

## Horseless Horse 4-H Club is Off and Running

It started as an idea. Marty Cruickshank, 4-H staff member in charge of the Lancaster County 4-H horse program, saw a need for a club aimed at youth who want to participate in a 4-H horse project but don't have access to horses.

"I see a horseless club as a great way for kids who probably will never have a horse but have a love for the animal to learn about horses and hopefully have the opportunity to ride a little," said Cruickshank. "It is also a chance for kids who are thinking about getting a horse to be around horses and find out if they really do want to take on the commitment. Kids and their parents can find out how to take care of a horse and what type of equipment is needed."

Enter Jen DeBusk. She recently moved to Lincoln from California. She wanted to help with 4-H but didn't feel ready to head up a riding club. Cruickshank mentioned the need for a horseless club and DeBusk bit immediately. DeBusk volunteered to be club organizational leader.



A Broomtails club member wore a bicycle helmet and cowboy boots for a horse ride courtesy of the Riding Wranglers 4-H Club.

"I was a horse-crazy kid, so I completely understand kids who love horses. I wanted to share what I knew with them," said DeBusk. "I totally empathize with kids who don't have horses. There are different reasons why they can't have horses — usually financial or time constraints. But this club gives them a way to learn about and be around horses."

The Lincoln Broomtails 4-H

club is the first horseless horse 4-H club in Lancaster County, and only the second one in Nebraska. They started meeting in January 2004 at the Bess Dodson Walt library. Members researched horse breeds, styles of tack and riding clothes. In March, the club attended the Nebraska Horse Expo as a group.

DeBusk owns a mustang, Libby. Club members use Libby to learn ground skills such as grooming, leading a horse, putting on a halter, and safety around horses.

During the 2004 Lancaster County Fair, Libby was a club project. The Broomtails decorated their club area and

participated in the herdsmanship contest (in which clubs are judged on cleanliness of stall areas, attention to safety, care of animal and courteousness of members). Members took turns feeding and watering Libby. During the Western Horse Show, they handed out ribbons to winners.

4-H parent Kay said, "The members are learning what it

realistically takes to take care of a horse. They haven't done it full time, but they've done most of the steps."

Last October, members of the Riding Wranglers 4-H club invited The Broomtails out to ride their horses. The Wranglers led the horses as Broomtails members rode, some for their first time. The Wranglers also gave a mini-clinic about the differences between English and Western horses, tack and riding.

The Broomtails visited a tack shop, "Tack 'n' Togs," in December. Owner Marge Davenport showed club members different types of

saddles, bridles and other equipment.

"We try to do a hands-on activity each month," explains DeBusk.

The Lincoln Broomtails currently has ten members, and is always open to new members. For more information about The Broomtails club or 4-H Horse program, call Marty Cruickshank at 441-7180. 4-H is part of UNL Cooperative Extension.

If anyone would like to host The Broomtails for a visit to their horse barn, or to share a horse-related activity, please contact 4-H staff member Marty by calling 441-7180.



Club members participate in herdsmanship duties at the Lancaster County Fair.



### 4-H Rabbit Clinic

Thursday, March 3, 6:15–8:30 p.m.

Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Rd, Lincoln

Learn about the 4-H Rabbit Program. FREE to attend!  
SESSIONS INCLUDE: Grooming, Judging, Rabbit Breed ID Contest, Showmanship, Quiz Bowl, Static Exhibits

### Spring Rabbit Show

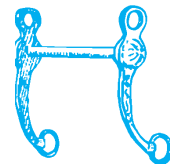
Saturday, March 5, 9 a.m.

Lancaster Event Center, 84th & Havelock, Lincoln, Pavilion 3 Exhibit Hall

Classes: Fancy Rabbits, Commercial Rabbits, Pet Class and Pee Wee Class. Registration Fees: \$2.50 per rabbit or cavy, \$1.50 Showmanship. Trophies & ribbons will be awarded!  
Please bring a raffle prize to donate to the 4-H Rabbit Program of Lancaster County

For more information, call Rodney at 782-2186 or Marty at 441-7180

OPEN TO ALL YOUTH



## HORSE BITS

### 4-H Horse Stampede March 12

This third annual 4-H Horse Stampede will be held Saturday, March 12 at the Animal Science Building on UNL East Campus. The Stampede consists of the 4-H state horse-related competitions: Horse Bowl, Public Speaking, Demonstration and Art contests. It is free to watch Stampede events. All 4-H members in the horse program are encouraged to attend — it's a good way to see what the competition is about and to consider competing next year. Schedule is:

8–4 p.m.	Art Contest Judging and Display
8:30 a.m.	Demonstration Contests
9 a.m.	Public Speaking Contests
10:30 a.m.	Horse Bowl
7 p.m.	Awards Presentation*

\*held at the Lancaster Event Center as part of the evening performance of Horse Expo

### Nebraska Horse Expo March 11–13

The 2005 Nebraska Horse Expo will be March 11–13 at the Lancaster Event Center. Presented by the Nebraska Horse Council, the Expo brings together horse enthusiasts from all disciplines for three days of entertainment and information. Exhibitions take place all day. Visit the vendor hall and see what's new in equine products. Special clinicians and speakers include horse trainer Curt Pate, Susan Harris and horse trainer Kevin Wescott.

"Anatomy in Motion: The Visible Horse," is Susan Harris' unique demonstration. She paints the muscles and skeletal system on a living horse, to show how the anatomy of the horse works in motion at all gaits. The skeletal system, painted on one side, demonstrates the structure and movement of body and limbs. On the other side, the painted major muscle groups show how the muscles work to produce good movement and balance. As the

horse works, it's easy to see and understand the function of the bones and muscles, what causes good and poor movement and common causes of movement problems.

For more information about the Horse Expo, go to [nebraskahorsecouncil.org](http://nebraskahorsecouncil.org).



## Can You Guess It?



Did you guess it? Find out at [lancaster.unl.edu](http://lancaster.unl.edu)

Did you guess it from the February NEBLINE?  
The answer was raspberries.