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4-H Clubs celebrating centennial

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Black-tie dinner Saturday in Dover

By ROBIN BROWN, Bear Bureau reporter

Former members and supporters of the **4-H** Clubs in Delaware will host a black-tie celebration Saturday in Dover to honor the youth-development group's national 100th anniversary.

The federally sponsored nonprofit began as a group of corn clubs for boys.

"In 100 years, **4-H** has grown far beyond the farm," said Burtie Hutchison of Middletown, president of the Delaware **4-H** Foundation. An estimated 35,000 Delaware children are involved in **4-H** programs.

Youngsters from ages 9 to 19 now can take annual skill-development projects ranging from photography to the environment, and children as young as 5 can join the Cloverbuds program.

The organization - each H stands for Head, Heart, Hands and Health - holds annual state **4-H** camp near Frankford, day-camp in Newark and various in-school programs.

This summer, members entered a record 8,990 exhibits in the state fair, according to state **4-H** coordinator Joy Sparks. The **4-H** and Future Farmers of America also dedicated their new state fair building with a public ice rink.

The Delaware **4-H** Foundation is sponsoring Saturday's \$100-per-person reception and dinner-dance at the Dover Downs Hotel as the kickoff of fund-raising for a \$250,000 endowment fund to help the program statewide.

The Delaware **4-H** Centennial Gala begins at 6 p.m. with dinner at 7. For tickets or more information, call 831-2501 Ext. 3.

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