

As a nine-year-old, Becky Domolewski remembers feeling shaky at the knees as she got up to deliver her first public speech as a 4-H member.

"I think most kids when they first start out do get a little nervous about public speaking. Definitely by the time you're in Grade 12 and you're doing your final one it's not as a big of a deal. You're definitely more confident and have the ability to be able to stand up and give a speech," she said.

She grew up on a farm outside Taber and belonged to 4-H up until she graduated from high school, first joining the Taber Crazy Crafters club, then the Grassy Lake Beef Club and finally the New Ewe Sheep Club in her Grade 12 year. Now she is an ambassador and represents 4-H on a broader scale.

Adriane Good, also an ambassador, grew up on an acreage in the Brooks area and became a 4-H member at age nine.

"Back then I didn't really know what a great program I was getting into. I just really wanted to play with my sheep," Good said.

In subsequent years she went into the beef club, attended 4-H workshops, summer camps and competitions and is now a leader in the Cow Country Judging Club.

"Some of the most helpful kids I know are 4-H members. There's something about 4-H that just builds kids into great leaders," Good said.

Mark Sayer knows exactly what she's talking about. His children were 4-H members and he's been involved as a leader. Now he's chairman of the celebration committee for 4-H's 100th birthday.

"One of the really neat parts for me as a leader is to see these kids come in at nine and they're really shy and quiet and when they graduate they're totally different kids. They're really well-spoken," Sayer said.

After 100 years in Canada 4-H is still going strong. Alberta has more than 6,000 members and the southern Alberta region has nearly 70 4-H clubs. Some focus on livestock while multi-clubs focus on a particular interest like photography, cake decorating or woodworking.

To celebrate their success and longevity, the southern Alberta 4-H region, in conjunction with Exhibition Park, will host a trade show on Saturday from 1-5 p.m. that will give the public a look at all 4-H has to offer. More than 30 clubs will have displays. Admission is free. Later that evening, former Lethbridge Herald agriculture editor and writer Ric Swihart and Global Television's Ian McDonald will be recognized for their contributions at a banquet for 4-H members and their families.

4-H clubs typically have a long-standing relationship with their local exhibition associations. Rudy Friesen, general manager of Exhibition Park, said the partnership here has been going for more than 60 years.

Alberta is divided into seven 4-H regions and the southern Alberta region, has nearly 70 4-H clubs.