Sharon’s Report January 2017

* Sharon is supposed to be out of town for a regional conference February 1 & 2 but there are two scheduling conflicts, one an afterschool club at Four Corners and the other our United Way presentation for a $5,900 grant. Any volunteers for either of them? The club isn’t too hard to reschedule, but it would be nice to keep it there (Thursday the 2nd, 3:15 – 4:30). United Way, on the other hand, is a big deal. We’re scheduled for Wednesday February 1st from 11:10 – 11:35. The only days we can present are the 1st and 2nd so swapping with another agency won’t help. They are fine if a board member is there instead of Sharon. The first 15 minutes is a presentation that reviews what Douglas County 4-H does, then there’s 10 minutes or less of Q & A. It’s not too difficult and Sharon can create a PowerPoint with notes.
* Since November most of her time has been spent on Superior Days, afterschool clubs, and end of year reporting. The afterschool clubs are going well. Numbers are up overall, with 18 – 21 students at Four Corners and Great Lakes, another good sized group at Northwestern and clubs at Cooper and Bryant as well. Surveys show building things and STEM activities are favorites.
* The first littleBits SPIN club will start soon at Cooper Elementary, led by new volunteer Ryan Stovern. Sharon may have to attend as well; the school district is checking its policies.
* At least two new volunteers will be trained next Monday, Reuben Clemmer and Aria Wright. (Aria is Sharon’s foster daughter and 20 years old.) Marc & Jen Simms and Elizabeth Eccles trained in December. Sharon has trained 16 volunteers since starting, 11 of them in 2016.
* Winter Camp is this coming weekend. Sharon is one of the lead teachers of an outdoor DOTS class and hopes to not chaperone a cabin! Peggy Fechtelkotter will act as one. Heidi and Nathaniel are both signed up, along with Sarah Wahlquist, Nicole Greely and Kevin Garland.
* Superior Days 4-H delegates: Sarah Wahlquist, Sasha Achucarro, Kevin Garland. Volunteers: Buffy Luostari and Tricia Garland. Pat Luostari leading.
* Fair dates still not set; Crash said he thought they’d book a carnival this week while at a convention.
* Junior Camp news: Booked Leisure Lake July 28-30 (last weekend), assuming no fair then because it’s the most popular time for them. Several area counties are planning on combining for counselor training in Spooner one of the last weekends in April. Anybody know of conflicts besides the Cultural Arts Festival on the 22nd and MN Horse Expo on the 27th? Proms? Because of the tight deadline for this training, all counselors must have their applications in on time this year and attend the training in April. If we don’t have enough it will limit our numbers or cancel this version of camp.
* Marc and Jen Simms have taken over the Horse Association and are starting well. They are on top of things, but is someone from the board available to do some mentoring? Or is this already happening?
* We need to formalize the Expanded Access committee; we got dinged for it on our 5-year civil rights review this fall. It also would be great to restart the Junior Leaders Association. And does anyone want to lead a club officers training?
* NextGen update should be coming via a big speech by Chancellor Sandeen on February 7th. From what we’ve heard everything’s on the table. There are lots of questions and few answers. The Northwest region is more stable than other areas of the state as far as staff leaving. Overall, in 4-H alone there are more than 20 counties with openings (out of 72).