that moment, all that they were concerned about was helping me make sure that another parent was able to watch their child race.

“Ever since then, I realized that’s what 4-H is all about. We work hard on our projects but we help each other when needed.”

First National 4-H Camp

The first National 4-H Camp was held June 16-23, 1927, on the lawn in front of the west wing of the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C.

Each state was able to send four delegates to camp, two boys and two girls. Delegates had to be at least 15 years old and have a minimum of three years of club experience.

The first national camp was deemed a success, with 275 4-H club members and leaders attending representing a total of 41 states.

In Memoriam

4-H alumna and long-time volunteer Anna-marie Hockenbury passed away on July 20, 2016, at the age of 84. Anna-marie grew up on a dairy farm in Warren County and was a member of the Ashby Dairy 4-H Club. It was through 4-H that she met her husband of 52 years, Carl Hockenbury, a 4-H'er from Hunterdon County.

The couple had four children, all of whom were active in 4-H clubs in Somerset County. Anna-marie served as the leader of the Ginger Gnomes for more than 25 years.

She is survived by her sons, Craig and Clark Hockenbury, and daughters Carla Sbrana and Caren Loyd, and six grandchildren.

Anna-marie will be greatly missed by our 4-H Family.

Looking back . . . .

4-H News

Published by the Somerset County 4-H Youth Development Program, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Lisa Rothenberg, 4-H Agent, Carol Ward, 4-H Agent

VolumeII 

August 2016 

No.1

Editors Holly Jean Dunbar .......4-H Volunteer, Alumna Barbara Navatto .......4-H Program Coordinator, Alumna Assistant Editors Julie Segovia .......4-H Secretary, Alumna Annette Smutko .......4-H Admin Assistant, Alumna

Send news, articles and photos to: Barbara Navatto navatto@co.somerset.nj.us

Tod Blum, 4-H Center of Somerset County 310 Milltown Road, Bridgewater, N.J. 08807 (908) 526-6644 • www.4HisTops.org

I’m Looking Over a 4-H Clover

Music has been part of the 4-H program since its early beginnings. These songs were published as part of the 4-H History Preservation Project.

We’re Here To See the Fair

Sung to the tune of “Battle Hymn of the Republic”

We are winners in the club work from the counties of the state, We have worked all through the summer, now here we come to celebrate. We have left the other members hanging on the garden gate, While we came to the Fair. Chorus: Glory, glory, Hallelujah! Glory, glory, Hallelujah! Glory, glory, Hallelujah! Yes, we came to the Fair. You may think you win in club work is an easy thing to do, That the road that leads to victory is quite easy to pursue. But be sure there’s a hustle from the start till we get thru To win and see the Fair. We are former lads and lassies and we know just how to toil, We are always up and doing, making profits from the soil, We raise winning pigs and chickens and can fruit that will not spoil, So we can see the Fair. When we started in the club work, we went in to do or die, Now we’re here while all the others are lamenting with a sigh, And we’ll have fun here in (name of town) or we’ll know the reason why, While we are at the Fair.

- Published in 1926 4-H Handy Book

It’s a Long Way to Club Perfection

By Jessie Warrington, sung to the tune of “Tipperary” It’s a long way to club perfection, It’s a long way to go, But we’ll raise pigs, chicks, and rabbits, gardens, And we’ll cook and can and sew. Good-bye, loss and failure; good-bye doubt and fear It’s a long, long way to club perfection, But we’re getting near. “Farm Boys’ and Girls’ Leader” magazine, December 1919
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4-H Alumni News

Volume 11 August 2016 No. 1

Published by the Somerset County 4-H Youth Development Program, Rutgers Cooperative Extension-Lisa Rohenberger, 4-H Agent; Carol Ward, 4-H Agent

Staff Updates

4-H Center Night Supervisor Maryann DelGigante retired after 28 years of service scheduling meeting space at the Center. RCE Secretary and 4-H alumna Georgette Valis also retired. Her assistance with this newsletter in the past was greatly appreciated.

Annie-marie Hokensbury

In Memoriam

4-H alumna and long-time volunteer Anna-marie Hokensbury passed away on July 20, 2016, at the age of 84. Anna-marie grew up on a dairy farm in Warren County and was a member of the Asbury Dairy 4-H Club. It was through 4-H that she met her husband of 52 years, Carl Hokensbury, a 4-H'er from Hunterdon County.

The couple had four children, all of whom were active in 4-H clubs in Somerset County. Anna-marie served as the leader of the Gingersnaps for more than 25 years.

She is survived by her sons, Craig and Clark Hokensbury, and daughters Carla Sbrana and Caren Lloyd, and six grandchildren.

Anna-marie will be greatly missed by our 4-H Family.

Alumni Notes

Kristen Johnson joined the 4-H staff this summer as a fair assistant. An alumna of 4-H horse, sheep and goat projects, member of the 4-H Exchange and 2012 Outstanding 4-H'er, Kristen is currently a member of the Rutgers Collegiate 4-H Club and works in the State 4-H Office.

Annette Schmidt Smutko has joined the 4-H staff as a full-time administrative assistant. A dedicated volunteer, Annette also serves as vice president of the Somerset County 4-H Association, chair of the annual Tricky Tray fund-raising event, and she has been the leader of the Crazy Frog Hoppers club for 10 years.

Holly Dunbar has been named national chairman of conservation for the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). She will be responsible for raising awareness of issues related to the environment among the organization’s 180,000 members and promoting good stewardship practices. Holly also serves as the New Jersey State Society DAR liaison to the 4-H Program. She is a member of the 4-H Association and a Warren Trail Blazers horse club alumna.

First 4-H Camp

Sung to the tune of “Battle Hymn of the Republic”

We have worked all through the summer, now we’re here to celebrate; We have left the other members hanging on the garden gate, While we came to the Fair.

We are winners in the club work from the counties of the state, Sung to the tune of “Tipperary”

It’s a long, long way to club perfection, It’s a long long way to go, But we’ll raise pigs, chicks, and rabbits, gardens, And we’ll cook and can and sew; Good-bye, loss and failure; good-bye doubt and fear It’s a long, long way to club perfection,

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I’m Looking Over a 4-H Clover

Sung to the tune of “I’m Looking Over a 4-Leaf Clover”

I’m looking over a 4-H Clover, that I overlooked before One for head, the second for heart to celebrate Wherever we go, you will always know That we club folks keep swinging along.

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We are former lads and lassies and we know just how to deal, We are always up and doing, making profits from the soil, We raise winning pigs and chickens and can fruit that will not spoil, So we can see the Fair.

When we started in the club work, we won in to do or die, Now we’re here while all the pherens are looming with a sigh, and we’ll have fun here in (name of town) or we’ll know the reason why, While we are at the Fair.

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4-H Continues to Make the Best Better

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“I am a marketing/communications professional, and I definitely apply 4-H lessons in my work. I think the top two are my ability to monicite and work in a group and public speaking.”  
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“I am a producer, director, entrepreneur and educator with an interactive outdoor theatre at a local middle school. Most importantly, my 4-H club nurtured my curiosity about the wider world. That curiosity has fueled all of my professional choices and will always serve as a career lodestone. 4-H helped me recognize the importance of contributing to a nurturing community, and I use the organization as a template for how people with differing interests can come together to create a larger cohesive society where all are respected and each niche is celebrated. Finally, 4-H presentations were an invaluable first stage in preparing for careers that are in the public eye.”  
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- Shannon Snook

Youth Alumni Reconnect with 4-H in Somerset County

Several other young alumni are keeping in touch through email and the Somerset County 4-H Facebook page. Several will be volunteering at the fair, including Carolyn Rubinfeld, Alison Kraehenbuehl and Ben Parker. 

If you enjoyed your days in 4-H, now is the time to reconnect. Call the office at (908) 526-6644 or come to the Join 4-H Open House on October 6 to learn about current volunteer opportunities.

Save the date!

Somerset County 4-H Fair - August 9-11, 2017

Upcoming events to benefit 4-H

- 4-H B.I.G. (Build, Invest, Grow) Rummage Sale: Friday, September 16 and Saturday, September 17, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ted Blum 4-H Center of Somerset County, 310 Milltown Road, Bridgewater.
- 4-H Wreath Sale: Holiday wreath sales are still an important fund-raiser for 4-H. Order your holiday wreath in October. Call (908) 526-6644.
- Festival of Trees: Saturday, December 10, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, December 11, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the 4-H Center.

4-H connects with Rutgers - www.RUinto4H.com

Rutgers Celebrates 250 Years of Learning

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Somerset County 4-H Association Honors Outstanding Alumni

Members of the Somerset County 4-H Association honored the 2016 Outstanding Alumni at their July meeting.

Adele Barree

Adele was in 4-H cooking and sewing clubs from 1965 to 1967. Her first club, a sewing club named Stitch ‘n Scissors, was started by her mother, Mary Thoma. Several years later, cooking was added to the curriculum and the club changed its name to Seam It or Steam It.

Adele has fond memories of learning to sew and cook with her friends; most of the girls in the neighborhood belonged to the club and so did her brothers! They all had a lot of fun at the fair and enjoyed 4-H camp, creating many wonderful memories.

Adele returned to 4-H when her son, Alex, became interested in goats after learning about them at school; goats Loki and Lily soon joined the family. Alex was a member of the Just Kidding club from 2005 to 2007 and Adele became a leader in 2007.

Today, Adele has made the switch from goats to flowers and honey bees and now serves as leader of the Garden & Bee Club.

The club has bee hives and a beautiful garden located at the 4-H Center.

A 4-H Association member, Adele serves on the membership committee, sharing her knowledge and experience in support of our 4-H program.

Dawn Gallagher

Dawn Gallagher became a member of 4-H after winning the opportunity to take home her class guinea pigs. Her teacher at the time was Bob Petroski, who convinced her to join 4-H.

Dawn became a member of Mighty Cavies and Pigs 4-H club. Her love of 4-H has been passed down to another generation as her children became interested in guinea pigs and joined 4-H.

Dawn returned to her 4-H roots in 2006 as a volunteer with her old club and working with her former leaders, Bob Petroski and Judy Burlow. Dawn also began assisting the division chair and eventually took over that position.

Dawn has been a mentor to new club leaders and has helped new clubs get their start, including the Hippity Hop Waggly Happy Handlers.

More recently, Dawn has mentored Claire DeAngelis and Vinh Vu to help organize and oversee the County 4-H Small Animal Show and Small Animal tent at the fair. Dawn has encouraged the group to try a new method for selecting the Royal Robin showmanship winners.

Unfortunately for us, Dawn will be moving south and leaving the program next year, but her legacy to the Somerset County 4-H will be the wonderful group of competent trained volunteers that she leaves behind. This will ensure a bright future for the small animal project.

Adele and Dawn are examples of truly outstanding 4-H alumnae. Their pride and dedication to the 4-H program and its objectives has opened doors for a new generation of 4-H’ers and 4-H volunteers.

We salute them for their service and thank them for their many contributions to 4-H!