





Rhonda Bauerle tells of some of the most memorable activities at 4-H Club Congress in Chicago last year. She was also awarded the Ak-Sar-Ben leadership award and the "I Dare You" award for Outstanding leadership.

Rhonda Pierce, c.1976.

How has 4-H influenced you? It's a question Rita Farro & I asked when we realized 4-H is a common denominator among many sewing & quilting influencers. This issue deals with 4-H primarily from the 1970's – 1980's. In the next issue we look at contemporary 4-H.

Personally, I was an active 4-H member of the Friendly Faces and Deckie Decorators 4-H clubs. My Mom worked in the county extension office, so I took part in a wide variety of projects. Sewing, cooking, nutrition, health, dog care, entomology, photography, still serve me well with a common sense approach to organizing & presenting materials. 4-H was a integral part of my youth ... years that built a strong life foundation. Sew SCHMETZ & Grabbit® Too!

Rhonda

Rhonda Pierce
Spokesperson, SCHMETZneedles.com
info@SCHMETZneedles.com

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Cover: **Rhonda Pierce**

Story by: **Rita Farro**
<https://ritassewfun.blogspot.com/>

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Layout/Design: **Paul Ragas**

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University of Minnesota Extension
<https://extension.umn.edu/about-4-h/4-h-volunteer-impact-study>

The History and Impact of 4-H

Since 4-H began more than 100 years ago, it has become the nation's largest youth development organization. The 4-H idea is simple: help young people and their families gain the skills needed to be proactive forces in their communities and develop ideas for a more innovative economy.

In the late 1800's, adults in the farming community did not readily accept new agricultural developments. But university researchers discovered young people were open to new thinking and would experiment with new ideas and share their experiences with adults.

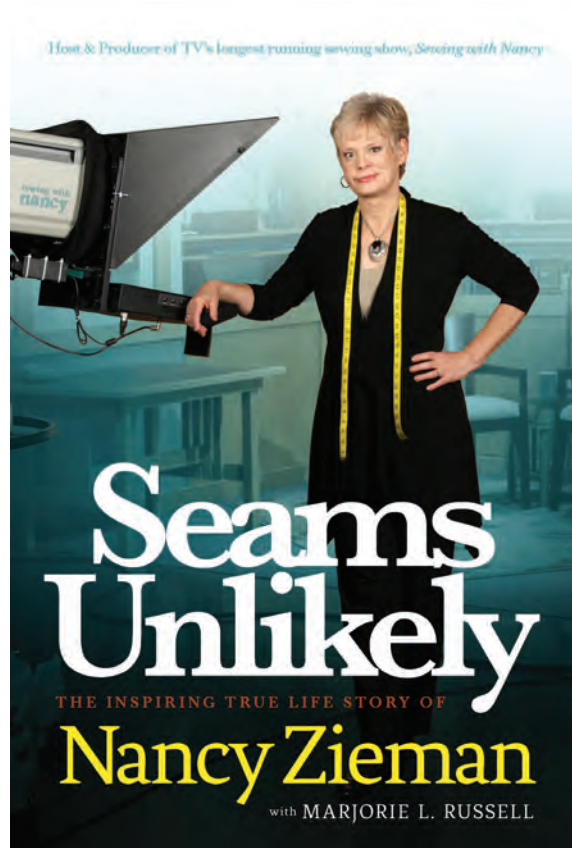
The passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 created the Cooperative Extension System at USDA and nationalized 4-H.

By 1924, 4-H clubs were formed and the clover emblem was adopted. The four H's stand for: Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

Chances are, even if you were never a member, your life has been impacted by 4-H in many ways, especially if you love to sew.

For starters, if not for 4-H, we might never have known Nancy Zieman. Can you imagine a world without 30 years of **Sewing with Nancy**?

In Nancy Zieman's autobiography, **Seams Unlikely** (2013), she writes: *In high school, I received little recognition, but it was a*



different situation in 4-H. As an organization, 4-H does an excellent job of preparing their members for roles in society. Requirements that must be completed for individual 4-H projects give young people an opportunity to exercise initiative and see projects through to completion — attributes that, as adults, make them valuable in the workplace.

Since much of my life to that point had been in the shadows, when I was elected to serve as reporter at the age of fourteen, it felt to me like a stamp of approval and acceptance. By my junior year in high school, I was serving as a Junior Leadership assistant to our sewing leader.

Junior Leadership participants also helped out at the county fair. We worked as assistants, helping with check-in and display of fair entries, serving as ushers for fair events and assisting in many ways. Working alongside adults and other 4-H'ers provided great learning experiences in following directions and working with others. One interesting thing, years later, in 1985 when Sewing Weekend became a big event for us at Nancy's Notions, we started inviting well-known instructors. Using the Junior Leadership model employed in 4-H, we assigned each teacher a staff member or volunteer as an assistant. Now that The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show, is attracting thousands every September, we've done something similar at that event.

4-H is a **community**
 of **young**
people
across America
who are learning
leadership,
citizenship and
life skills.

University of Georgia Extension Office - Pulaski County
<https://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/pulaski/4-h-youth-development.html>

Teachers tell us how much they appreciate that help and many who teach at other events where that sort of assistance is lacking act as if the assistance we provide is something new, but I learned it in 4-H. About that time, I adopted a motto that I still use today, "If something is worthwhile you have to work for it." Achieving a goal, and doing a good job in the process, is not easy, but it is rewarding. That held true in 4-H and has held true since.

My freshman year in high school I won first place for a sewing demonstration, "Tips for a Good Collar." Most of my sewing skills

were developed in 4-H. Although I'm sure I maintained a calm exterior, when I received a first place in my category, I was doing cartwheels inside. I had been singled out for first place honor.

As I entered my teen years, the effects of Bell's palsy were becoming more obvious. I still wasn't part of the popular crowd at school, but my achievements in 4-H had fostered a growing confidence and I was beginning to see myself as successful. No doubt about it, I excelled in sewing.

What Does 4-H Mean to You?

4-H taught me to sew, speak, demo, & more! 4-H is a life changing, life enhancing organization that gives opportunity and experiences across the board to live life successfully! So thankful that my mother started my sister and me early in life in 4-H!

Annette Hazuka

Six of my friends and I wanted to start a 4-H Club in our hometown of Hastings, Nebraska. We were 5th graders, I think. Our moms took us to our local Cooperative Extension Office and we started the Gingersnaps. I took sewing & cooking. Let's just say, of the two, it was the sewing that "took."

MJ Hueske Kinman

One of the biggest joys I've had was the years I judged county and state Fashion Review. I was so honored to be asked to judge for a number of counties. It was truly an education (for me) to talk to each of the young 4-H enthusiasts. I learned so much and hope I offered good comments too.

Janith Bergeron

The University of Wisconsin-Extension 4-H Youth Development Program inducted Nancy Zieman, with honors, into the Wisconsin 4-H Hall of Fame in 2014.

In her acceptance speech, Nancy said, *My years as a 4-H member provided the stepping-stones to my career.*

My first demonstration was, "How to put on a Waistband." With help from Mother, I broke the process down into various steps and created different samples showing each of those steps. There is no magic to a waistband, but when I stood before the judges of my club, demonstrating step-by-step how to prepare and attach

Taught me to sew and to speak in front of a group with their demonstration programs.

Margaret Travis



I was never a 4-Her as a kid, but worked with the program for 31 years. What we know is that 4-H helps kids to have greater self-esteem, do better in school, develop better concentration ability, become self starters, and have the ability to transfer skills learned to all areas of life. They do this through demonstrations, club meetings, projects, evaluations, contests, and competitions.

Joanne Ross

I was a 4-H member for nine years and loved the program. I credit 4-H for helping me develop life skills and leadership skills that I use on a daily basis. Now I am a 4-H Leader and see my children reaping the benefits of participating in the program.

Jody Nordhausen Most

I love 4-H! Sewing, cooking, public speaking, camping, and a hundred other things, were learned in 4-H. My club looked forward to Style Dress Review all summer long as we sewed new clothes for ourselves. I even worked at the National 4-H Center in Washington, D.C.

Joy Ercanbrack

Awesome program for all ages. Skills, teamwork, meeting conduct, speaking, and prize \$ for rewards ... so many more aspects and decisions. Confidence to try new things. Yes, definitely used all through life.

Vicki Oard

a waistband, the girl who spoke was confident, articulate, and at home in herself. Nothing else mattered, I had discovered where I belonged.

*Fast forward several decades from that first demonstration contest, I was still using those skills, this time in front of a TV camera. It's been over 30 years and **Sewing With Nancy** still airs on PBS and online. Also part of my career is authoring books, founding a direct mail business, and product development. Many of my career skills can be traced back to 4-H leadership training and even the dreaded record keeping in those iconic green books!*



Mary Mulari & Nancy Zieman

Mary Mulari is another example of somebody who may have influenced your sewing world. Mary has written dozens of best-selling books and patterns. Her entertaining and inspiring seminars at sewing expositions, conventions, guilds, and stores all over the U.S. routinely sell out. She was also the most frequent guest on *Sewing with Nancy*.

And guess what? Mary learned to sew as a member of the Loon Lake 4-H Club in Palo, Minnesota. In 1990, Mary dedicated her book ***Accents For Your Style*** to her 4-H leader, Elsie Lehtinen. When we asked how 4-H impacted her life, Mary said, *I remember that the twill fabric was varied blue tones in 1" stripes. I brought it*

to my 4-H leader's home for the shoe bag making project. After sewing each seam, our leader directed us to press the seam. I didn't understand how important it is to press while sewing. I may even have expressed my impatience and reluctance to take the time for an "unnecessary" step. My shoe bag was exhibited at the St. Louis County Fair and it won a blue ribbon along with the opportunity to exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair. (Those stripes all aligned and I had produced a handsome bag.) I won a ribbon at the state fair.

Learning about sewing and pressing were lessons I carried with me for the rest of my sewing life. Also, keeping records was an important part of every 4-H project. Details such as fabric quantities and costs,

~~~~~ 4-H Pledge ~~~~~

I pledge ...
my head to clearer thinking,
my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service, and
my health to better living for
my club, my community,
my country, and my world.



along with notes about the process of creating the project. First there is a project title, a brief description, and then a list of fabrics, notions, and equipment needed for completion.

Demonstrations at 4-H meetings were about organization and clarity. Years later, those skills helped me as I began to write instructions for sewing projects.

I haven't thought much about how I learned to do this until now.

If you've ever been lucky enough to attend the Great Wisconsin Quilt Show, your life has been impacted by Deanna Springer. She is the Vice President of Marketing at Nancy Zieman Productions, LLC. She is a business manager, blog editor, manager of product development, project design, and co-events manager of The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show. And, yes, Deanna is also a 4-H alumna. We asked her to tell us how her involvement in 4-H, and how it changed her life. Deanna says, *"In primary school I was shy and when called on in class, I wouldn't have the classic textbook answers. I thought there must be something wrong with me, which drew me further into my shy-shell."*

In 1979, when I was 10 years old, I joined the South Columbus Wisconsin Willing Workers 4-H Club. My sewing leader was my



Deanna Springer

friend Jacki's mother. We would meet at Mrs. Damm's farm home, where we were completely absorbed in all things sewing. I was in sewing heaven!

Because of my years in 4-H, my shyness went away and my confidence grew. Being in the hot seat during face-to-face judging at the county fair taught me to know my topics and techniques, and be prepared! Decision-making comes easy to me today, because of 4-H.

I cherish the many 4-H gatherings and outings we had with quality people, kids and leaders, who I still admire today. We had great times, and we were learning community and loyalty (Heart), and service (Hands). Thinking of others, and helping others is top of mind, every day.

Nancy taught me about business and marketing. Looking back, she was exactly how you would image a 4-H leader teaching business and marketing. I remember the day Nancy told me, "Business is simply practical sense."

Today, along with the NZP Team, I'm honored to carry on Nancy's legacy and love of sewing through sharing Nancy's time-saving sewing techniques via the BLOG, by creating patterns and developing new products, gathering the stitching community at The Great Wisconsin Quilt Show, and continuing reruns of Sewing With Nancy, and The Best of Sewing With Nancy on Public Television, and at nancyzieman.com, for many years to come.

— written by Rita Farro

Benefits of 4-H

It's where I learned to sew, where I learned to speak in public (and in a studio for broadcast), where I learned to follow (and therefore write) instructions, where I got comfortable speaking to a crowd (MC at Share the Fun), and where I learned the rules of order (which only helps when I'm at a group meeting and wish I had a gavel and understanding firsting and seconding a motion). I think 4-H is a valuable program for a million reasons. I help my cousin walk through her clothing construction each year. I try to have the whole experience be informative (how to read the back of a pattern, what to know about construction - the "why" instead of just the "do"). The programs then were great ... our county had a Fashion Advisory Board, and we got to do some interesting things like a behind-the-scenes tour of, I believe, Marshall Fields, where an expert there pointed out the things that made for "well-constructed garments" - matching plaid, interfacing under blazer buttonholes, etc., that I believe made us smarter in our construction of all of our garments. Understanding what "well done" means as opposed to "poorly constructed" has made me a smarter shopper (not that I buy a lot of tailored garments these days), but it makes me aware of how things should be done and what troubleshooting I can do if I need to tweak a garment. I also had a mother who was aware of good construction, so she encouraged us to do our best. If you don't know what "good" looks like, it's difficult to use it as a benchmark. I may be a little more of a perfectionist when it comes to teaching my cousin's daughter, but if I don't point out where she could improve (and where she has done remarkably well), she won't realize there's a difference. I constantly say that my experience in 4-H (sewing, foods, arts and crafts, public speaking, leadership) not only gave me some of the very best friendships in my life, but also built my career without me knowing it at the time.

Linda Augsberg



4-H is an amazing organization. It builds future leaders. The motto to make the best better has stuck with me my entire life. Never settle for second best. Everything can be improved. I love the concept of adults mentoring students. I love the idea of parents working along side of their kids with livestock projects. I did livestock and other projects. Working in the barn and going to the county fair were some of the most exciting times of the year. My first two years of clothing construction I received red ribbons. That made me so hungry to win that I worked and worked to win state fair ribbons. I was so driven to get better. My siblings all have great memories and my children do too. Going to the fair was as exciting as Christmas! I can talk forever about subject! I learned parliamentary procedure. I learned to be a leader and a teacher. I became teacher of the year for my district and one of the top 30 educators of 2020 in the state of Indiana. 4-H had a lot to do with that. I have no fear of failing. If you want more let me know!! 4-H made me who I am today.

Kim Truex Despar

I learned to sew for judging, how to meet a set of standards. I developed public speaking skills that have served me well. I kept a record book and learned how to present myself and my projects in the best terms - great prep for writing a resume. I got to do some travel, the first time I was ever sent to a convention as a representative of a group. Our extension agent gave me early teaching opportunities, too; I was barely in my teens when my best friend and I planned and taught a beginning-sewing day camp. And I can't forget the pocket money that came from entering my work in the regional fair every fall ... it was a great way to fund buying books and more supplies, and I liked those ribbons!

Rebecca Kemp Brent

**4-H welcomes young people of all beliefs and backgrounds,
empowering them to create positive change in their communities.**

**Learn More at
<https://4-h.org/>**



Needle Points with Rhonda



Stitch by stitch.
Mask by mask.

SCHMETZneedles salutes our medical professionals for
their care and professionalism.

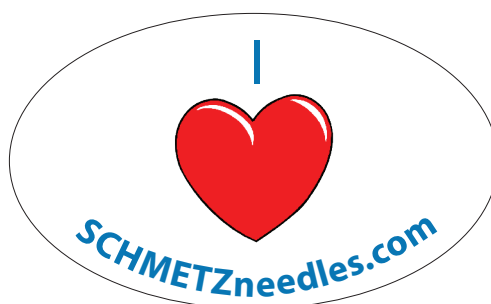
SCHMETZneedles also salutes the global sewing community
for stepping up to stitch.



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*Stitch quality improves &
the sewing machine performs
better with a new needle!*



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