

# Show your Greens!

With winter firmly rooted in Alberta for the next two (or six) months, few plans can be made with absolute conviction, what with the unpredictable fluxes in weather, temperature, and road conditions. However, in the world of an Alberta 4-H senior member, the one exception to this absolute is Senior Members' Conference (SMC). Close to ninety senior-aged 4-H delegates from across the province make their way to the Alberta 4-H Centre for the last weekend in January, come blizzard or black ice.

*"It was another very successful weekend,"* stated 4-H Specialist, Cameron Horner. *"The passion that 4-H members have towards SMC is second-to-none and as always the Ambassadors did a fantastic job with planning the program."*

January 28 to 30 proved to be no exception in the SMC record books, with every one of the 88 registered delegates showing up at some point on Friday evening. An apt 45-minute session on time management was held in order to get the delegates thinking, prior to setting them up for a relaxing, "perfect-time-for-socializing" movie/games night.

As is seemingly always the case with 4-H programs, the "rise and shine" chimes felt like they came a bit too early, but, as is always the case with 4-Hers, despite an early wake-up call, everyone hit the ground sprinting. Lance Johnson, former 4-Her and Business Strategist with Edmonton-based Drive Solutions Marketing Firm, conducted a focus group with



members, attempting to gauge what it is that members need, look for and want in a website, whether it be navigational ease, integrated web 2.0 technologies, online registration capabilities, and so on.

Members' resumes were then put to the test, with an hour and a half being dedicated to educating, presenting, evaluating and critiquing the resumes that participants brought from home. Grueling? Likely. Necessary? Definitely.

Following this rather rigorous morning, delegates were treated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Battle Lake Winter Games, where the province comes to compete. Or, well, ... maybe not *compete* as much as have a blast, which was a mandate definitely achieved. Following the winter games, select-a-session was on the itinerary, with every 30 minutes seeing the delegates rotating between healthy eating, finance management, post secondary survival and program brainstorming.

Next thing a 4-Her knows, the day has passed and it's banquet time, where Sunday's best was sported a day early, and keynote speaker Brenda Robinson's address left member half-consumed by tears of laughter, and half-absorbed with thoughts of change. Speaking of changing, following the keynote's address, members leapt from their banquet-appropriate threads and into their green-themed apparel for a night of dancing and singing.

Sunday saw members learning about the Alberta 4-H scholarship program, which awards nearly \$80,000 annually to 4-H members and alumni attending post-secondary. Key Member opportunities were explored and overcoming adversity was championed.

Before you could even snap your fingers and say "wind chill factor," the conference was over, delegates were packing up, and plans were made to reconvene in 2012.



*"SMC was an enriching experience all round. The senior members gained valuable knowledge pertaining to their future and the ambassadors matured as leaders, now more aware of the deeper aspects of event planning. As a whole though, we walked away with some new ideas and the memories of a great time,"* reflected Jenalyn Myggland, member of the Ambassador 2011 SMC planning committee.

Alberta 4-H Ambassadors are in charge of the planning, running and executing of Senior Members' Conference. Ambassadors are selected annually, based on their leadership, communication and passion for the 4-H program, and, if chosen, will be in this prestigious role for a two-year term.

Partner Supporters of Senior Members' Conference are ATB Financial, Federated Co-operative Ltd., Government of Alberta, Livestock Identification Services, Northlands, and Olds College. Partner Host is the 4-H Foundation of Alberta.

