

4-H Focus

SEPTEMBER 2025



2025 National 4-H Week Oct. 5th - 11th

National 4-H Week is an opportunity to highlight the remarkable 4-H youth in our communities and showcase the incredible experiences that 4-H offers young people. National 4-H Week will be held October 5-11, 2025. We encourage all clubs to find ways to promote and celebrate 4-H. A few ideas may include:

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6

**BEYOND READY:
GO GREEN**

Wear Your 4-H Gear

Nothing says 4-H pride like a 4-H tee! Dress yourself (or the entire family – pets included!) in 4-H green and clover gear.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

**BEYOND READY:
4-H FOR GOOD**

Give Back

Local programs are always looking for resources to continue growing the programs. Help programs like the Flying Squirrels or Green Turtles (not real clubs, but maybe) thrive by making a donation that can help provide supplies to kids in the area.

Set Up Information Booths

If your local grocery or hardware store allows, set up a table to share information about your local 4-H program. You can display 4-H posters, hand out flyers, or showcase the work of local 4-Hers.



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New 4-H Year Starts October 1st

4-H began in the early 1900s. Girls participated in canning clubs, and boys participated in corn and pig clubs. In 1914, Congress passed an act establishing Cooperative Extension and 4-H across the country. Corn, poultry and garden clubs existed in Kansas as early as 1905.

4-H has certainly changed since its early days. While we are proud of our rich history, we've expanded to include members from more than just rural backgrounds. We've evolved to meet the needs of today's youth, and develop learning experiences for boys and girls of all ages.

Why do we do 4-H? Why do we put time and effort into this program? Through this program kids build life skills by leading hands-on projects in areas like science, health, agriculture and, civic engagement – helping them to grow confidence, independence, resilience, and compassion. 4-H empowers young people to be true leaders. True leaders are young people who have confidence; know how to work well with others; can endure through challenges; and will stick with a job until it gets done. In 4-H, we believe true leaders aren't born – they're grown.

4-H program's hands-on approach gives young people guidance, tools and encouragement, and then puts them in the driver's seat to make great things happen. Independent research proves the unparalleled impact of the 4-H experience. 4-Hers are four times more likely to give back to their communities and 2 times more likely to make healthier decisions.

In 4-H we believe:

- all young people have potential;
- developing young people who are empowered, confident, hard-working, determined, responsible and compassionate—seeing a world beyond themselves so that they have the life-long skills to succeed in college and career,
- ensuring access and equity for all,
- the power of America's leading public universities,
- the practice of positive youth development (PYD)* by creating positive learning experiences,
- caring and trusted adult mentors who cultivate positive relationships with youth,
- creating safe, diverse and inclusive environments, and meeting young people wherever they are.

So you are probably saying, yes Sonya, I know this already. This is why we are a part of this great program. This is where I need your help. ***First is make the decision early for your family to continue to be apart of this amazing program. Commit as a family and get enrolled once October 1st rolls around. Don't wait until November, December or even January. Get out there and get it done. Second, is spread the word.*** Talk to your friends in church, at school, or in line at the grocery store about this program. Invite a friend to come to a meeting with you. Invite a friend over to your house and show them your projects, talk about what you have learned and the skills you have gained. Help me spread the word about his program that has taught you and me so much. Everyone should have the opportunity to benefit from 4-H.

Remember October 1st. Mark it in your calendar!

4-H Club Officers



As the new 4-H year fast approaches, our 4-H clubs are getting ready to elect new officers. I strongly encourage youth to think about running for an office. Holding a 4-H office, no matter the type, teaches responsibility, time management, public speaking, builds confidence, and promotes organization. It is a great way to get involved within your club.

There are club offices for all levels. For those who are just starting out and not sure they are ready, try song leader. Like to take pictures, think about running for historian for your club. Like to take notes, reporter is always a great position and a great stepping stone to the secretary position. Ready for a bigger leadership role, think about running for club vice president or president. Want to get more involved in the county level, think about running for county council representative.

Not sure how elections work within your club. Ask an older 4-Her within your club or talk to your club leader. If you are elected to a club office and want additional resources, we have officer resources books available here at the Extension Office. ***We will hold a county wide officer training. The training will be November 13, 2025 from 6:30pm - 8pm at the Extension Office. Please contact the Extension Office to RSVP.***

Each spring and fall, Tractor Supply helps raise money for 4-H programs through the sale of Paper Clovers in their stores. In the most recent campaign we raised over \$981,000 nationwide. 90% of funds raised go back to state and local 4-H programs to support youth by providing hands-on learning experiences through projects in STEM, agriculture, healthy living, and civic engagement.

4-H Clubs can support the campaign through different ways. Clubs can have a booth outside the store and help sell clovers or can simply be present to help customers. Contact our local Tractor Supply to set up a time for your club to support this great program.

This year's fall Paper Clover program will start November 28 and will run through December 14, 2025. For more information please contact your community leaders or the Extension Office.



Record Books and Project Report Forms

One of the true 4-H learning experiences is record keeping. This does take time, but 4-Hers learn important skills that will benefit them in the future. 4-Hers will keep a continuous record of their 4-H experiences and non-4-H experiences as long as they remain a 4-Her. All 4-H members are strongly encouraged to complete a 4-H Record Book or Member's Record each year as part of 4-H Membership. A record book/ member's record will be composed of a Completed Personal Page, a 4-H story, Permanent Record and photos (photos are optional but a nice addition).

Is this your first year doing a member's record? Make sure to talk to your leader or stop by the office and pick up a green members record folder to keep all your records in. Each 4-her receives one green folder free, compliments of Leavenworth County 4-H Council.

4-Hers are also encouraged to complete a Project Report Form for at least one of their projects for the year. The Project Report Form is a record of what the 4-Her did within a specific project. Project Report Forms including personal page, permanent record, and project forms by age are located on our web page: http://www.leavenworth.k-state.edu/4-h/forms_resources.html. Once forms are completed simply place them into a three pronged folder with a label on the outside. Labels are available at the Extension Office for no cost.

Record Books and Project Report Forms should all be submitted to your club leader by the due date as specified by your club leader. Each club will have a different deadline. **Your leaders will then submit these to the Extension Office by October 3, 2025.**

Still feeling a bit overwhelmed when it comes to 4-H record keeping. Please reach out to your club leaders or the Extension Office. We are here to help.



Membership Pins

Membership pins are designed to recognize youth for achieving that level of participation in the 4-H program. This is not a competitive process. All youth who complete an application and whose application is verified as complete will receive a recognition pin.

There are nine membership pins. Pins must be received in order but can be skipped. For example, if you are starting 4-H at an older age such as 13, we do not recommend you start at the bottom pin which is the membership pin. You will not make it through all 9 pins before you age out. We recommend you start at the highest pin you qualify for. One thing to remember is you can skip pins but you cannot go backwards and get those pins at a later date. You want to keep this in mind when deciding which pin to start with.

Application forms can be found on our web page: www.leavenworth.k-state.edu/4-h/awards_scholarships.html

All pin applications should be submitted to your club leader by the due date as specified by your club leader. Each club will have a different deadline. Your leaders will then submit these to the Extension Office by October 3, 2025. Pins will be awarded at our Annual Achievement Celebration in November.



Officer Books, Leadership Scholarships & Club Summary

Officer books are also eligible to be judged for awards, similar to project report forms. Officer books include: treasurers book, secretary book, historian book and reporters book. If you have questions about what the requirements are for each of these books, please contact the Extension Office. Officer books are due to the Extension office by October 3rd.

County Council awards leadership scholarships every year. Applications for this scholarship are located on our website. These applications are also due to the Extension Office by October 3rd.

Each club may chose to fill out a club summary. Seals are awarded based on each club summary. Club summary applications are located on our website. Club summaries are also due October 3rd.

Make record books easier with ZBooks

Technology is such a big part of our world and is in almost everything we do. 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. Well, that request has been answered and the answer is ZBooks. If you are interested in ZBooks, there are great informational resources on the State 4-H site. A link to them is here: <https://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/awards-and-recognition/ZBooks.html>. Even if you do not currently participate in records books in 4-H, check it out because it might make you change your mind.



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.

We will be holding a breakout training during countywide officer training specifically for treasurers. In this training we will go over everything that is needed for your club financial report. I strongly encourage you to attend if you are a club treasurer. The training will be November 13th from 6:30pm - 8pm at the Extension Office. Please call the office to RSVP.

Please contact the office if you have any questions.

4-H Achievement Celebration

The 2025 Leavenworth County Achievement Celebration is scheduled for November 8th at the Tonganoxie Christian Church. More details will be coming soon.

All 4-Hers and their families are invited to attend. This event consists of a celebration meal sponsored by Leavenworth County 4-H Council and an awards ceremony. At the awards ceremony, 4-hers receive recognition for membership pins received (see Membership pins article in this newsletter) and project pin winners are announced. This is based on the Project Report Forms that are submitted for judging by October 3rd. Key Awards and Leadership Scholarships are also awarded during the awards ceremony.

Don't miss a chance to celebrate all the accomplishments our Leavenworth County 4-Hers have made this year.

Upcoming News and Events

Kansas Youth Leadership Forum and Kansas Volunteer Forum

Kansas Youth Leadership Forum (KYLF) and Kansas Volunteer Forum (KVF) will be held on November 22nd - 23rd, 2025 at Rock Springs Ranch outside Junction City, Kansas. This event is for youth ages 14-18, and also Adult Volunteers. This event will include speakers, workshops, and the election of the 2026 Kansas 4-H Youth Leadership Council. This is a fantastic learning opportunity for building leadership skills, collaborating with fellow 4-H members from across the state of Kansas, making memories and maybe even some lifelong friendships! You must be registered by Monday, October 15th, 2025 to attend. Keep an eye on your email for more information. While the 4-H'ers are having a great time with their peers at their event, there is also an opportunity for 4-H Adult Volunteers to have some fun of their own with their other 4-H leaders and volunteers. The Kansas Volunteer Forum (KVF) is designed to provide volunteers with tools and ideas to take back to their respective 4-H programs. KVF attendees will get to hear the Keynote Speaker with the KYLF attendees. They will also have their own set of workshops. To end the first day there will be a silent auction and other activities in Leadership Lodge. This is great time for visiting with other KVF attendees about the day, sharing ideas and networking together. There will be nominations for officers for the 2026 KVF Planning Board. If you have any questions about either event, please contact the Extension Office.



Leaders Meeting - October 16th

A leader's meeting will be held on October 16th at the Extension Office from 7pm - 8:30pm. We will cover many things so please make sure that one or both of club leader attends. If the club leaders can not attend, please send a parent volunteer who will be able to relay the information back to the leaders. Please RSVP to the Extension Office by October 10th.

4-H Dog Conference

Kansas 4-H Dog project members, their dogs, and families will convene October 18-19, at Rock Springs Ranch for a weekend of learning, fellowship, and fun at the 4-H Dog Conference. This year's theme of "Trails and Tails" will be a great fall treat to kick off the new 4-H year in the dog project. Conference sessions will include topics on dog care, training, and showing. Contests will include photography, quiz bowl, and presentations. Don't miss this opportunity for fun and fellowship with your dog and 4-H'ers from across the state! Early bird registration is due September 19th. Final deadline to register is September 26th.



Congratulations State Fair Participants

I would like to take a moment to congratulate all the 4-Her's who exhibited at the 2025 Kansas State Fair. No matter what ribbon you received, you should be proud!

Results are in for all static exhibits (building exhibits). You can access all state fair results at the below link.

<https://fairentury.com/Fair/Results/21918>

As a reminder we will pick up all State Fair items that we dropped off on Monday, September 15th. We will need to sort and put ribbons on so they will be available for pick-up starting Wednesday, September 17th. Please do not forget to pickup your items.



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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.