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York County Resident Celebrates 50 Years as 4-H Volunteer

YORK COUNTY -

Else-Maria Cook of Shapleigh celebrated a milestone in 2025: 50 years as a volunteer with York County 4-H, a program delivered by University of Maine Cooperative Extension. As the leader of the Shapleigh Four Leaf Clover Club, Else has shepherded dozens of youth through the 4-H experience, nurturing their curiosity, instilling the importance of community service, providing enriching and fun group experiences, and encouraging participation in national 4-H trips to Washington, D.C.

Cook's work with 4-H follows that of another long-term volunteer and former leader of the Shapleigh Four Leaf Clover Club - Hazel Goodwin. Cook did not participate in 4-H as a child, but was recruited by Goodwin to help lead the Four Leaf Clover Club in 1974 and has been a steady presence ever since.

Cook exemplifies the role volunteers play in maintaining the 4-H program, providing a consistent positive adult presence in the lives of young people. The fact that many of her club members remain involved in 4-H through their teenage years is a testament to the impact Cook's leadership has on club members.

York County 4-H is deeply grateful for Cook's dedicated



service and looks forward to working with her for many more years.

For more than 100 years, Extension has supported UMaine's land- and sea-grant public education mission through community-driven, research-based programs in every Maine county. UMaine Extension works to build thriving communities and grow the state's food-based economy. It also leads Maine's 4-H program, the state's largest out-of-school youth education program.

Grounded in the belief that kids learn best by doing, 4-H offers hands-on projects in health, science, agriculture and civic engagement, encouraging participants to develop leadership skills in a positive, support-

ive environment.

For more information, visit <https://extension.umaine.edu/york> or call 207-324-2814.

Image above: Else-Maria Cook accepts a plaque for 50 years of leadership in 4-H. Photo courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.