

# Northwest Region Focuses on 4-H



So much goes on in a 4-H year that it's hard to keep track of it all. From project workshops to Achievement Days, there is much to learn and see. Much of what 4-H members in the Northwest Region do throughout their club year was showcased at this year's Focus on 4-H, which was held July 2-5 at the Drayton Valley Omniplex. Members from all over the area came to present, witness and learn about not just their projects, but others as well.

The event started on Friday afternoon with barn-board branding, gingerbread house making and stationary roping. There was also a judging competition involving classes of poi balls, heifers, alpacas and hand lotion for members to compete in and give reasons on. For all of the canine members, there was a Rally-O & Agility workshop to take in.

On Saturday morning, the Parade of Clubs and Opening Ceremonies officially kicked off Focus on 4-H 2010. Escorted by an RCMP constable, every club present made their way into the Drayton Valley Omniplex arena, where rodeo announcer Doug Wickham introduced each one, and gave a bit of background information on the club. There were words of welcome from the town of Drayton Valley, the County of Brazeau and the Northwest 4-H Region. Focus on 4-H was officially underway.

As the day went on there was a beehive of activities for people to do. In the lobby of the Omniplex there was a lifeskills display and crafts for people to see and try their hand at. People of all ages were there making no-sew pillows, painting small wooden toys and burning designs into pieces of wood. There was also a silent auction for people to make their bids on items donated by different clubs.



The curling rink was divided in half for the canine and beef projects. On the canine side there was over 30 members competing in obedience, agility and rally-O. Over on the beef side, there was a full ring of heifers, showed by the many talented beef members. With the horses, there was an indoor and outdoor arena for them to show in. On Saturday evening, a few horse clubs performed a musical ride for the crowd. The clubs were very well prepared, and executed their performance extremely well.

As with any 4-H event there were fun activities scheduled throughout the entire weekend. On Saturday afternoon, members had the chance to participate in the Iron Member Decathlon. Each member had to complete a set of challenges that tested their speed, agility and precision. From putting lids on lunch containers to assembling a map of Alberta, they were definitely put to the test! In the evening there were also tons of activities to make up the night. First, there was a lip sync competition, where clubs perform a routine to a chosen song. Every club put their own spin on their song and had a lot of fun while doing it. After the lip sync there was a greased pig contest. Here, members had to catch a pig covered in grease while their rubber-gloved hands were covered in grease as well; the first one to catch the right pig got to keep it. To conclude with Saturday night there was a dance in Omniplex.

On Sunday, the major crowd pleasers were the costume classes. For the beef, canine and horse project, members dressed up their animals in funky and crazy costumes. All members were very creative and the crowd loved seeing what the members came up with. Also on Sunday, members had the chance to be in the Bike and Tractor Rodeo. On either a garden tractor or a bicycle they had to complete a course correctly, and in the fastest time. Members were put to the test even more when the rain came down on them. But like the 4-Hers they are, they pushed on through. In the evening many awards were given out. One of them being the "Heart and Hustle" awards. Every project category votes on a member who puts their all into making the Focus on 4-H weekend enjoyable for everyone. This year's winners were Rebecca Reich (Beef), Jocelyn Biro (Canine), Carissa McGregor (Horse), and Shawna McLaughlin (Lifeskills).





On Monday, Focus on 4-H concluded with the horse trail and gymkhana events. “We were really pleased that there was so much participation by the members, and so much fun had by everyone in all of the shows,” says Jocelyn McKinnon, Northwest 4-H Specialist.

Thank you to our many sponsors for all the different parts of Focus on 4-H. You enabled us to enhance the experience of our 4-H members.

Be sure to check when and where Focus on 4-H 2011 will be held.

For more information please contact Jocelyn McKinnon at 780-674-8250.