

It's a family tradition!



Henry Vollmer stands with his inspirations, Uncle Brad Wendholt (center) and Great-Uncle Glenn Lange (right) outside his great-grandmother's home. Both uncles are holding the displays they created for Dubois County 4-H, both of which were exhibited at the State Fair as well.

Right: Henry with the displays he has submitted this year. The eighth grader followed in the footsteps of his uncle and the great-uncle who started the family tradition of 4-H entomology.



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Rather than discourage this burgeoning hobby, his parents, Clem and Mary C. Lange, supported Glenn's endeavors, so when he joined 4-H, he decided to pursue the collection and identification of bugs — also known as insect taxonomy — as his main project.

According to Glenn's sister, Sheila Wendholt, the whole family got involved. As the lone girl with three brothers, she was right there with them, playing in creeks and ditches near their home to see what they could discover or using flashlights at night to scope out the creatures who come to life after dark.

Others would get involved as well, as the Lange kids found a great place for hunting at their aunt and uncle's chicken farm.

Glenn started in Division One at age 10 (the youngest age group) and continued on through all the divisions.

This is definitely not one of those 4-H projects that can be completed the night before the fair. Collecting bugs and identifying them by a common name is arduous enough, but then comes mounting, a laborious and delicate process that takes time and patience.

An entomology box is used to mount them in. It's designed to display the collection. While a third grader only needs to showcase 10 bugs his or her inaugural year, that amount increases exponentially as the child grows, each year being required to add at minimum of 25 more species to his collections.

Glenn's collections made it all the way to the State Fair where he earned blue ribbons for his work.

To this day, Glenn still has portions of his massive collections, and he can remember where many of the species were found.

His nephew, Brad Wendholt, took up the entomology challenge when he joined 4-H. Brad is Sheila's son and like her mother before her, Sheila willingly stowed bugs in the freezer as Brad collected them.

He tracked down everything from minuscule head lice and mosquitoes to gloriously beautiful yet fragile butterflies and moths.

But no spiders were collected because arachnids are not insects. They don't have wings and don't fly. In addition, insects have three body segments — head, thorax and abdomen with six legs, whereas arachnids have two main regions — a cephalothorax and an abdomen — and eight legs.

Following in his uncle's footsteps, Brad

amassed a huge collection. He eventually pinned over 200 bugs and as a senior in high school, took five display boxes to the Dubois County 4-H Fair.

"Grandma would coax me," he recalls, "and sales reps would bring bugs from around the country. Everyone helped."

The search would include lifting up stones and logs to see what treasures might be found below — leaving no stone unturned.

The 4-H rules for entomology are very specific in some ways and quite confusing in others.

The bugs must be grouped in "families" and identified by a common name. Some of the common names refer to more than one species, and sometimes correct identification can be difficult, if almost not impossible.

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