

What Volunteers Do to Assist in the 4-H Exhibit Building at Oregon State Fair

The 4-H Exhibit Building at Oregon State Fair has about 6,000 static exhibits displayed during fair plus contests taking place 8 days of fair. Volunteers are the key people who make all of this possible by assisting the paid staff with everything that is done. Here are the types of volunteer positions that make 4-H State Fair possible each year. Volunteers may assist for one day or more. If you are a 4-H adult parent or leader/teen interested in volunteering please contact Mona Easley at: mona.easley@oregonstate.edu or call 541-737-1327.

Fair Set-up - Assist in covering tables and hanging signs the weekend before exhibits arrive at fair.

Receive Exhibits – All exhibits arrive at the 4-H Exhibit Building from the County Extension Offices on Monday before fair opens. Volunteers assist in checking-in each exhibit to be sure it meets the requirements in the fair book. They arrange exhibits by class number to be ready for judging.

Judge Exhibits – All exhibits are judged on the Tuesday before fair opens. Approximately 70 judges are working that day to judge all static exhibits. Volunteers assist each judge as a clerk to prepare exhibits for judging and fasten ribbons on score cards. In return the volunteers learn about what the judge looks for, what skills are needed to do well at fair and what they can do next year to improve their skills for teaching 4-H members.

Display Exhibits – All hands on deck for the last two days before Oregon State Fair opens. All the exhibits in the 4-H Exhibit Building are displayed for the fair visitors. Banners and signs are hung. With 5,000 exhibits to display, it makes less work for all if everyone pitches in to help.

Clerk for Contests – Food Prep Contest, Mini Meal Contest, Presentations and Fashion Revue take place on 8 days out of 11 during fair. They welcome participants as they arrive, help them get oriented to the contest process, serve food sample to the public, help the judge as the contest takes place to staple ribbons to score sheets and in general keep the contest running smoothly.

4-H Exhibit Building Information Desk – Teens are especially qualified for this type of volunteer position as they are enthusiastic about their 4-H experience and may answer questions that the fair visitors have about exhibits in the building, events and how to join a 4-H club.

General Assistance with Office and Fair Duties – Every day of fair is a new experience with different needs and events. Volunteers assist the 4-H staff with office duties, filing ribbons in county boxes, watering the 4-H container gardens, potted plants and floral arrangements. As needs arise throughout the day, volunteers do the things that need to be done so the events will be successful.

Exhibit Take-Down – on Labor Day evening all the exhibits are piled in county groups and are prepared for pick-up by county staff and volunteers. A pizza party is held on the evening of Labor Day to give the volunteers the energy to work into the night after fair closes. The more volunteers working, the faster the job is finished. Those counties who bring groups of adult and teen volunteers to help that night are allowed to load their exhibits after the exhibits are down/at the end of the evening, so they don't have to return on Tuesday to haul them back to their county.

Assist Closing Day – Volunteers are needed on Tuesday after Labor Day to help load exhibits into county cars/vans to return to the county, pack supplies and prepare to close the building.