



Keeping the Legacy Alive

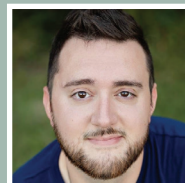
THE TORCH

THE WV 4-H ALL STARS

WINTER 2023

The Chief's Signal

Abebrum Schoonover
Chief, 4-H All Stars



It's good to be back!! If you weren't able to attend the West Virginia Volunteer Leaders and All Star Weekend you really missed out! This year we put service at the forefront of the event and provided multiple service projects to participate in on Saturday. This was a great opportunity to ramp up your service hours for the year and to spend time with fellow All Stars. A big HOW HOW goes out to Shay Teter for taking the lead on organizing and working with the state office for a successful weekend. You can read more about that in her article.

As we wind down from the holidays and head into a new year, let's give thanks for the many blessings bestowed upon us in 2022 and strive for an even better 2023. During this incredibly busy time I encourage you to think about service, not as grandiose service projects,

but as the things you're already doing. Small acts of service that you're doing for your family, friends, and neighbors are just as important as volunteering at the food bank or cleaning up a highway. It's easy to overlook how much you've already done and continue to do.

As an organization, let's redouble our efforts in support of the great work the 4-H program does throughout West Virginia. And if you have ventured outside our borders and made your home somewhere else, show your pride as an All Star and let the outside world know your heart for service. After all, that is what someone saw in you when they nominated you to be a part of this organization. So, from the Executive Committee and myself, Thank you for all you do and Happy New Year!

Forging Ahead

Shay Teter, First Lessor Chief

"Service to others is the rent we pay for our room here on earth." -Muhammad Ali

This quote seemed very fitting when looking back on our time at the 2022 All Star and Volunteer Leader Conference. I think I can speak for all when I say that it was wonderful to be able to reconvene at Jackson's Mill!

The Planning Committee was excited to see approximately 130 friends of 4-H return to the Mill and enjoy the weekend! Special thanks to the staff at WVU Extension for planning and presenting great workshops that provided attendees with new ideas and teaching opportunities they were able to take back to the counties. Also, several service projects were completed during the weekend, including a "Creek Clean-Up" activity, where a group of All Stars waded into the West Fork near the amphitheater and removed lots of trash from the river! Another group cleaned and painted the iconic rocking chairs on the Dining Hall porch,

some made sleeping mats for the homeless using plastic bags and a group of volunteers traveled to the Mountaineer Food Bank in Weston to label and pack food boxes.

Throughout the weekend, we enjoyed bonfires and a s'mores bar, played a great trivia game while rooting on the Mountaineers and we even convened an indoor council circle. Most importantly, in spite of the rainy weather, we were able to conduct our traditional All Star Consecration and Initiation for a large group of new All Stars in the beautiful West Virginia Building.

To cap off such a great weekend, the Jackson's Mill Historic District was opened to us for both demonstration and tour. I learn something new every time I take a tour of this area of the Mill! Overall, the weekend was a great way to reflect upon our year, and a great starting point to forge the road ahead! We hope you can join us 2023!

Welcome Back! The New 4-H Year

Brent Clark, Director, 4-H Youth Development, WVU Extension Service

With the start of fall, also comes the start of a new 4-H year. For the first time since the fall of 2019, we were able to kick off our 4-H year in full force with club meetings, open house events, fall festival activities, community service, and much more! This past October, thousands of youth across the state enrolled for a brand new 4-H year through our online system. We are finally starting to see a level of activity that more closely resembles 4-H in West Virginia “pre-COVID”. Here are a few highlights over the past couple of months...

Since October, we have had several state level 4-H activities that have reached a large number of youth, volunteers, and families. Many of you kicked off the new 4-H year at Jackson’s Mill during the 2022 WV 4-H All Star and Volunteer Leaders weekend. There were more than 200 people who visited Jackson’s Mill throughout the weekend to participate in a variety of activities including the WV 4-H All Star annual meeting, consecration ceremony, workshops, community service projects, award recognitions, social activities, and the yearly All Star auction fundraiser. This fall also saw the return of regional volunteer trainings throughout the state. Twelve different sites across West Virginia hosted a total of 267 volunteers who spent time reconnecting, learning about new trends in positive youth development, and sharing ideas.

As a part of WVU 4-H Football Day, close to 800 4-Hers, volunteers, families, and alumni visited Morgantown at the end of October for the WVU vs TCU game. Prior to the game a tailgate celebration was held at the WVU Alumni Center and was open to anyone with a 4-H connection – or anyone who just wanted to stop by and say hello. Close to 200 people stopped by to visit, picked up their free limited edition WVU/4-H bandana, and enjoyed a pepperoni roll from Jackson’s Mill. Total attendance for the actual game was just over 50,000 people

– if you do some quick math that means that close to 1.5% of the total game attendance purchased their ticket through the State 4-H office promotion. That total number does not even include everyone with 4-H connections who are season ticket holders, or who obtained tickets in another way. 4-H was well represented at the WVU Homecoming game!

To close out 2022, we shifted our State Teen Leader Weekend from March to November and hosted teens from throughout the state at Jackson’s Mill during the first week-end of November. The shift from spring to fall was an effort to bring 4-H teens together earlier in the 4-H year to provide them with information, trainings, and resources that they can use to help support our counties and clubs throughout the 4-H year. While it seems like there is never a “perfect time” to host an event, we have found that the shift to the fall resulted in a larger number of campers compared to 2019. It is just another testament of the need to continually re-evaluate what we do in 4-H and how we can make things even better!

It has been a very optimistic and encouraging start to the new 4-H year to say the least. As I have mentioned before, many of the struggles over the past two years have resulted in ways to improve our 4-H program and the All Star organization. I would encourage each of you to continue supporting the many wonderful programs, activities, and events that 4-H has to offer – wherever you may be. You will continue to see new ways of offering traditional programs, and you will also see new ideas come to life. As 4-H All Stars, it is our on-going responsibility to support the changes that will ensure we remain relevant for decades to come. We must share our time, our talents, our contributions, and our support as we continue to be guided by those who have come before, and open to that which is yet to come...

WVU Camp Scholarship Honors Legacy of Former 4-H'er and All Star

Lauren Seiler, Director for Development, WVU Extension

West Virginia University Extension 4-H'ers across the state will soon get more opportunities to attend 4-H events at WVU Jackson’s Mill through a new scholarship fund honoring a long-time 4-H'er and All Star.

Donna Gail Michel was a lifelong 4-H'er and a 4-H All Star for more than 60 years. She was even the chief of the West Virginia 4-H All Stars in 1981. To say she loved 4-H is an understatement.

Retired Reverend Louis Craig Michel, Donna Gail’s husband, wanted to honor his late wife by creating an endowment for 4-H state camps.

Although Reverend Michel was never involved in 4-H until he met his wife, he soon learned to love 4-H as she did. From Providence, Rhode Island, to Oxford, Mississippi, they went all over the U.S. attending All-Star conferences together.

The Michels were committed supporters of 4-H over the years, even deciding together that they wanted to write it into their estate to give to the program. However, Donna Gail passed before those plans came to fruition. Now, Reverend Michel is carrying out their plan on his own, creating the 4-H State Camp Scholarship Endowment. This scholarship was announced at a celebration of life held for his late wife at WVU Jackson’s Mill on October 1.

This endowment, worth \$300,000, will support youth attending 4-H camps or programs at WVU Jackson’s Mill.

This includes traditional summer camps, pod camps, week-end camps, seminars and competitions. A percentage of scholarships awarded will be named Plymale Promises in memory of Donna, whose maiden name was Plymale.

“There was no place more special for her than Jackson’s Mill, and no people more special than the 4-H All Stars,” said Reverend Michel. The couple attended the West Virginia 4-H All Star conference every year until they moved to Arizona, but they did make it back home for her last conference at Jackson’s Mill in 2019. Although they attended 4-H All Star conferences across the U.S., nothing was quite like West Virginia.

“They were all 4-H'ers, so they spoke a common language and had common values, and it was interesting to hear them relate the experiences that 4-H has in their states,” said Reverend Michel. “But West Virginia is a pioneer 4-H state – it’s one of the oldest and leading 4-H programs, so people get advice from West Virginians because they’ve been at it a long time and have done an excellent job.”

Donna’s ties to 4-H predate even her own life. Her father was an agriculture teacher and agronomist, and he is in the Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame at Jackson’s Mill. Her aunt attended summer camp at Jackson’s Mill the very first year it was open in 1920. “As deep as her roots were in 4-H and in agriculture, it’s almost natural that she had this love and respect for Jackson’s Mill,”

(Continued on page 3)

Annual Conference Meeting Minutes

The Annual Meeting of the West Virginia 4-H All Stars was called to order by Chief Abebrum Schoonover on September 30, 2022. The Pledge of Allegiance and 4-H Pledges were recited by those in attendance.

Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting were displayed on the overhead screens for those in attendance and online for those who joined the meeting virtually by Zoom. Craig Young moved the approval of the minutes. Ryan Kerns seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Treasurer Jordan Pruett presented the Treasurer's Report (same report as printed in *The Torch* – Summer Issue). After review, the report was filed for audit. Treasurer Pruett also reported the following: After submitting all outstanding filings, the organization's 501c3 Tax Exempt status has been reinstated with help from Senator Joe Manchin's Office; the All Star Life Membership Fund being managed by WVU has a current market value of \$126,586.57; and, the organization recently hosted a successful Gift Card Raffle fundraiser where the winner donated all the prize money back to the Order. Additional fundraisers will be planned in the future.

Membership Chair Alan Rollins reported on the current membership. To date, the total number of All Stars stands at 9,681. Of those, we are aware of 5,302 known All Stars with 831 known deceased and 3,548 members with invalid mailing addresses. This past Summer, 4,983 *Torches* were mailed out with 72 returned and no forwarding address. 191 issues were emailed instead of standard mail.

Written Scout Reports from Steven Hyatt (Wetzel and Marshall), Kristi Gannon (Barbour, Braxton, Clay and Lewis) and Ryan Butler (Harrison and Monongalia) were provided to members, both in person and virtually.

The Unfinished Business of the updating the status of the IRS Tax Exempt status was reported as part of the Treasurer's Report.

Under New Business, Lauren Seiler and Carol Young gave an update on the All Faith Chapel and reported that progress is be-

ing made to the ongoing refurbishment project at Jackson's Mill.

The Nominations Committee presented their slate of nominees for the various offices up for election. By consensus, it was decided to address the nominations individually, by office. Craig Young presided over the nominations process. The following individuals were nominated for office: Chief: *Abebrum Schoonover*; First Lessor Chief: *Shay Teter*; Second Lessor Chief: TJ Dewitt, Jeffrey Davis and *Jodie Varner*; Scribe: *Ayla Mathias*; Treasurer: *Jordan Pruett*; Communications Chair: *Kelly Blake* and Laurel Russel; Service Chair: *Chad Proudfoot*; Membership Chair: *Alan Rollins*; Nominations Committee (1 seat): *Michael Dawson* (Floor Nom.); Scout (R1): *Justin Miller*. Elizabeth Jackson and *Carole Scheerbaum* (Floor Nom.); Scout (R2): *Jill Devrick* and *Ryan Butler*; Scout (R3): Wendy Snider, *Mason Arbogast* and *Kathy Coen Marlow*; Scout (R4): *Kristi Gannon* and *Charles Bershire*; Scout (R5): Amy Chrisman, *Cedrice Kenney* and *Ryan Kerns*; Scout (R6): *Emily Parsons* and *Dawn Streets*; Scout (R7): *Chuck Dransfield* and *Sheryl Sergent*; Scout (R8): *Katie Little* and *Michelle Watkins Samuel*. Motions to close the nominations for each office were made and seconded. Voting commenced by online voting for those attending by Zoom and by paper ballots by those attending in person. The results were announced (*those elected are noted above in italics*).

During questions, Mary Ellen Cook inquired about dates for the 2023 conference and about planning for the Interstate Conference. Chief Schoonover noted that dates for the 2023 conference were being worked out with Jackson's Mill and will be announced at a later date. Also, planning for the next Interstate Conference being hosted by WV All Stars will begin soon in the new year.

With no further business to come before the Order, Craig Young moved to adjourn the meeting. Jeff Yokum seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned.

Dates to Remember

- **Online Nominations for All Stars**
January 15th-April 15th
- **Final Consecration for 2022 Class -**
March 12 – Jackson's Mill
11:30 am following Dance Weekend
- **All Star Conference 2023 -**
September 29-October 1

WVU Camp Scholarship (Continued from page 2)

Reverend Michel said. "She wanted to make it available so that any 4-H'er could have the opportunity to come here."

This endowment is open so that anyone can donate into it at any point. This scholarship will fund 4-H experiences for many youths in West Virginia over the years. "This scholarship will ensure that future generations of youth throughout West Virginia are able to experience 4-H and Jackson's Mill just like Donna Gail," Brent Clark, Director of WVU Extension 4-H and Youth Development, said. "Camps and events at Jackson's Mill expose youth to new individuals, skills and talents that will help them grow and develop throughout their life."

Nominations are Open!

The new member nomination process has opened and nominations will be accepted through April 15th. To access the online nomination form, please visit our Facebook page for a link or through our website link (www.wv4hallstars.com/resources).

As a reminder, an instructional video can be viewed on our YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wvFCjOA-Qig4>).

Nominations for Outstanding All Stars will be open at a later date. Information will be forthcoming.

Should you have questions or need assistance, please contact First Lessor Chief Shay Teter at shayteter@gmail.com.



VIRGINIA 4-H ALL STARS
Celebrating 100 Years of Service
1922-2022

**4 - H ALL STAR
INTERSTATE CONFERENCE**

SAVE *the* DATE

AUGUST 3 - 6, 2023

BEST WESTERN HOTEL
CULPEPER, VIRGINIA

MORE INFORMATION TO COME



SERVICE PROJECTS & WORKSHOPS



Creek Clean Up



Mountaineer Food Bank



Rocking Chair Clean Up



Plastic Mat Loom



Plastic Mat Preparation



Mountaineer Food Bank



It only takes a
spark!



Folk Dancing



Understanding Addiction





OUTSTANDING 4-H ALL STAR
Michele Hale



OUTSTANDING 4-H ALL STAR
Montana Callison



OUTSTANDING 4-H ALL STAR
Locke Wysong



OUTSTANDING 4-H ALL STAR
Emily Parsons



OUTSTANDING 4-H ALL STAR
Jeff Yokum



OUTSTANDING 4-H ALL STAR
Patty Crupe

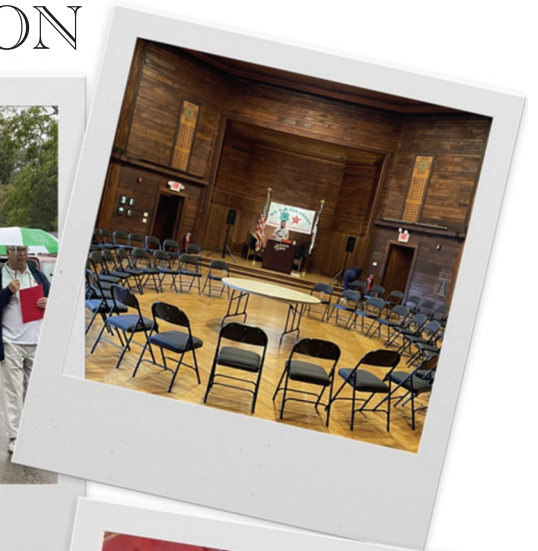


OUTSTANDING 4-H ALL STAR
Nancy Lupardus



★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Congratulations! ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CONSECRATION



2022 4-H All Star Weekend



Business Meeting



Council Circle



Donna Gail's Memorial



Historical Tour



Reflections



Past Chiefs



Smore's



Memorial





Keeping the Legacy Alive

WEST VIRGINIA 4-H ALL STARS

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2nd Lesser Chief Jodie Varner
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Membership Chair Alan Rollins
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Nominations Member Jean Ann McGuigan
Nominations Member Michael Dawson
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Region 6 Scout Dawn Streets
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Region 8 Scout Michelle Watkins Samuel

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Region 1:

Brooke, Hancock, Marshall, Ohio,
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Region 2:

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Tucker Counties

Region 3:

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Roane, Wirt and Wood Counties

Region 4:

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Counties

Region 5:

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Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan and
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Region 6:

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Mason, Putnam and Wayne Counties

Region 7:

Fayette, Greenbrier, Monroe, Nicholas,
and Pocahontas Counties

Region 8:

Logan, McDowell, Mercer, Mingo,
Raleigh, Summers and Wyoming
Counties

THE TORCH

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