

Senior Members' Conference (SMC) has come and gone for another year - which is amazing ... didn't the 2009 edition *just* happen – and for another year (the past eight, actually), senior-aged 4-H members left the Alberta 4-H Centre on January 31 more informed, better prepared and more connected to their peers than they were upon their arrival on January 29, 2010.

“Senior Members' Conference is great in that it brings together senior members from across the province, which allows for networks and relationships to be created,” commented Lindsey Meredith, second-year Ambassador for the South region, and part of the SMC planning committee. “These connections will help members in the years to come when they leave home for school – the world doesn't seem nearly as big and scary when you're a 4-H member because you always seem to know someone wherever you go.”

Keynote speaker Ryan Porter was Friday night's highlight, with his presentation entitled, “Make Your Own Lunch”, which was not a cooking class as much as it was a motivational talk on the power that lies in decision, and the necessity for youth to start to identify what they see their ideal “lunch” being.

“Ryan's presentation really engaged the members, as this is the point in their lives where many of them are starting to think about what exactly they do want with their lives,” said Cameron Horner, Alberta 4-H Communications and Marketing Specialist and facilitator of the Ambassador planning committee. “Hopefully Ryan's insights prove to stick with the delegates for the weekend, and for years to come.”

Saturday morning's yoga session started everyone's day off with a stretch, which then carried right into breakfast and a follow-up workshop by Ryan Porter, who expanded on his ideas expressed the night before by challenging delegates with four decisions that they can make that will change the way they currently view their future.



Rick Davidson of Cenovus Energy presented a session on the “how-to” of resume writing, as well as tips for successfully navigating an interview. Being that for most of the delegates, post-high school employment is right around the corner, job-related skills are sure to come in handy.



While many people think “Vancouver” when they think of the 2010 Olympics, but for 93 SMC attendees, the grounds of the 4-H Centre is where this year’s world’s games took place. On Saturday afternoon, the Battle Lake Winter Olympics took place, and with little to no training, senior members spent some time leaping, sliding, running and balancing their way to gold.



Following their athletic excursion, delegates took in four different “select-a-session” presentations, which covered nutrition and healthy eating, financing for students, farm and acreage safety, and educational enhancement opportunities such as high school credits through 4-H (CTS) and Speak Out (a conference put on by Alberta Education).

A program review session after Saturday night’s banquet provided delegates the chance to voice their likes, dislikes, suggestions and ideals for the 4-H organization; this information will be used in making decisions about how to move forward with 4-H programming.

Sunday started with a tutorial on the many scholarships available through Alberta 4-H, with an Ambassador Q & A session to follow. Ambassadors fielded any number of questions regarding the roles and expectations of being an Ambassador, which was a good conversation to have, what with Selections happening just around the corner (April 30 –May 3).



And finally, goodbyes were said and wishes for a safe drive were imparted, as another year of

Senior Members Conference drew to a close on Sunday afternoon. Remember to get your applications, which can be found in the fall issue of the *4-H Magazine* as well as online at www.4h.ab.ca, in early, as this is a program that fills up fast.

Cenovus Energy was the Presenting Partner of Senior Members' Conference; Partner Supporters were ATB Financial, Federated Co-operative Limited, Government of Alberta, Livestock Identification Services (LIS), Northlands and Olds College.

