



## KAE4-HA

# THE PRAIRIE PROFESSIONAL

## A Note from the President...

“Attitude is the difference between an ordeal and an adventure.” This quote came from the recent Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) meeting in Nashville where Extension Professionals from across the nation came together to learn, network and serve.

In these challenging times, attitude can be everything. As we sat in the (JCEP) meetings, we listened to the “state of Extension” across our country. We heard many challenges being shared. Those are things that could easily get us down.

But 4-H Agents do seek the “adventure” rather than the “ordeal” in most situations. There was so much positive energy in the meetings, that if you hadn’t heard the stories, you wouldn’t know of the challenges.



**Susan Schlichting**

It’s not to say that there aren’t tough decisions to make and challenges ahead for us. There certainly may be. But I’m encouraged when I see our leadership focusing on the positive and seeking ways to turn those challenges ahead into opportunities / adventures. Our organization is in good hands!

We came back with several new and exciting developments to share from our National organization. If you haven’t logged on to the new NAE4-HA website, check it out at [www.nae4ha.com](http://www.nae4ha.com). There is a wealth of information there for your use. As the website evolves, it will become a vibrant place for professionals to interact through committee work and agent discussion boards. It will be up to each of us to keep our profile information updated.

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NAE4-HA conference committee will have their website up and ready to accept registrations later this month. Arizona and the Western Region have been working hard to provide us with an engaging and adventure filled conference. Watch for information coming soon on the Film Festival and Salsa Contests. These are great ways for you to actively participate in the conference process. This will be a first rate professional development adventure!

Our own Professional Development committee has been hard at work putting together a great learning and networking opportunity for us in Abilene next month. I hope you have it on your calendar and plan to join us. Bring items to share and get ready for our own Kansas 4-H adventure!

Keep it positive! Embrace the adventure!

Susan Schlichting  
KAE4-HA President

## Teaching Children About Diversity

We live in a diverse society that includes people of many different races, cultures, beliefs, physical and mental characteristics. All of us experience diversity every time we interact with other people, since each person is an individual with his or her own unique set of skills, attitudes and attributes.

Our children will live in an even more diverse world than exists today, so it is important to help them grow up to be open-minded, fair, respectful of others' rights and feelings, and aware of others' similarities and differences. An understanding and acceptance of diversity helps a child to be better prepared for life in a changing world where people of different colors, cultures and background learn, live and work together; and where all nations will be closely linked by technology and trade.

As educators and parents, we can help the children with whom we interact to develop healthy attitudes and behaviors about diversity by providing guidance and support in several specific ways:

1. Talk to children about the harm caused by stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. Although it is natural to form opinions about people as you get to know them, it is not OK to like or dislike others just because of their color, accent, ethnic heritage, social class, disability or religion.
2. Healthy self-esteem allows children to respect others. Children with poor self-esteem may put others down to feel better about themselves, so make sure the children you work with know that you think they are important and special. Accentuate their talents and strengths and help them learn to accept their rights and responsibilities.
3. Celebrate your family or group heritage. Encourage children to find out about their ancestors and learn about where they lived and the challenges they faced. Point out how their family customs, special foods, and holiday observances have been influenced by their ancestors' background. Encourage them to compare their family traditions with other families' traditions and heritage.
4. Encourage children to enjoy diversity in their daily life:
  - a. Avoid toys and games that encourage stereotyping (cowboys and Indians) or limit gender roles.
  - b. Using a world map or globe, locate countries that are in the news and talk about how billions of people from many cultures share one small planet.
  - c. Listen to tapes, CDs and radio programs that present music from other ethnic cultures with children.
  - d. Talk with children about the common themes of love, hate, honest and hard work that run throughout fairy tales, fables, and cultural stories that they read. Relate these themes to the children's daily life.
  - e. Watch TV shows, documentaries, or news articles with children. Be sure to discuss any stereotypes or prejudice that you may see (i.e. Are all the doctors male? Are the criminals often people of color?)
  - f. Encourage children to find out where their favorite foods come from. Help them find and prepare other culturally different recipes that they might like.
5. Provide a good example. Examine your own prejudices and work to overcome them. Think before you speak, and avoid pointing out differences that are irrelevant. When you do mention differences, keep the focus on the person first (i.e. say "the singer who is blind", not "the blind singer"). Avoid ethnic, racial and sexist humor, even about your own race.
6. Develop friendships with those who are different from you. Offer to host a visitor from another country (perhaps an IFYE representative) for dinner or longer. Children will follow your example.
7. Explore diversity in your community by learning the history of your area and taking children with you to local folk celebrations.

Diversity is, and will continue to be, a part of our world every day. With our help, the children in our community will grow to be caring, successful adults who can help build a peaceful world.

## 4-H Day with the Lady Cats

One thousand four hundred and forty Kansas 4-H members watched the Kansas State University Women's Basketball team take on Kansas University Women's Basket Ball team on January 13. As everyone was wearing green t-shirts, it was very obvious we had arrived to watch a victory and the team obliged! Kansas State Women's Team shut down Kansas University 59-35. I want to say a special thanks to the committee for all their hard work and what a successful event! A new addition was a poster making table to make sure the 4-H members made the jumbotron!

A special thanks to the committee members Kendra Baehler, Jodi Besthorn, Ginger Kopfer, Sarah Laib, Diane Mack, Sarah Maass, Andrea Schmidt, Nancy Pihl and Ann Religa.

## T-Shirts Available

We may have a few tee shirts left if you would like to purchase one please contact Diane Mack. The shirts are \$8.00 each.

## 2010 KAE4-HA Spring Conference "Mission Possible"

**April 13-14, 2010**  
**Eisenhower Center & Library**  
**Sterl Hall at the Dickinson County Fairgrounds,**  
**Abilene, KS**

The 2010 KAE4-HA Spring Conference theme will be "**Mission Possible.**" The 2010 program will focus on the three national 4-H mission mandates: 4-H Science, Engineering and Technology (SET); Healthy Living and Citizenship. Special emphasis will be given to the 4-H SET mandate. You'll also receive a free CD of Doc Gizmo's fun science experiments, which will be a great new 4-H SET resource. And you'll have a chance to see and experience the Dwight D. Eisenhower Center and Library in Abilene, KS.

4-H Science, Engineering and Technology is the first of the three national mission mandates to be developed. This year's program will showcase 4-H SET. We are pleased to have Doc Gizmo present. Doc Gizmo believes in "learn by doing" and provides hand-on activities for students to learn about science.



Registration is due by April 1, 2010. More information can be found on the KAE4-HA website at [http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/agent\\_association/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=48](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/agent_association/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=48).