

Home Economics Development Committee
Minutes – Oct 6, 2008

Members Attending: Nancy Kershaw, Pam Wiederholt, Joan Hart, Melanie Mintkin, Kim McCullough (for Lynette Black), Paty Jager, Sarah Pick, Patricia Dawson, Roberta Anderson, Amanda Bailey, Mona Easley, Elaine Schrumpf .
Guests: Tina Hohman, Joy Mosier, Shelly Creach

Members and guests introduced themselves and shared their 4-H roles and county. Three groups connected by polycom and one by phone.

Home Environment

Exhibit classes had been consolidated to four types of exhibit (decorative item, organizer/storage item, textiles accessory item, and furniture) with separation of Jr, Int, and Sr. Total number of exhibits has ranged from 37 to 17 over the past 8 years. This year's total was 25. Discussion followed about the loss of connection between the Home Environment project and Fiber Arts and other Home Economics projects. Home Environment could link very closely with skills and techniques members are learning in other project areas. We discussed changing from Jr/Int/Sr as a means of separating the classes to using the project units (1/2/3/4) regardless of member age. The committee advised looking more closely at the types of work members of different ages were doing to be sure there would not be a disadvantage to younger members. Elaine will try to evaluate next year at state fair.

Knitting

Total knitting exhibits were about the same as the 3 previous years at 83. New classes in loom knitting accounted for 22 of those – all in the beginning level. Felted knitting had 7 exhibits total in the beginning and expanding levels. Knitting with needles phase 5 (combining colors to create a design) had no exhibits and has usually been very low. The 4-H Knitting Member Guide was revised this past summer and is now available on-line only. It now includes information on loom/board knitting. The record is a separate publication available on the state website. All Home Economics (and Expressive Arts) records are now available in two forms. One form can be printed and filled in by hand. The second form is a Word document that can be downloaded and filled in on a computer.

Crochet

The Total crocheted exhibits were down slightly to 46. Two of these were in the felted crochet classes, beginning and expanding levels. The possibility of adding a class for items (such as snowflakes) made from finer thread was discussed. The current classes are based on inclusion of specific stitches and could include all types of thread, yarn, or cloth stitches. It seemed that this would include the snowflakes and expanding the number of classes did not seem warranted by the number of exhibits. Another alternative would be for the member to enroll in Home Environment and enter the snowflakes as a decorative item. The 4-H Crocheting Project Member Guide was revised slightly and separated from the project record. Both are available on-line only.

Home Economics Judging Contests

This was the first year of having the county judging contest data reported for a state level contest. There were some challenges. In a few cases, the score sheets were handed back to members before the class placings and scores were captured. Most counties included oral reasons this year but there seemed to be a large variance in scoring even with the new oral reasons score sheet. Some counties had all scores in the mid range while a couple counties had full points for most of their members. Reasons scores were not included in the state contest because of this. The process of members giving oral reasons continues to be a strong tool in their development and will continue to be included as part of the state contest whether scores are actually counted or not.

Both contests had more counties participating than when members needed to travel to state fair. Sewing/Clothing had 155 members in 13 counties. When comparing the skill levels 4-6 with previous years, there were 48 participants this year compared to 13 and 14 in 2007 & 2006. Skill levels 7-9 had 23 members compared to 14 and 7 in the two previous years. Foods & Nutrition had 164 members in 14 counties. Phases 4-6 had 54 members compared to 23 & 24 for two previous years. Phases 7-9 had 26 members compared to 11 and 13.

A question came up about the value of team scores and awards when teams were not previously formed and had not worked together. Elaine's answer was that the possibility of team awards can be useful in the county to encourage greater participation and the recognition can kindle the interest in improvement on a county basis. It would be possible for counties to designate pre-formed teams if they so choose.

Sewing/Clothing

This was the first year for the revised Sewing/Clothing exhibit classes so comparison on a class by class basis was not possible. Number of exhibits seems to drop for each additional year in the project.

Skill level 1 - 177 exhibits (totals include Hands for Larger Service and Creativity).

Skill level 2 - 146

Skill level 3 - 90

Total for all 3 Basic Skills levels = 423 (2006 – 485; 2007 – 417)

Skill level 4 - 62

Skill level 5 - 13

Skill level 6 - 19

Total for all 3 Expanding Skills levels = 94 (2006 – 105; 2007 – 113)

Skill levels 7, 8, 9 – 38 Previous totals 2006 – 50; 2007 – 38

Participation in Fashion Revue was down slightly to 32 Intermediates (2006 – 39; 2007 – 44) and 32 Seniors (2006 – 35; 2007 – 34).

Intent of wording for the Creativity classes was discussed. Part of the wording was “exhibit must have been made by exhibitor”. This was to indicate that purchased items could not be embellished and entered in this class. Part of the evaluation was on the construction skills of the member. However, recycled items can be entered in this class and the question was whether any original construction of the recycled item could be

retained. An example is recycling a pair of jeans into a skirt which retains the original waist of the jeans or converting jeans into a tote bag that retains pockets or other sewn parts of the jeans. New wording will say

Creativity – Item or garment which has been enhanced through embellishment, fabric manipulation, or fabric creation; recycled items **are included and may retain some seams/design of the original item as appropriate**; exhibit must have been made by the exhibitor and use fabrics and skills appropriate to skill level _.

The Sewing/Clothing record has been revised according to feedback from the committee last year and is available on the state website.

Foods and Nutrition

Numbers of exhibits were considerably less than previous years. The total was 395 exhibits compared to 603 and 608 for the two previous years. This breaks down as follows: All food product classes had a total of 287 (2006 – 446; 2007 – 460); educational posters 15 (30; 18); recipe collections – 93 (132; 125). Mini Meal contest had 32 contestants which is about the same as the previous few years. Food Prep contest was actually increased slightly over last year (45 total compared to 34 last year).

However there used to be 60 to 80 members participate before the classes were consolidated. Although county quotas were increased, this may not have been enough. We decided to remove the quotas for next year. Counties will be allowed to send all members that the county judge thinks is qualified.

A small clarification will be made to the food product description for Shortened Cakes. The previous wording said No commercial mixes or toppings. The intent is that the cakes have no frosting or topping of any kind. Wording will read: No commercial mixes; No toppings (i.e., frosting, icing, glaze, powdered sugar, fruit or nuts.)

Food Preservation

Exhibits were down slightly over the previous two years. Total of all classes was 144. Canned fruit, jam with pectin, and dried fruit continued to be the larger classes. We discussed an overall 4-H issue that has particular implications for Food Preservation. General eligibility rules in the state fair book say: A 4-H exhibit must be the work of the 4-H member **and completed during the current enrollment year**. The phrase “current enrollment year” was interpreted by some to mean Oct 1 to the next Sept 30. This leaves a “down time” from after the county fair to Oct 1 where work that the member does could not be exhibited. In Food Preservation, this would eliminate much of the harvest that comes from local orchards and gardens. It affects other project areas as well (entomology, forestry, geology, photography) and will be discussed in those advisory meetings as well. We propose adding an additional sentence to clarify that this exclusionary period is not the intent. It may read:

A 4-H exhibit must be the work of the 4-H member and ~~completed during the current enrollment year~~ **completed as part of the current year’s project. [Work done after county fair but prior to Oct 1 and not previously exhibited may be included in the next project year.]**

New ideas and supports

This will be a trial year for 4-H Iron Chef contest at state fair. The basic concept will follow the current TV show for a fun foods contest based on teamwork and use of a mystery ingredient. The contest will happen at state fair on Monday, Aug 24, 2009. Counties do not need to conduct a qualifying contest. Any team of 2 or 3 Int &/or Sr members who participated in one of their county foods contest may enter. Complete details are available on the state website.

Regional leader trainings focusing on Foods were scheduled for this fall but were cancelled due to very low registrations. Effort at the state level will focus on presenting the update and support information in a format that will reach more leaders across the state and be available for new leaders in years to come. One of these approaches will include short video clips that can be available on the state website and downloaded to DVD. The first two topics will be ingredient measuring and table setting. The committee suggested additional foods topics including: oven rack and pan placement; food mixing techniques (folding, stirring, beating, etc); baked product methods (biscuit, muffin, cake methods, etc); using the right pan for baked products. There was some discussion about whether these needed to be accompanied by written scripts or handouts. We also discussed the possibilities of including sewing techniques. A question was raised about whether the measuring video would use weighing rather than measuring ingredients. It will not since most recipes in the US use measurements. Converting to weights would require looking up the standard weights for each different ingredient since they do not all weigh the same for a standard amount. [One cup of bread crumbs does not weigh the same as 1 cup of sugar.]

The state website is just recently revised and includes project sections that have all the materials related to a specific project linked from a specific section for that project or project area. This is where the video clips will be housed.

The idea of statewide project discussions by phone/polycom connection was discussed. This would give leaders an opportunity to ask questions related to a specific project. Elaine will pursue the possibilities.