

# Photography brings 4-H'er Nat'l award

CHICAGO — Last year one of Chris Kittila's photographs won a trip to 4-H Congress in Chicago. This year Chris won a trip to Chicago himself, as Delaware's statewide 4-H photography winner. And he came home from 4-H Congress on Friday, December 5, with an even greater honor: a national 4-H photography award and a \$1000 scholarship, compliments of Eastman Kodak. He is one of six national winners.

When Chris first joined the Seaford Blue Jays five years ago, the 4-H club had no photography program. But in 4-H, all it takes is one interested child and one adult with some skills to share to activate a project area. Chris was interested, and his father, Allan Kittila, was willing and able to help. A research chemist by trade, Kittila is also a photography enthusiast with a basement darkroom.

Chris' interests in things mechanical and scientific made him a natural behind the camera and in the darkroom. He and his father learned a good bit from one another's experiences, but they wanted to open up their 4-H project area to others, too. First Chris managed to interest one of his friends in

photography. After that, the Kittilas held several photography workshops in their home to build up still more interest.

Now the Seaford Blue Jays 4-H Club has a thriving photography program. Allan Kittila is the project leader, and fifteen-year-old Chris is junior photography leader. He earned the title by teaching other members of his 4-H club how to take and develop pictures.

Chris is also the official Sussex County 4-H photographer. He brings his camera to all 4-H events, taking photos for displays and local newspapers. It was one of the pictures he took at 4-H camp last year, an action show of two young people jumping for a ball, that was awarded a medal and displayed at the 1979 4-H Congress.

Each year Chris keeps a record book of his efforts and achievements in the 4-H photography project. The books diligently record examples of over-exposure, under-exposure, burned negatives and shots where a tree got in the way, as well as his best work. To look back over five years of the books, though, is to see a pattern of steady improvement.

"I've learned from these

mistakes," Chris says. "What I like about 4-H is the chance it gives me and my

friends to work at something over a long period of time until we really get to know

how to do it. In the beginning we might not know anything about a subject, but after a few years the awards start coming."

Chris is an honor student at Seaford Senior High School, where he takes pictures for the yearbook and plays saxophone in the marching band, wind ensemble and stage band. This year chemistry is proving to be one of his favorite subjects.

As far as winning the scholarship goes, Chris feels he owes a lot to three people: his mother, Karen Kittila, a former 4-H member herself, who helped him keep up the enthusiasm for his project

book; his father, from whom he learned most of what he knows about photography, and his 4-H leader, Barbara Taylor, who provided countless hours of advice on the project book. The book took Chris the entire summer to do.

The thirteen-member Delaware contingent to 4-H Congress came home with plenty of photographs to help them remember their visit. Chris brought along a brand new professional-type camera - the proud result of years of grass cutting and the symbol of his commitment to the craft of photography.



Chris Kittila, of Seaford, came home from National 4-H Congress in Chicago with a \$1000 scholarship for his 4-H photography project.

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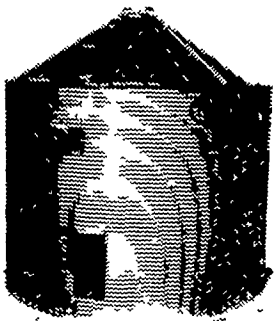
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