

# Spotlight on ... 4-H!



## LEADER LETTER

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DISCOVER 4-H

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- What's behind the perfect meal? Learn about how to plan for a party!
- What does it take to be a Premier Exhibitor? Learn how to meet the challenge!
- How do you tell the 4-H Curriculum Story? What does a Career Portfolio need to succeed?

## CREATING FUN CLUB ACTIVITIES

Club activities can enhance your 4-H club program immensely. However, sometimes



coming up with the right activity at the right time can be a challenge. Whether it is recreational, educational, motivational, competitive, or solely for entertainment purposes, activities conducted as a club help to build relationships among your members, strengthen the "team" concept and will help your club members connect with 4-H in a different way.

The first step to determining a good club activity is to identify the following: **1)** what is the age of your youth, **2)** what are the interests of your youth, **3)** what do you have access to within your community or surrounding area? Keeping the activity age appropriate is important. Touring a facility where the presenter is speaking at a much high cognitive level than where your youth are will not lend to a positive experience. Share the age range of your youth and potentially their experience level with the presenter so they can prepare their information in a way that your members will enjoy and understand.

Although exposure to new ideas is always great, you need to make sure that the activity appeals to your youth. Does your club have a livestock focus? Then maybe a tour of the meat department of a grocery store would be appropriate. But if your club has a livestock focus, you may not want to visit the local fabric store.

If you are unsure of what businesses are available for tours in your area, visit with the local area Chamber of Commerce. They have a listing of all businesses and will know which ones are open to giving youth tours.

### Some activity ideas to get you started:

**Tours:** Grocery Store or Meat Locker, Restaurants, Clothing Merchant, Greenhouse, Banks, Colleges, Producer's Operation, Manufacturing Company, Entrepreneurial Business, etc.

**Activities:** Judging Contests, Club Demonstrations on Project topics, Quiz Bowl, Skill-a-Thon, Project Pictionary, Project Jeopardy, etc.

**Recreational / Entertainment:** Swimming, Skating, Sledding, Challenge another club to a softball game, Scavenger Hunt, Progressive Dinner, Chili Challenge with other clubs, Silly Supper, etc.

**Motivational:** Speakers including local business people, former club members, or Extension staff. Watch the movie "Pay It Forward" and link it to a club activity, Read with your club "You can be Anything" and apply the content. Activities in this area need to be selected carefully as they can carry great impact with your youth.

These are only your starting points. Add to them, build from them, and then share them by going to [ne4hvolunteers.ning.com](http://ne4hvolunteers.ning.com) and add them to the club successes.



## TABLE SETTING CONTEST TIPS

Whether your county has a Table Setting Contest, a Table Toppers Contest or a Favorite Foods Contest, the concept is the same. It is a fun way for youth to learn how to properly set a table, plan nutritious meals, express originality and creativity in choosing a theme, express knowledge of food and nutrition, and food safety.

### Select a Theme

What is the occasion...a family dinner, a holiday, or lunch with friends? Possibilities can run from a fishing party sack lunch to a formal Mother's Day dinner.

**Table Appointments** — Include any item used to set a table: tablecloth, napkin, placemats, dinnerware, glassware, flatware, and centerpiece. Choose table appointments to fit the occasion and carry out the theme. Paper plates, plasticware and paper napkins may be used for a picnic, but they would not be appropriate for a formal dinner. Flatware and dishware must be safe to eat from i.e., no glitter, glue, etc. is to be used on eating surfaces.

**Table Covering** — Protects the table and makes for less noise. Placemats and/or tablecloths may be used. Sometimes the table is left bare. Choose a covering which is appropriate for the occasion and the other table appointments.

**Place Setting** — Allow at least 20 inches for each person's dishes. This is called a cover and each cover is set exactly the same. A cover contains the dinnerware and flatware for the meal served.

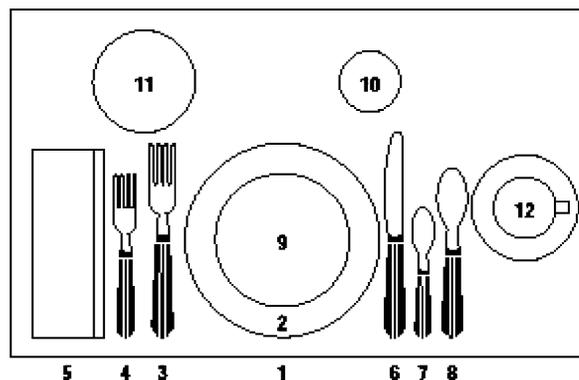
**Centerpiece** — The centerpiece should be coordinated with the table appointment and be appropriate for the occasion. The centerpiece should be visible to all as if the entire table was set and should not obstruct anyone's view of each other. Centerpiece candles should NOT be lit in 4-H contests.

### Proper Way to Set a Table

The following rules for setting a table correspond to the numbers seen in the table setting illustration.

1. The flatware, plate, and napkin should be one inch from the edge of the table.
2. The plate is always in the center of the place setting.
3. The dinner fork is placed at the left of the plate.
4. If a salad fork is used, it is placed to the left of the dinner fork.
5. The napkin is placed to the left of the fork, with the fold on the left (unless a decorative fold is used). The napkin may also go under a fork or on top of the plate.
6. The knife is placed to the right of the plate with the blade facing in towards the plate.
7. The teaspoon is placed to the right of the knife.
8. If a soup spoon is needed, it is placed to the right of the teaspoon.
9. The soup bowl may be placed on the dinner plate.
10. The drinking glass is placed at the tip of the knife.
11. If salad, bread and/or dessert plate(s) or bowl(s) is used, place at the top of the fork(s).
12. The cup or mug is placed to the top right of the spoons.

**Note:** Only the utensils needed are placed on the table.



"Source: Purdue University Indiana 4-H"



## CONSIDERATIONS IN CHOOSING A GOOD TOY.

### SAFETY IS NUMBER 1!!

- Toy should safe for the age of the child specified.
- If painted, the paint should be non-toxic
- If under the age of 3, are there any small parts that the child could swallow?
- Is free of sharp parts or pointed edges that could scrape a child?
- If the child fell on this toy, could he/she get hurt?
- If there is a cord, is it under 12 inches?
- Are there any parts that could pinch fingers or catch hair?
- Is it made of material that will not break?
- Could a child bit off or eat part of the toy?

### GOOD TOYS ARE APPROPRIATE TO THE AGE OF THE CHILD FOR WHICH THEY ARE MADE OR CHOSEN.

- Good toys are challenging to the child, but not overly challenged so as to become discouraged. Example – would you choose an alphabet book for an 8 year old, or a set of tinker toys for a two year old.?
- A toy that is too challenging for a child will create frustration and thus will not keep his/her attention.
- A toy for an older child may be unsafe for a younger child to play with.
- Age appropriate toys will be both safe and interesting for that child.

### HOW IMPORTANT IS QUALITY OF WORKMANSHIP IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT?

Certainly the beautifully made toy is more appealing than the sloppily made toy. The main point is, does the toy maintain its value as a play thing? A poorly made puzzle, for example, might be hard to put together. If the child can't get the pieces to fit, he/she will become frustrated and quit using it. It doesn't maintain value as a toy.



A poorly made stuffed animal may not be appealing in that it just doesn't look nice enough to catch the child's attention. It may also fall apart more easily or become a safety hazard. Sometimes, quality of workmanship is related to choice of materials. Encourage 4-H'ers to choose the best materials they can, while still having an affordable toy. Sometimes very appealing toys are made from recycled materials. A wooden toy made from a nice quality of wood, free from knot holes and nicks, will be safer and more appealing than one made from poorer quality wood.

Score sheets are available for judging toys and babysitting kits. Check with your UNL Extension office or you can download from <http://4h.unl.edu/programs/statefair/sfcoresheets.htm>

Experience The  Adventure



**CERTAINLY THE BEAUTIFULLY MADE TOY IS MORE APPEALING THAN THE SLOPPILY MADE TOY. THE MAIN POINT IS, DOES THE TOY MAINTAIN ITS VALUE AS A PLAY THING?**



## WORKING TOGETHER USING GPS AND GIS



**GPS – Global Positioning Systems and GIS – Geographic Information Systems** work together to tell us about certain attributes within our community, state and world. GPS tells us where, while GIS tells us what. Together, they help us locate, organize, and map our communities.

So you have heard a lot these days about GPS - global positioning systems which give your location by latitude and longitude. GPS reference to a location can also assist individuals with navigation from one location to another. Many people these days have navigational instruments or systems in their cars in order to make travel easier for them. Many 4-H youth have learned how to use a hand-held GPS receiver in school or as a club by doing an activity called geo-caching in which they locate hidden treasure boxes. So what's next? How can you take them to the next level?



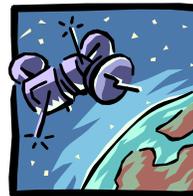
This project encourages youth to build their science and technology knowledge, while increasing their career awareness.



Using GIS (geographic information systems) which is a computer program for storing, retrieving, analyzing and displaying data can assist with such 4-H projects like community mapping. This project encourages youth to build their science and technology knowledge, while increasing their career awareness. Tom Tate, national program leader with USDA states that through these geographic projects, youth and adults can improve decision making capacity in their communities and help strengthen local economic, social and environmental well being.

GIS combines two kinds of information or databases:

- 1) latitude and longitude coordinates, spatial or local information, "where things are";
- 2) descriptive information or attributes: characteristics or qualities of that place, "what things are like".



When this information is put together or layered, GIS creates a map to show what the place is like. What information /layers you combine depends on your purpose: where open areas for a new park exist; emergency shelter locations in case of a natural disaster; location of vacant buildings for the location of a teen youth center, etc. All this information is computerized and stored until you request that it be mapped in the way you define. Check it out here:

<http://www.qis.com/whatisqis/dowithqis.html>

Create a data base of business locations in your community. Youth use the handheld GPS receivers to mark the location of various types of services and businesses found in the community. Make a map plotting the latitude, longitude and information about the location from the following website:

<http://www.esri.com/software/arcgis/explorer/index.html>

**Check out the other 4-H project that uses GPS and GIS:**

4-H Youth Favorite Places - <http://www.youthfavoriteplaces.org>

4-H Community Atlas Project - <http://edcommunity.esri.com/commAtlas>

**TOM TATE, NATIONAL PROGRAM LEADER WITH USDA STATES THAT THROUGH THESE GEOGRAPHIC PROJECTS, YOUTH AND ADULTS CAN IMPROVE DECISION MAKING CAPACITY IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND HELP STRENGTHEN LOCAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL WELL BEING.**

## PREMIER LIVESTOCK EXHIBITOR CONTEST

Often times 4-H livestock exhibitors will make a comment about not wanting to exhibit at the State Fair or Aksarben because they don't have the quality of animal to be able to compete at that level. Many times, these exhibitors are the ones who know a great deal about livestock production and managing a project to make a profit. These exhibitors are the ones who need to be encouraged to participate in the "Premier Livestock Exhibitor Contest". The "Premier Livestock Exhibitor Contest" provides an opportunity for 4-Hers who know good production practices and the background of livestock production to excel. The purpose of this contest is to provide an opportunity for 4-H exhibitors to demonstrate their skills and knowledge in all areas of production and management in beef, dairy, sheep, or swine, to strengthen communication and decision making skills and to recognize excellence in these areas.

Contestants will be evaluated on the following basis:

**Interview** – A panel of at least two livestock industry leaders will visit with the contestants about current issues facing their livestock specie and their personal background and experiences.

**Skillathon** – This portion of the contest requires the 4-Her to use skills they have gained in their project to complete tasks and complete problems that livestock producers are faced with on a regular basis. This may be identifying equipment that is used, or breeds of their specie. They may have to make decisions affecting the feeding program for their animal.

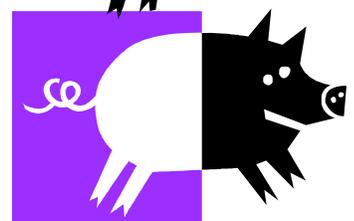
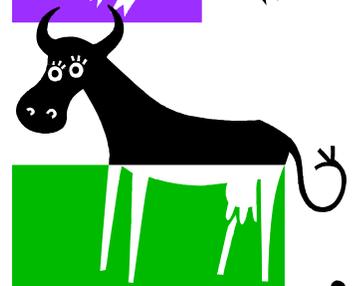
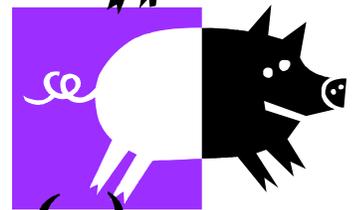
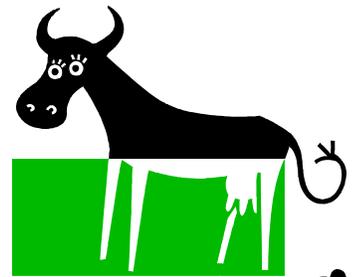
**Written Quiz** – A multiple choice quiz will be given to each of the participants to test their knowledge about the specie they are showing. The questions on this test will involve breeding, gestation, carcass quality and more.

**Showmanship** – points will be assigned as follows: Purple ribbon-15 points, Blue ribbon-10 points, Red ribbon-5 points.

References for the contest include the 4-H Manuals and Extension NebGuides listed as references for the State 4-H General Livestock Quiz Bowl Contest. These references are available at <http://pase.unl.edu/lifechallenges/resources.html> or by contacting your local UNL Extension Office.

The Premier Exhibitor Contest is offered at the Nebraska State Fair and Aksarben. Exhibitors must pre-register for these events when entries are due for State Fair and/or Aksarben. This is generally around the first week of August. Exact times for interview and details about the contest schedule are mailed out to exhibitors prior to the contest.

Complete rules and guidelines for the contests can be found at <http://4h.unl.edu/programs/statefair/fairbook.htm> for the State Fair [http://www.rivercityroundup.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=59&Itemid=167](http://www.rivercityroundup.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59&Itemid=167) for Aksarben.



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2009 Nebraska State Fair

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## SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H!

### THE 4-H CURRICULUM STORY

The Career Portfolio is one of the ways 4-Hers learn to keep records, learn business skills, and learn the importance of "telling Stories". The 4-H Curriculum Story is one of the most important parts of the Career Portfolio. It is the most fun to read, but proves to be the most difficult part to produce. Here are a few helpful hints:

- ◆ A maximum of six pages on one side,
- ◆ double spaced with one inch margins,
- ◆ Font: Times New Roman 12 point.

#### Part 1: Introduction

Introduce yourself; include information about your family and interests. Tell when and why you joined 4-H why 4-H is important to you; tell us what you learned this year.

#### Part 2: Describe Growth in Major Project Area

- ◆ Relate some of the experiences you have had while completing your project(s).
- ◆ Share how 4-H and your project helped you learn new knowledge and skills.
- ◆ Include some things you tried successfully or unsuccessfully.
- ◆ Humor is always great to include.

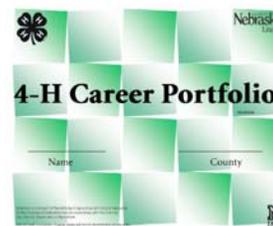
#### Part 3: Other 4-H Projects and Experiences

Share highlights of other 4-H projects, activities, or experiences not in part 2, include:

- ◆ any major learning experiences,
- ◆ items of special interest,
- ◆ unusual situations you encountered.

#### Part 4: Leadership /Community Service related to Part 2 of the story. Explain how:

- ◆ 4-H has helped you become a better leader and citizen.
- ◆ 4-H has increased your interest and participation in community affairs,
- ◆ 4-H has helped you learn from team efforts.



#### Part 5: Conclusion - summary of the impact of 4-H on you.

Describe how 4-H participation has helped you to feel good about yourself, influenced your personal goals, and impacted your use of leisure time. Tell about your future plans and the career you want to pursue.

#### SUPPORT MATERIALS:

Total of 6 pages - 8 ½ " by 11" piece of paper.

- ◆ Includes: maximum of 4 pages of photos and 2 optional pages of other 4-H supporting materials (photos are not permitted)
- ◆ Newspaper articles and clippings may not be used.
- ◆ Do not include specific project record books or yearend stories.
- ◆ Photographs may be used to illustrate highlights of the project/curriculum area.
- ◆ Photographs depicting special practices followed, year-to-year progress, or leadership activities provide excellent documentation of growth.

1. Four picture pages with photo's securely mounted on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper on one side only with a brief caption explaining the picture. These should be descriptive, not "cute" captions. They might identify event, year, and/or your role.

2. Provide "Action" photos to document 4-H activities.

3. Color photocopies, and/or digital photos are acceptable and may be submitted in place of actual photos. (Photocopies of newspaper print pictures are not acceptable.)

**DO NOT** write on front of a photo.

**DO NOT** shingle pictures (where one photo must be lifted to see another). Photos may be trimmed, but be careful not to confuse information being shared with a collage effect.

**DO NOT** include news clippings or photographs taken from newspapers, magazines newsletters, etc.

**DO NOT** use plastic cover sheets/sleeves on portfolio pages including support material pages.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Friday, May 29 — 4-H Life Challenge—Seniors Contest Preregistrations Due to Extension  
Saturday, May 30 — **4-H Life Challenge—Seniors** (Lancaster Extension Education Center) .....9:30 a.m.  
Monday, June 1 — 4-H Horse Identifications Due to Extension  
Thursday, June 4 — 4-H Leader Training (Lancaster Extension Education Center) .....9:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m.  
Monday, June 15 — 4-H updated club enrollment forms due to extension office — must list project area(s) each member plans to enter at the county fair.  
Monday, June 15 — 4-H/FFA Sheep/Goats/Swine/Breeding Beef/Bucket Calves/Dairy Cattle/Rabbits IDs Due to Extension  
Monday, June 22 — 4-H Bicycle Contest Preregistrations Due to Extension  
Saturday, June 27 — **4-H Bicycle Contest** (Lancaster Extension Education Center) .....9 a.m.  
Wednesday, July 8 — All 4-H/FFA Animal Entries Due to Extension (*no late animal entries will be accepted!*)  
Friday, July 10 — 4-H Presentations and 4-H Life Challenge—Juniors Contest Preregistrations Due to Extension  
Saturday, July 11 — **4-H Life Challenge—Juniors** (Lancaster Extension Education Center) .....9:30 a.m.

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4 - H ! Y O U R F I R S T C L A S S A T T H E U N I V E R S I T Y O F N E B R A S K A !