

## Minnesota

### Leonard Harkness - Minnesota State 4-H Leader, 1949-1980

Hometown: Born in 1916 on a farm near Waterford, Minnesota

Minnesota State 4-H Leader 1949-1980

Nominated by: Center for 4-H Youth Development/ University of Minnesota

Honors:  
NAE4-HA Distinguished Service Award, 1979.

Year Inducted: 2002

"Turning hearts and hands to service of the community is at the very heart of 4-H."

Fresh from a naval assignment in WWII, Leonard Harkness became director of Minnesota 4-H at age 32 and stayed for 31 years. Leonard and his staff expanded opportunities for youth throughout Minnesota to earn trips to the state fair. During Leonard's long tenure he "knew the kids, knew their farms, and knew about their projects."

Leonard developed and encouraged leadership within his staff, and many members moved on to positions with National 4-H and the international program. After retiring, Leonard and his wife Maxine organized and conducted seven tours to the South Pacific with over 200 friends.



### Theodore A. "Dad" Erickson - Minnesota 4-H Founder and State 4-H Leader

Started 4-H in Minnesota.

First Minnesota State 4-H Leader from 1914-1940

Wrote many national 4-H bulletins and related publications, including "Guide Posts for 4-H Leaders" and "My Sixty Years With Rural Youth"

"The main purpose of my life has been to further this movement [4-H] toward a better country life, to make farming as proud and rewarding a calling for rural youth as any other occupation."

Hometown: Born in 1871 in Nelson, Minnesota

Nominated by: Center for 4-H Youth Development/University of Minnesota

Year Inducted: 2002

When Theodore "Dad" Erickson started the first Minnesota school fair in 1902, boys brought homegrown produce and girls exhibited baking and sewing projects. In 1904, Dad started the first Minnesota corn club by sending 1 lb. of corn seed to any student who agreed to exhibit 10 of their best ears at their school fair. From 1914-1940, Dad served as the first State 4-H Club Leader. After retirement, he wrote many national 4-H bulletins, including "Guide Posts for 4-H Leaders." In 1956, he wrote "My Sixty Years With Rural Youth" which tells what motivated him to take education beyond the rural classroom to the community.



"Dad" Erickson with a 4-H Sheep Champion, 1946.