

A Glamorously Green Time – 2010 Alberta 4-H Leaders' Conference

What do the Oscars and a four-leafed clover have in common? Why, the "Green Carpet Gala" themed Alberta 4-H Leaders' Conference, of course! Held January 8-10, Alberta 4-H Leaders' Conference welcomed approximately 240 exceptional volunteer 4-H leaders as they rolled up for what would be a weekend of rejuvenation, reflection, inspiration and education.



Boasting a 67-year existence, the 2010 edition of Leaders' Conference proved to be what many are citing as the smoothest-run year yet. Janet Kerr, 4-H Specialist and a member of the East Central region's organizing committee, hailed this year's conference coordination and session line-up as being a certain success.

"Leaders' Conference is always a highlight for our leaders as it gives them the opportunity to learn from the sessions and from one another, with many leaders then returning to their clubs revitalized and full of enthusiasm for their club work," explains Janet.



Yvonne Yaremcio, Leaders' Conference co-coordinator added, "The volunteer leaders who work to plan the conference chose session topics which gave a great variety of session topics ranging from Internet safety to personality types to conflict resolution to organizing a multi-club to tips on staying energized."

While this might sound like a full enough conference in its own right, it's not even the curve of the cloverleaf. The weekend also hosted the Green Carpet Gala banquet, where elaborate gowns, phenomenal shoes, crushed velvet suit coats and oversized sunglasses were the norm, as well as the naming of the 2010 Golden Clover recipients Dixie Crowson, Linda Gooch and Muffy Knox for their hard work and dedication to the 4-H Provincial Equine Advisory Committee's Horsemanship DVD set, which was created for Alberta 4-H Equine project leaders.



The 2009 Premier's Award winner, Rosie Templeton, spoke during Saturday's luncheon, offering up accolades for leader's continued dedication and their influence on members'

future. For the Saturday evening, the Sponsor Recognition banquet garnered representation from 85% of Alberta 4-H's corporate partners, and as always, the Alberta 4-H Hall of Fame induction ceremony proved to be the perfect complement to the evening's itinerary.

This year's Hall of Fame inductees were Ellen Bonde, who was inducted for her work on the Japanese Exchange program, and Melvin Clark, leader with Gibbons 4-H Light Horse Club, who, respectively, have 32 and 45 years of volunteer service with the 4-H organization.

"I feel tremendously honoured having been chosen for this distinction, and to have been nominated by those who are equally as dedicated to the program is a very humbling experience," Ellen reflected in her induction speech to a banquet room of more than 300 4-H leaders, staff, volunteers, family members and sponsors.



Melvin Clark felt that this honour was the perfect way to cap off his years of dedication to the program, summarizing his years with 4-H with the phrase, "4-H is forever".

"Given the amount of time that I have been with the organization, I joke about being a 4-H 'lifer'. But being a lifer really is a term that takes on a different meaning when you consider the skill development, technical training, communication practice and confidence that all come about as a benefit of being involved in the 4-H program. Those skills truly are with you for a lifetime."

The presenting partner at Leaders' Conference was UFA. The partner supporters include: AMA Insurance, ATB Financial, Cenovus Energy, EnCana, Government of Alberta, Lammler's Western Wear and Tack, Olds College, and Viterra.

For more information on the 4-H organization and its benefits, programs, available awards and scholarships, and sponsorship, please visit the 4-H website, www.4h.ab.ca.

