



**Bonnie Sorum—2016 Winneshiek County Fair Distinguished Service Award Winner**

Bonnie Sorum has lived her entire life in Winneshiek County, in fact in the same house she grew up in. She started her working career at Luther College and then ended at Winneshiek County Extension Office where she worked for 37 years until the end of career. The first seven years she worked for John Rodecap and at least 30 years with Dick Horne as an administrative assistant. She did various jobs at the office, but was the “Go To” person for 4-H answers. She often didn’t need to look at a fair book because she wrote it.

When the fair came around, it was her home for the week. Bonnie spent long hours organizing and adjusting the schedules and compiling all the information. There were often constant interruptions from people with questions, problems, requests and why’s. She always had a smile and helped them with their concerns. They never left with “I can’t help you” answer.

Bonnie was always fair to all and that is why the 4-H/FFA part of the fair ran so smoothly. Bonnie even took on technology and Winneshiek County was one of the first if not first to computerize the county fair entries and results.

No matter how much work it was, she looked forward to the fair. She loved watching all the 4-Hers with their projects and seeing them achieve and grow each year. The 4-H restaurant ran by Mary Holthaus and Lorna Sande provided Bonnie with her favorite, Super Nachos. She also made sure during the fair to make sure she had a bowl of chili and piece of pie from the Luren Stand.

Bonnie also volunteered in the community and was part of the Girl Scout Program and was one of the founders for the Decorah Athletic Booster Club.

Bonnie was married to the late Ordell Sorum and has three children, Erik, Rona, and Andrea and 10 grandchildren she now follows.

The award was presented at the 4-H sheep and goat show, which actually was the first time she had attended this. Bonnie’s children and grandchildren were present as well as a host of friends and former co-workers.