4-H Week observed in 75th anniversary

National 4-H Week, being observed this week, has a special significance this year for the more than 75,000 4-H youths enrolled in Louisiana, says Dr. C.J. Naquin, state 4-H agent with the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service.

"In addition to calling attention to the accomplishments of 4-Hers throughout the state, National 4-H Week is being celebrated as the 75th anniversary of 4-H work in Louisiana," Naquin said.

"We are especially proud of what the 4-H program is doing for the youth of Louisiana, and has done for the hundreds of thousands who have participated since the program was started back in 1908," Naquin said.

Naquin said members of many of the 1,757 4-H Clubs in the state are undertaking special activities during national 4-H Week to emphasize the 75th birthday of Louisiana 4-H.

He said a giant birthday party was held in Baton Rouge in June during the annual 4-H Short Course. More than 2,000 4-Hers attended from throughout the state.

Explaining some of the characteristics of Louisiana's 4-H members, Naquin said that only 14 percent of the current total enrollment is classified as "on farm."

"This means that the vast majority of our members are rural nonfarm, town and city youths," he said. Fifty-five percent of the 1983 enrollment are rural nonfarm, while 31 percent are from towns and cities.

While some of the livestock projects get higher public exposure due to the annual State Junior Livestock Show in Baton Rouge each spring, there are other 4-H projects in Louisiana which have larger numbers of youths participating, explains Naquin.

He listed the following projects as the top 10 in enrollment: food and nutrition, clothing, health, bicycle, dogs, expressive arts, personal development, photography, safety and woodworking.

"We are also very fortunate to have such a large number of adults and older youths who serve as leaders in our 4-H program," Naquin said.

"They give vast amounts of their time and their own money in support of the program."

Currently, there are 6,289 adult leaders and 4,531 junior leaders working with Louisiana 4-Hers.

In addition, Naquin expresses appreciation to the numerous persons, organizations and associations who support the program by contributing money for prizes and educational trips.

"We take the occasion of our 75th anniversary to salute everyone involved with 4-H in Louisiana," Naquin said.

The 4-H program is offered in every parish in the state, and is supervised by 166 parish 4-H agents. They rely on the resources available from LSU, elected public officials, leaders and teachers in the school system, and the many individuals and groups who provide private support, he said.