

Quesnel leader receives national 4-H award

Erin Rossmann recognized at Vancouver event

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QUESNEL – Erin Rossmann has helped manage the Kersley 4-H Club for over 10 years, work recognized at the 4-H Canada Leadership Summit on April 13 in Vancouver with the 2023 National Volunteer Leader of the Year award.

“It was a shock,” Rossmann says. “It really is a true huge honour to be able to be recognized and 4-H is one of the only volunteer organizations that really honours their volunteers the way that they do in such a huge way.”

Over the three-day summit, Rossmann participated in workshops that addressed topics including positive youth development, risk management, conflict resolution and building safe and inclusive spaces.

“It was an amazing trip. It was an amazing whole weekend and very, very well done,” Rossmann says.

Local clubs, 4-H British Columbia and BC agriculture minister Pam Alexis also contributed to the event. On the summit’s second day, delegates explored Granville Island and took part in a 4-H Makers Market with handmade goods for sale, thanks to 4-H BC. Alexis welcomed guests and Valley 4-H Beef hosted a Make and Take craft session.

“It was an absolute honour to present Erin Rossmann with our National Volunteer Leader of the Year award at our leadership awards event this past April,” says 4-H Canada interim CEO Hugh Maynard. “Her dedication to creating an inclusive, accepting space for every one of her youth members is what 4-H is all about. Her story is no doubt an inspiration to our staff, members, volunteers and supporters across the country.”

Rossmann’s husband Kurt participated in 4-H as a kid, and it was a priority for the couple to have their three children participate in the program.

Because the Rossmanns’ children each have neurological disorders, they have first-hand knowledge of the importance of accommodating children of

all abilities. It was Rossmann’s mission to make a safe and inclusive environment for all youth to get involved in the community.

“Whether you’re neurodivergent or you’re neurotypical, it works for everybody,” Rossmann says of the club.

Rossmann and her family run a purebred Limousin herd on 500 acres, but she loves the multi-project aspect of the Kersley club.

Projects revolve around each child’s interest, including livestock, crafts and outdoor living.

Her favourite part about volunteering and leading the club is seeing the kids grow throughout the year, exemplifying the club’s motto, “see it, do it, teach it.”

“Watching their skills, their confidence, then becoming young women and men ... is so awesome,” she says.

The 4-H club meets 11 months of the year and meetings are often run by members with the help of leaders to present a new skill or topic each session. The club also gives back to the community by helping with



Kersley 4-H Club leader Erin Rossmann, left, pictured here with club member Heidi Singer, was honoured with 4-H Canada’s highest honour this spring when she was named National Volunteer Leader of the Year. *SUBMITTED*

local events such as Quesnel’s Billy Barker Days.

“They learn how to do some more public speaking and explain and show how to do things,” Rossmann says.

The 4-H judging rally offers critical thinking opportunities in which members must compare different items, rank them and explain their decisions, Rossmann adds.

Members also learn about record keeping, budgeting and livestock husbandry.

Club members showcase their projects at their Achievement Day during the Quesnel and District 4-H Annual Show and Sale in August.

Rossmann received the award for her involvement and leadership in 4-H, but she

credits the help of other leaders throughout the years.

“There is no way that I could be able to be nominated [for] this position without the huge, amazing support that I have within my other leaders of the club and district,” she says. “They all have helped me grow to become the leader that I am today.”

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