



## 4-H & Youth

# 4-H! A Great Experience!

### Community Service Corner

## Holiday Gifts Needed

There is always a need for helping the less fortunate, especially around the holiday season. Lincoln Public Schools Headstart Program is in need of over 300 gifts for children birth to 5 years old. New, handmade or purchased items such as books, stuffed toys, dolls, cars, trucks, markers, puzzles, etc., are needed. Literacy is being emphasized this year, so books and items that encourage reading are suggested.

If gifts are wrapped, please indicate what the item is, the cost (\$5 recommended) and if the gift is for a boy or girl. Bring gifts to the extension office by Dec. 1.

For more information, contact Lorene at 441-7180. This is an excellent community service program for 4-H, FCE and other community clubs. Individuals are welcome to participate. (LB)

## 4-H CAN Fight Hunger

In an effort to fight hunger, Nebraska 4-H will be conducting a 4-H CAN Fight Hunger Campaign. The goal is collecting 4000 pounds of food. Collect donated food now until Jan. 5, 2003 and donate it to a charity of your 4-H club's choice. Please report to Tracy the total weight of the food collected, the number of youth and adult volunteers, the number of total volunteer hours, the agencies and/or groups who benefitted from the food drive and any publicity the project received. Call Tracy at 441-7180 for more information and for 4-H CAN Fight Hunger promotional material. (TK)

Sheri Ramirez  
4-H Leader and Parent

Amber Ramirez began her 4-H career by judging livestock in rural Nebraska. Then she moved to Lincoln and joined a new club. She has been a member of three clubs during her 10 years in 4-H. Currently, Amber belongs to Pet Pals and Flamingos.

Nine years ago, Amber was diagnosed with a very rare seizure disorder. After three surgeries, and many years of seizures, she underwent removal of the left hemisphere of her brain three years ago. Amber has had to relearn to read, write, speak and work one-handed. When she was hospitalized for surgery, both of her 4-H groups sent many get-well wishes and hosted a donation event for her at the county fair.

Amber currently is a senior at Lincoln High school and is an active young adult. She spends many hours as a community service volunteer. This summer, Amber logged 76 hours of volunteer time at Folsom Children's Zoo and Botanical Gardens. Among her duties were walking the ponies, helping with the barnyard critters - including the pygmy goats, Critter Corner, face painting and riding the train. "Those goats were always chewing on my clothes," smiled



Amber showed off her guinea pig Cuddles at last year's fair.

Amber. "But it was great fun."

At Legacy Terrace Retirement Community, Amber assisted older adults with craft projects and enjoyed giving manicures to many of the women. These visits enhance the lives of residents who very often have few visitors. "They always want pink," exclaimed Amber.

At the 2002 Lancaster County Fair, Amber was awarded the Grand Champion Mammal trophy for showing Cuddles, her favorite cavy (guinea pig.) Cuddles and Amber are invited guests to the Children's Museum several times each year. They always enjoy being part of the educational events there.

Amber has gained much

from 4-H. After her surgeries, Flamingos gave her a welcome home party. These 4-H members helped Amber gain back her self esteem and self assurance. They did so much for us when she was gone. She has always felt very fortunate to belong to an organization as inclusive as 4-H.

4-H has something for every child. Whether you have a gift for doing the project or if you don't, 4-H still finds a place for you. It offers great opportunities for kids to gain self esteem and self awareness with no strings attached. All youngsters can find their niche.

Amber has enjoyed a wide variety of projects such as sewing, baking, woodworking, crafts and showing her many pets at fair time. 4-H has been a great experience for Amber.



## HORSE BITS

### State Horse Show Contests Change

The decision has been made to hold the Horse Bowl, Public Speaking and Demonstration contests apart from the State 4-H Horse Exposition in 2003. They have been scheduled for March 14-16, 2003. The specific times and locations of these contests will be decided as soon as possible.

Remember, you will need to get an early start this year if you'd like to participate in the State Horse Show contests, so begin organizing your Horse Bowl team now! (EK)

### Horse VIPS Committee Meetings

Our regular monthly meetings of the 4-H Horse VIPS Committee have been changed to the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center, 84th & Havelock in the meeting room of the Exhibit Hall (southeast of the multipurpose arena and pavilions). Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend. We could always use a few more good volunteers! (EK)

### 4-H Horse Leader Training

There is a Lancaster County 4-H Horse Leader training tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 1, 2003. If you are currently a club leader, please put the date on your calendar and plan to attend. The meeting will be open to any person interested in assisting with and learning more about leading a 4-H Horse club. (EK)

## Music Contest and Family & Consumer Science Judging Contest are Retired

The Nebraska State 4-H office recently announced that the traditional Family & Consumer Science Judging Contest has been retired at both the county and state levels. A new event will be offered this summer, showcasing hands-on learning opportunities in FCS subject matter areas as well as offer chances for participation in team problem solving, oral presentations and possibly an FCS quiz bowl.

The Nebraska State 4-H office also retired the Music Contest at both the county and state levels. A new performing arts "camp" will draw upon the expertise of faculty and students within the College of Fine and Performing Arts, has been established. This is one of the fastest-growing colleges at the University of Nebraska. This camp will provide expertise and a strong curriculum.

Stay tuned for more information about the new FCS event and performing arts camp. (TK)

## Nominate Your Favorite 4-H Volunteer!

Starting in January, Lancaster County 4-H will present a "Heart of 4-H Award" to a Lancaster County 4-H volunteer each month! Nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer or leader by submitting the following form (also available online at [lancaster.unl.edu](http://lancaster.unl.edu)).



I, \_\_\_\_\_, nominate \_\_\_\_\_  
for a "Heart of 4-H Award" because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I can be reached at (phone) \_\_\_\_\_ or (e-mail) \_\_\_\_\_

Return form to: UNL Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County, 444 Cherrycreek Rd, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528.