

# Highlights from 2019 National 4-H Western Heritage National Conference



Article Submitted by *Thomas Aquino, Texas A & M Intern and Santa Clara County 4-H Alum*

The National 4-H Western Heritage Conference and Invitational Match was held for the first time ever in California July 30 – August 1, 2019. California hosted about 100 4-H youth, parents, and volunteers from seven states at River Oaks Range in Winton, CA. The Western Heritage project is aimed at educating youth not only in firearms safety, but also engaging them in living history and public speaking. Participation in the project requires members to learn the safe handling of firearms through shooting a variety of cowboy action style stages for time, as well as learning about U.S. history from 1860-1900. They must also develop and present a 3-5 minute “Persona” where they dress in period appropriated clothing and demonstrate their historical knowledge to a panel of judges.

Event attendees were also able to attend a variety of “historical demonstrations” in which they learned about the lifestyle and work of those who lived on the frontier through a hands-on approach. Some of these demonstrations included: leather working, lead casting, historical clothing and a frontier style sutler’s tent, where participants could purchase a variety of frontier goods. Shooting demonstrations were also included, where members had the opportunity to shoot original firearms. Some of these guns included the “Quigley” Sharps, an 1873 Springfield trapdoor as



well as a variety of muzzle-loading revolvers and even a civil war era cannon!



In addition to historical events, participants ate a variety of foods that highlighted California's rich agriculture industry and some even went to Yosemite, and Monterey. Of all of the activities however, the biggest crowd pleaser was the Tuesday night concert with cowboy entertainer Dave Stamey. The success of this event would not have been possible without the help of our 4-H volunteers, sponsors, and participants.

---

If you would like to see more of the activities that took place at this year's conference, visit the [California 4-H Shooting Sports Facebook page](#)

