

4-H Clubs are for everyone

By Dianne Cornish

If you're between 10 and 21 years of age, like to visit different places, learn new skills and meet new people, Lisa Walsma of Acton knows of an organization you might want to consider joining. Lisa is a member of the Halton Get Growing 4-H Club and she's doing what she can to get the word out to the community that 4-H needs and wants new members. She also wants people in Halton's urban areas to know that "membership in 4-H Clubs isn't restricted to people from rural communities."

Town and city people can benefit from "all the hands-on experience" that 4-H provides to its members, Lisa contends. While many people tend to associate 4-H with agricultural themes, such as livestock raising or judging, there are many different subject areas covered by the clubs. Theme areas include agriculture, growing plants, personal growth, natural resources, marketing, and home and family.

Halton 4-H clubs are currently working on increasing their membership. Older members are moving on to other pursuits and there's a definite need to attract new young members, Lisa stressed.

The clubs will kick off their membership drive with a sign-up night, March 25, at the Thompson Road Arena, in Milton. Registration will begin at 7:30 p.m.

A member of Halton 4-H Club for seven years, Lisa has completed 30 projects and received several awards for her efforts. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF) and 4-H Canada Association provide plaques to all club members each time that they complete six projects.

There are many reasons to join the organization, Lisa said. Members learn to "develop leadership skills and work with others." Self-confidence is also given a boost. There are also many travel opportunities available as club members often visit museums, attend regional and provincial conferences and participate in exchange visits.

Members can join as many as three clubs at a time. Generally, a club will meet three nights a month during the summer and once a week during the fall and winter months.

Lisa, a first-year office administration student at the Brampton campus of Sheridan College, said the 4-H Club lives up to its motto, which is, "Learn to Do by Doing." She suggested that anyone interested in learning more about the club should contact rural organization specialist Lisa Thompson at the Georgetown OMAF office at 873-9930 or 1-800-361-1939.



Lisa Walsma

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