

## **SUE SANDERLIN BERRY, SNOHOMISH COUNTY**

As youths in the Snohomish County Cat Program, Sue Sanderlin Berry was one of our leaders, but she was so much more than that. When our group went to State Fair, Snohomish County tradition was to walk around the fair as a group and have a group picture taken. All the pictures are displayed annually at our county fair and it is fun to go back and view the pictures taken over the years. Each year on the night of this tradition, Sue would walk out to the center of the cat barn and quack like a duck. This was her fun way of telling all of us it was time to go. Our group of close friends decided that we would be ducklings to our Mama Duck, and we would quack back and follow her. I am sure the other counties thought we were crazy. This is just one example of how Sue has made the cat program more than a program, but a family. Sue's efforts to foster this family essence has resulted in strong bonds that we enjoy today as adults with families of our own.

Sue Sanderlin Berry has been a 4-H leader for over thirty years. She has always welcomed all youth to her club; she started her first club for members with special needs, as many of these youth were left out of 4-H. She saw that other clubs did not intentionally exclude special needs youth but did not openly include them either. Her club filled a need for special needs members to have their own club where they could participate at their own level,. Her club has always had at least four special needs members; over the years she has mentored youths with autism, ADHD, and schizophrenia, as well as blind and deaf youth.

Sue has been an active leader on the county level including judging record books, public presentations, and cat shows. As a certified professional cat judge, she has judged shows all over the world and volunteers her time and knowledge to 4-H kids around the state. She has served as Cat Department. Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent at Evergreen State Fair for over fifteen years. She is active on the state level by helping to organize Cat Bowl and judging contests at the state fair in Puyallup, judging the cat judging contest and writing many of the Cat Bowl questions. She is also on the curriculum committee for resource material for Cat 4-H that not only put together the original materials but is currently reviewing and updating Cat Program Curriculum, Materials and Questions. She has been a respected source of cat knowledge, breeding, and judging on the state level for many years. Sue has donated many purebred cats to 4-H members or their families, believing that the opportunity to own and raise a purebred cat is the most authentic way to learn standards. She never wants a child to miss an opportunity to learn or be exposed to different experiences because of a lack of financial resources. Sue helps 4-H cat members transition to showing their cats at open shows in order to show them that, even though they are leaving 4-H, they can continue to share their love of cats and show their cat as an adult.

Sue has been an important and valuable part of the Snohomish County 4-H Programs and a true blessing to the Snohomish County and Washington State 4-H Cat Program. She has served as teacher, leader, guide and - of course - our loving Mama Duck to generations of 4-H members.