

The NEBLINE[®]

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University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County
“Helping Nebraskans enhance their lives through research-based education.”

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SPECIAL INSERT

**Be Yard Smart:
A Guide to
Environmental
Gardening**



**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
Lancaster County Fair
Photos — see back page**

Now is a Good Time to Start a 4-H Club!

4-H offers a wide variety of opportunities for you to discover your world, your community and yourself. YOU make your own choices and set your own goals!

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development Program is open to all youth ages 5–18. Through learning-by-doing, youth gain practical skills and develop life skills.

Families are encouraged to help organize a new club — which is a lot easier than you may think! Starting a 4-H club now gives plenty of time for members to work on projects for next year’s county and state fairs.

Club Organization

Clubs range from 4 to 60 members and are led (or co-led) by club leaders — often club members’ parents. Parents are encouraged to attend meetings.

Volunteers are the heart of 4-H. Adult leaders partner with youth members to complete projects.

Club leaders — Also known as organizational leaders, club leaders coordinate meeting times and agendas. They also are responsible for club enrollment information.

Project leaders — Clubs may or may not have project leaders who provide leadership for specific projects.

Parent Volunteers — Also known as assistant leaders, provide valuable guidance to youth.

Club officers — Youth members choose officers to run their meetings.

Over 150 Projects

Nebraska 4-H has more than 150 project areas. Age-appropriate project manuals are written by university experts. Most project manuals have accompanying leader guides.

In most clubs, members complete several projects a year. Some 4-H clubs focus on one particular project area, such as rabbits. Many youth exhibit their projects at the county and state fairs.

4-H Staff Guidance

4-H staff provides guidance and resources to club lead-



At the third meeting of the Happy Hearts 4-H Club, members started the Road to Good Cooking 4-H project by taking turns demonstrating safety in the kitchen.

ers. Here’s a look at Lancaster County 4-H staff and their areas of responsibilities:

- Tracy Kulm manages all non-animal project areas. This includes clothing, food, home environment, engineering and general areas.
- Deanna Karmazin runs the 4-H livestock project areas.
- Marty Cruickshank manages the 4-H horse, rabbit and poultry project areas.
- Mary Jane Frogge runs the horticulture and conservation project areas.
- Gary Bergman oversees the Lancaster County 4-H program.
- Karen Evasco provides support to all 4-H areas.

Other Resources

Resource materials available to leaders include:

- Regularly-scheduled leader trainings
- THE NEBLINE monthly newsletter 4-H pages
- Lancaster County 4-H Web site at <http://lancaster.unl.edu>
- Nebraska 4-H web site at <http://4h.unl.edu>
- Mailings to club leaders
- County and State Fair can provide numerous ideas and inspirations for projects!

To Get Started

If you would like to help start a 4-H club, call Lancaster County 4-H at 441-7180.

Spotlight on a New 4-H Club: Happy Hearts

Leia Noel and her sister, Jill Greff, grew up in Lincoln County as members of the Sunflower 4-H club. Now they have families of their own in Lincoln. “I really appreciated the learning and social opportunities 4-H offered,” says Leia. “My sister and I talked about how we wanted to raise our kids and knew we wanted our kids to be in 4-H.”

Leia says, “One thing I really like about 4-H is it forces people — in a good way — to do a project correctly and to finish it. My sister and I feel the 4-H manuals are really well written.”

After asking around, they found four other families interested in starting a 4-H club. Leia contacted UNL Extension in Lancaster County, and 4-H staff member Tracy Kulm assisted Leia through the process of forming a club.

The Happy Hearts 4-H Club has 14 members ages 5 through 9. During their first meeting, members elected officers. All non-officers were randomly appointed duties such as flag holder, pledge holder, etc.

“Extension’s materials on how to hold a business meeting were very helpful,” says Leia. “I typed out a script for the club president to read. I think it helped her have confidence. Even the club secretary did a really good job taking minutes. I was really impressed seeing the kids conduct a meeting.”

Tracy attended the club’s third meeting and answered questions members and parents had. Leia says Tracy and 4-H staff have been very helpful. “As a new leader, I feel I’ve called Tracy regularly and she’s been extremely helpful. Next year, it will be easier so I won’t have to call her as much.”

For clubs with younger 4-H members, Tracy advises keeping meetings short — about an hour and a half. Happy Hearts club meetings are divided into:

- Business meeting which runs about 10 minutes
- Project time runs about 30 minutes
- Snack and game time runs about 30 minutes.

Meetings rotate among the families’ homes — if weather permits, meetings can be held outside. Prior to each meeting, Leia gives club members little assignments to demonstrate at the next meeting. “I want all members to get comfortable speaking in front of the club.”

Together, the club worked on the 4-H project, “Road to Good Cooking.” Additionally, each family completed other 4-H projects they were interested in. All members entered exhibits at the Lancaster County Fair.

“It was very easy to start the club,” says Leia. “We had motivated parents. 4-H really does take the support of parents. When you see what your children are learning and getting out of it, to me it’s worth the time.”

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Post. Office
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Lancaster County 4-H Council
University of Nebraska
in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A
Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

4-H Kick Off, Sept. 20

To learn more about the opportunities 4-H offers, attend the 4-H Kick Off on Tuesday, Sept. 20, 6–7:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road in Lincoln.

Several 4-H members will share completed projects. Project manuals will be available for people to look through. There will be time for questions and answers. Evening also includes door prizes!