

4-H Focus

OCTOBER 2026



Welcome to the 2026-27 4-H Year

Enrollment for the 2026-27 4-H year is now open. Please remember that you must enroll in 4honline each year to be considered an active 4-Her. Please also remember that all adults who serve as a leader/volunteer within our 4-H program need to also enroll annually through 4honline. Below are quick points to help you through the process.

- * Please go to <https://v2.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in> to get started
- * If you are a returning family, use your log-in and password from last year. Do not create a new account.
- * **Remember to update family address, phone numbers and email addresses. The Extension Office uses this information on a regular basis to contact your family. If the information is not correct, you may miss important information throughout the 4-H year.**
- * Reminder that 4-Hers will not be active until payment of the annual \$15 fee is received and processed by the State Office. We strongly encourage families to pay with a credit card instead of by check. A check can significantly delay your enrollment.
- * For more detailed information on enrollment and a direct link to 4honline, please take a look at the instruction guides available on 4honline and on our website: leavenworth.ksu.edu.
- * Like always if you have questions or need assistance, please contact the Extension Office: (913)364-5700.

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Project Spark Pages

4-H project spark pages serve as the foundational roadmaps for youth-led, hands-on learning. While a 4-H project focuses on exploring a specific interest, the project spark page is the structured tool that transforms that interest into lasting life skills, character traits, and practical knowledge.

1. Driving the "Learn by Doing" Philosophy

At its core, 4-H operates on experiential learning. Project spark pages provide step-by-step instructions and progressive learning experiences that allow youth to practice real-world skills. Rather than just reading about a topic, the guide prompts members to build, grow, or create independently.

2. Teaching Goal Setting and Self-Evaluation

A major component of any 4-H project spark page is teaching youth how to establish clear learning objectives. The pages prompt members to:

- Define what they want to achieve at the start of the year.
- Track their progress along a defined path.
- Reflect on what they learned, where they excelled, and where they fell short.

3. Cultivating Lifelong Record-Keeping Habits

Project spark pages introduce members to structured record-keeping, requiring them to document expenses, activities, leadership roles, and community service. This teaches youth vital organizational and communication skills that prepare them for long-term responsibilities like budgeting, tracking finances, and career scheduling.

4. Fostering Career Exploration and Personal Spark

With dozens of project tracks available across the country—from computer science to livestock husbandry—project spark pages offer an age-appropriate overview of what a specific field entails. They allow youth to "test drive" potential careers, discover their personal passions, and understand the commitment required to see a complex task through to completion.

Find all project spark pages for Kansas 4-H on the Kansas 4-H Website or follow the link:
<https://www.kansas4-h.org/projects/>



Leavenworth County 4-H Council

During the September meeting for Leavenworth County 4-H Council, the 2026-27 officers were elected. The new officers are:

President: Benjamin Karleskint
Vice President: Malachi Strick
Secretary: Taelynn Peter
Treasurer: Allison Murphy
Reporter: Adelaide Zenger

Please join me in congratulating these 4-Hers!

For those who may not be as familiar with Leavenworth County 4-H Council, council is made up of 4-H representatives from each community club across our county. This group of 4-Hers attend a business meeting bimonthly and sit on a youth committee that plans different countywide events throughout the 4-H year like 4-H Club Day, the fun event at county fair and the Achievement Celebration that is held every November. Representatives of council are elected at their community club to serve in these countywide positions. It is strongly encouraged that 4-Hers are 12 years of age or older. Ten and eleven year olds may serve only if older 4-Hers are not available. Seven through nine year olds are asked to wait until they are older to serve on council.



Attention all newly elected club officers. We are holding a county wide officer training this year. The training will be November 12, 2026 from 6:30pm - 8pm at the Extension Office. Please contact the Extension Office to RSVP by November 6th.



Achievement Celebration 2026

The Leavenworth County 4-H Council would like to invite all 4-Hers and their families to our annual 4-H Achievement Celebration on November 7th at Tonganoxie Christian Church. We will open the night with a dinner starting at 5pm and then an awards ceremony to celebrate all our 4-Hers' success over the past 4-H year. This event is a time of fellowship, fun and a great way to close the previous 4-H year and open the door to the next year.

If you are new to our program you may want to know who and what kind of awards are given at our Achievement Celebration. Those youth who completed record books and project report records may be eligible to receive a project pin in the project area where they submitted a book. This celebration is where members receive their membership pins if they applied for and met all the requirements. The evening will also be filled with other special recognitions.

Leavenworth County Council hopes you will consider joining us for the special celebration. We look forward to seeing all your wonderful faces as we say goodbye to the 2025-26 4-H year and hello to the 2026-27 4-H year!

If you plan to attend, please contact the Extension Office to RSVP by October 30th.



Welcome New 4-H Families

We would like to personally welcome each of our new 4-H families to Leavenworth County 4-H. We are excited that you have decided to join this wonderful program. 4-H was born in 1902 and ever since has strived to be the best youth development program possible. 4-H uses an experiential learning model to teach young people the life skills they need to be proactive forces within their communities.

I know joining a new organization can be overwhelming. I want you to know that you have a 4-H family that is here to help you. From your community leaders, parent volunteers, experienced 4-hers to your Extension Staff, we are all here to assist you.

I would also like to welcome back all returning 4-Hers. We are glad you continue to be a valuable part of this amazing youth development program.

Please remember to check our website often and to read your newsletters for information on what is happening in Leavenworth County 4-H.



Premium Checks and More

We still have showmanship t-shirts still left for pick up. If you won champion or reserve champion in a livestock or small animal project and you have not picked up your showmanship t-shirt, please do so as soon as possible.

County Fair Ribbon Premium checks are now available for pick up at the Extension Office. You will need to sign for your club's check.



Extension Drop Box

Did you know the Extension Office has a drop box? Can't make it to the Extension Office before 5pm. Please utilize this drop box to drop off financial reports, organizational report forms or any other document. Drop box is located on the side door, to the west of the sliding doors.

Make record books easier with ZBooks

4-H Record Keeping has been a part of the 4-H model for many, many years. It is a life skill that even in our growing world of technology is still important. Up until recently, the record keeping part of 4-H might have felt like it was still stuck in the 80's. Technology is such a big part of our life, why not improve the way we do record keeping in 4-H.

ZBooks is highly effective because it digitizes and simplifies the 4-H record-keeping process, eliminating the hassle of paper binders and confusing forms.

Here is why it is so valuable for 4-H members:

- **Centralized Hub:** Keeps all current and past project books safely stored in one secure online profile.
- **Auto-Tracks History:** Automatically compiles the multi-year Permanent Record as members input their activities over time.
- **Simplifies Finance Data:** Features guided fields that organize project expenses, income, and animal health data without formatting stress.
- **Digital Media Uploads:** Allows youth to type their "4-H Story" and upload project photos directly into the software.
- **Anytime Editing:** Enables year-round, cloud-based updates from any device, preventing last-minute scrambles before fair deadlines.
- **One-Click Printing:** Generates clean, professionally formatted documents that perfectly align with county judging rubrics.

Interested in trying ZBooks? Check out the below link to learn more and how to sign up.

ZBooks Info Link: <https://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/awards-and-recognition/ZBooks.html>



Upcoming News and Events

Club Financial Reports are Due by November 15th

Each club who has a bank account is required to turn in a financial report each year. At minimum we need a completed treasurers book. It is required to include the following within your book.

1. Bank Statements
2. Budget (page 9)
3. Yearly Summary of Club Finances (page 24)
4. 4-H Club/Extension Affiliated Group Annual Financial Report (page 29)
5. Required signatures (page 30)

I want to remind everyone that this is a requirement and not optional. If you are a chartered club and have a bank account you need to complete these documents. Not completing these documents can and will affect your club charter.

Attention Leaders

Organizational Report Forms are due to the Extension Office by November 15th. You can find this form on our website under 4-H Youth Development/Form and Resources/Organizational Report Form.

I invite all leaders to attend the Officer Training on November 12th. We will have a leader's meeting before the training. The meeting will start at 5:30pm. One leader from each club is strongly encouraged to attend. Both leaders would be best! Please RSVP to the Extension Office by November 6th.

Kansas Youth Leadership Forum and Kansas Volunteer Forum

Kansas Youth & Volunteer Leadership Forums – Register by Oct. 15!

Mark your calendars for an incredible weekend of leadership and networking! The Kansas Youth Leadership Forum (KYLF) and Kansas Volunteer Forum (KVF) are coming to Rock Springs Ranch from November 21–22, 2026.

This concurrent event offers distinct, high-impact tracks for both senior 4-H youth and our dedicated adult volunteers:

- For Youth (Ages 14–18): Expand your leadership toolkit, connect with peers from across Kansas, attend dynamic workshops, and vote for the 2027 Kansas 4-H Youth Leadership Council. It is a fantastic opportunity to build skills, make memories, and form lifelong friendships.
- For Adult Volunteers: The Kansas Volunteer Forum runs alongside the youth event, offering leaders a chance to collaborate, share ideas, and gather practical tools to bring back to local clubs. KVF attendees will join the youth for the keynote speaker and participate in specialized volunteer workshops.

Registration Deadline: Thursday, October 15, 2026

How to Join: <https://www.kansas4-h.org/educational-experiences/project-based-events/conferences-events/kansas-youth-leadership-forum/>

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K-State Research and Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the event contact (Sonya Murphy) two weeks prior to the start of the even at (913-364-5700). Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so.