

Greetings from Finland

Shawnda Gregory's sends her latest IFYE report from Finland.. (*Dottie Nelson*)

4H IN HAAPAJARVI AND PARKKILA

4H is different all around Finland. 4H clubs have different projects they participate in during the year. Here in Haapajarvi and Parkkila I have participated in three different 4H clubs doing different activities. On the evening of October 28, 2002 I went to the English club that was started by Sara, a young 4Her from Canada, whose family is Finnish and is now living in Haapajarvi. Sara wanted to start this 4H English club to help children of school age learn to speak English by playing different games or making collages from magazines. This evening they made collages of different animals and had to explain what each animal was doing by giving a small presentation. I helped the girls write in English and took a few pictures. Before everyone left I gave out my 4H Virginia pins to the club members. The English club meets every Tuesday evening from 4:00 to 5:00pm at the Haapajarvi community center. Then the 4H advisor Aila and I went to her home to collect food items for the next 4H club that meets from 6:00 to 7:00pm at the elementary school center. When we arrived there were a few club members waiting for Aila to open up the center. While Aila prepared for the club meeting she showed me how to dye paper. Once all the club members arrived Aila introduced me and then separated the young members from the older 4H members. The young children made handicraft cards while the older children around age 14 made pizza. I helped make pizza, which was fun. Some of the girls needed help on how to make the pizza dough. I took several pictures of each group. After each pizza finished cooking the older children were able to eat the pizzas they made. There are two 4-H club leaders Jonna and Susanna who help lead this 4H club. After this 4H club Aila and I went to another meeting where they were planning a cultural event for the community of Haapajarvi on November 14, 2002. Here I met Markku who is the Parish for Haapajarvi and he works with children age 6 to 14. Tarja is the chairmen for the local community, District of Finland and works with children. Pirjo was working for the first time as a work assistant for Markku. Taina is a Scout leader. Kati is a community worker who works at the community center and works with ages 9 to 25. Aila is the 4-H advisor for Oulu 4-H club and the Haapajarvi 4-H Association. While they planned for the cultural event I took a few pictures, had tea and dessert. Aila took me back home after her meeting. The next two 4-H club meetings I went to were at Parkkila elementary school where my host sister Jaana and Heidi another girl are 4H leaders for this 4-H club. They meet every Monday evening from 5:00 to 6:00pm. Before and after the club meetings the children like to play in the gym. At the first club meeting Nov. 4th the club members made greeting cards. Then at the next club meeting Nov. 11th the club leaders and the children played different Finnish games in the gym. On Nov. 8th I spent the day with Aila at her 4-H office. Aila explained to me how they have 390 4-H members in 4-H clubs, 460 projects the club members can choose from each year, and 4-H members can earn each year about 14,000 euro for 4-H projects which members have for themselves. For example when 4H members plant trees they can earn 1,000 euro. At the end of February they have an awards ceremony where certificates are given to persons who have been members for 10 years, awards are given to club leaders of 3 years, and metals are given out for different projects. The local bank gives money for the best project in the surrounding community, for example Paivi a 4-H member for the last two years was given money for raising turkeys. Learning about the different 4-H projects, and spending time with Aila the 4-H advisor and some of the 4-H clubs has been fun. I really enjoyed staying three weeks with my 5th host family. There was always a lot of joy and laughter. This was the first host family where most of the children were involved in the 4-H. The two

oldest daughters Tiina and Ulla were club members and leaders, the eldest son Henrik was a 4-H member. Jonna the next oldest is still a 4-H member, Jaana is a 4-H leader and the younger brothers and sisters are 4-H members except Hannu. I look forward to staying with my last host family and getting involved in their 4-H clubs.

Sincerely,

Shawnda H. Gregory, IFYE Representative