



4-H NEWSLETTER



MERCER COUNTY 4-H

BARB'S BULLETIN

Dear 4-H Volunteers:

I wanted to inform you about our county funding situation. January is the month in which we learn how much county funding will be provided for our office operations for the year. As I have stated over the past months, our county funding has continued to be decreased due to the battling economy coupled with the loss of county funds from the state level.

All county offices have experienced budget cuts – including Extension. For 2012, our budget will be \$133,950, 5% less than 2011. This is enough money to keep our office open through September. I know that may sound like a lot of money, but anyone involved in business knows that total is really not much when one is paying salaries, benefits, office needs such as phone, paper, postage and other office operations from that amount. Our reality is that with travel and training in addition to disposables and staff costs, we need about \$190,000.

A shortage of county dollars has been our reality since 2009. Luckily for us, we did have a bit of savings that had accumulated over time and that savings has now all been used. In addition, a group of Extension supporters raised private funds last year to bolster our budget for 2011.

So – once again, Extension needs to look for outside support, probably to the tune of \$40,000. Even at that amount, we will not have dollars for travel or for training (both important parts of the educators' jobs), but at least we will be able to stay open and operational throughout the entire calendar year.

I know 4-H is important to you or you would not be a 4-H volunteer. The way to keep 4-H strong and vibrant in this county is to have enough funds to maintain this office.

So – how can you help?

- Possible donors can request pledge sheets from our office or find them on our website at mercer.osu.edu
- Talk with 4-H alumni in the county. I would think many alumni have fond memories of their 4-H years. Any size donation would be useful and appreciated.
- Know of some other types of donation? – we are happy to use – like office supplies. Those items can really run up a bill!

(continued on next page)



mercer.osu.edu

FEBRUARY 2012

Inside This Edition:

- * Barb's Bulletin...
 - Paperwork for 2012 4-H year
 - Upcoming Meetings
- * Cheryl's Corner...

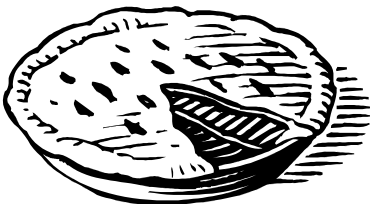
Continued from first page...

- Encourage your members to participate in the Pie Sale. Those dollars are marked to help with 4-H expenses – some of which could be paper, ink, postage, printing – those types of expenses that are incurred as a part of the program.
- We do have a university account established for tax deductible gift giving. More information can be shared about this matter upon request.

So – that is where we stand as of today. It is my sincere hope that we can continue to weather the budget storm and that economic times will get better. Our only other course of action will be to cut hours as salary/benefits comprise all but about \$2000 of our expenses. A cut in staff hours will mean a cut in office hours and Extension programming.

4-H Pie Sale

Erica has created a folder of pie sale materials for each club. Included in the folder is an order form for each member, a tally sheet for club advisors to use (if desired) to record each families sales, a tally sheet to total the entire club's order and a letter of explanation for you to share with families.



One important fact about the sale is that 4-H makes between 35-45% profit, unlike many sales that result in very little made per item sold. **All pies are \$10.**

The pies are baked and ready to eat. The pies may also be frozen for at least 2 months in the container in which these are shipped.

The monies raised will be used for 4-H program expenses. If you read the beginning of this letter, you know how important the success of this year's sale is. Plus the pies are yummy and will arrive just before Easter celebrations!

It is asked that an advisor in each club phone the total number of each flavor of pie needed to the Extension Office by March 19th. Please bring one check for your total club's order made payable to the Mercer County 4-H Program when you pick up your club's pie order on March 31 at the Extension Office.

Thanks in advance for your work on this sale. I know it is an "extra" for everyone to do!

Club Constitutions

Work Session for anyone working on a club constitution or revisions - Tuesday, February 28. I will host 2 sessions – one beginning at 10 a.m. and another beginning at 7 p.m. in the Extension Office meeting room. More information in this newsletter – keep reading!



Enrollment Information

4-H Enrollment Materials Available - Due March 1

Most clubs have picked up enrollment packets. If you have not, please do so ASAP. March 1 enrollment deadline will be happening before you realize!

Please return the top sheet of the project sign-up sheet, the calling plan registration and the photo release form to the office by March 1 or earlier. *You are to keep the middle section of the project sheet and the health information.*

4-H Project Summary Booklet

This publication contains specific information regarding what the members need to create and do for project judging. The book has been placed in club mailboxes for distribution – one per advisor.

4-H Project Books

All project books and insert sheets for these books are now available with the following exceptions: Cavy Project and Record book and Resource Book, Cake Decorating Project and Record book or the new Make Over my Space (Home Interiors) book. I phoned the State Office about the status of these publications and was told it would be sometime in February before we may have a copy of these books in our office. The cake decorating is only a record book, so that should not create a huge problem. I wish we had the other 2 items – but I have not been able to move the wheels any faster!

Book/Insurance Fee

The 2012 book and insurance fee has been increased for 2012. This is the first increase in several years. Costs are \$11 for horse project and shooting sports project members, \$10 for all other traditional club members, \$5 for advisors and \$1 for cloverbuds. (The cloverbud fee remains the same as in past years). Book fee should be paid when placing your large club book order and must be paid by July 1 if you want discounted Junior Fair tickets for your club. If you have some reason that this fee cannot be paid by July 1, contact Barb.



2012 Ohio 4-H Dog Information

The following 2012 Ohio 4-H Dog information is now posted at:

<http://4hansci.osu.edu/companion/companionResources.php>

- 2012 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules for Showmanship/Ohio 4-H Dog Showmanship Regulations
- 2012 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules for Obedience and Rally/Ohio 4-H Dog Obedience and Rally Rules and Regulations
- 2012 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules for You and Your Dog, Assistance Dogs, and 4-H PetPALS
- 2012 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Rules for Drill Team and Canine Free Style
- 2012 Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Dog Show Poster Contest, Skillathon, Scholarships

For more information contact Lucinda Miller, miller.78@osu.edu.

Opportunities for Club Outings!

Mercer Healthy Living Expo III March 31, 7:30-11:30 a.m. This event, to be held at the Galleria in Celina, will feature health screening in addition to featuring COSI on Wheels. This could be a fun club outing stressing the importance of one of the 4 "H"s – Health! There will also be several booths at the health fair spotlighting health services available throughout the county. And the best part is the price – Free! (some health screenings may carry a small fee – but there is no admission for COSI or other activities).

Planning for a Special Event in your Family, club or some other group? I know that cold weather is here but next spring will be here before we know it and that means many family activities such as graduations, first communions and confirmation celebrations. A great informal place to hold a large family gathering is 4-H Camp. If you have not been at camp for a period of time, you would not believe how great the facilities are! There is a dining hall that will seat 160 people, 3 stoves with ovens, a large refrigerator, a huge walk in frig (I would not think too many groups would need that!) and a freezer. There is a volleyball area, 4 basketball courts, the inlet for fishing, a large very nice level grass field for playing games and restrooms facilities for men and women. There is a parking lot plus parking in the lane inside the camp grounds.

Cost is only \$50 per day to rent camp! I know from renting tents what a bargain this price is and just think... you don't have to do all that extra house cleaning! For camping, there are bunks for at least 150 people and a cement walled basement for storm shelter. Really, this is a deal that cannot be beat! Interested parties reserve camp through the Extension Office by phoning 419-586-2179.

Opportunities for Service...

Volunteer Opportunity

The Junior Fair auction committee is seeking additional volunteers. Auction committee members work to provide a positive selling experience for all junior fair market livestock exhibitors. The committee meets 4-5 times a year including preparing and conducting the auction the last day of the fair. For more information, please contact Carrie Fortkamp at cjfortkamp@hotmail.com

2013 State Fashion Board

The selection process for the 2013 State Fashion Board will be conducted during the 2012 Ohio State Fair 4-H Fashion Revues (July 31 – August2). The application and more information regarding the State Fashion Board can be found on the Ohio 4-H website at <http://www.ohio4h.org>.

Click on 4-H for youth, then click on teens and follow the link to boards and councils – click on Fashion Board. A meeting of all applicants will be held at 8:30 a.m. on the morning they are participating in the State Fair 4-H Fashion Revues. At that time, applicants will turn in their paperwork and be interviewed.



If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at shuster.24@osu.edu or call 740-743-1602

Organizing Papers for Each Club

I know all this paperwork sounds overwhelming and I apologize. Believe me – it is not a fun task on this side of the desk either! Like other not-so-fun-to-do jobs, if we work together and break it down into pieces, we will be successful! Thanks for your hard work. Each club needs to provide a copy for the office - Constitution, Charter Check List, EIN Number, Annual Financial Statement

At the advisors' meeting on November 29, I discussed in detail the many organizing papers that will be required from each club. These requirements are due to Ohio 4-H obtaining a tax exempt status with the IRS. Extension has been working towards securing this status for all sanctioned 4-H clubs and affiliates for about 3 years.

This is the listing of items that I must have filed in the office for your club to be recognized as a club by OSU Extension. If I do not have this information, your club will be disbanded. Please understand that these policies are not something to be ignored! Clubs will be disbanded and members directed to join other existing clubs if these items are not addressed.

Required Paperwork

A copy of your club's constitution. Many clubs place a copy of their signed constitution in their program booklet which should be turned in at the Extension Office by May 1. I have been informed that all club constitutions will have to contain language concerning 1) what happens to club funds if the group disbands and 2) a statement that the club does not support political campaigns. The EXACT wording for these 2 clauses is still under review by OSU legal department. I am told that this wording will be sent to each office in the near future. I would encourage you to review your current constitutions. I think a constitution is a document that we do not annually review and after time, some of the wording does need changed. (We found this true of our 4-H Committee constitution which was recently revised.) There are many helpful documents about developing and editing constitutions on the Ohio 4-H web site at <http://advisorshandbook.ohio4h.org>. Check out all the information under the club management tab. I have also attached these documents for your referral.

Help Available

A constitution development work session for all interested club advisors to help create or edit your existing club constitution will be held Tuesday, February 28. I will host 2 sessions – one beginning at 10 a.m. and another beginning at 7 p.m. in the Extension Office meeting room. Please bring whatever materials you have prepared and we can review, edit, and refine the document. Your constitution (either the entire document or the changes) will need to be read at your meeting and approved by your club membership. I will review those approval steps with you at this meeting too.

Blanket Exemption Form

Since we are collecting financial paperwork and have not updated our blanket exemption forms for a few years, we are asking that the organizational advisor for each club sign this document when visiting the office. The purpose of this statement is to allow us to sell project books to your club tax free.

Charter Check List, EIN Number, Annual Financial Statement

The *charter check list* is a simple application that club advisors need to annually update. Many clubs have completed their copy in a few minutes when visiting the office. Make certain to check with Erica during your next office visit. *Both the Chartering Check list and a Yearly Financial Statement are attached to this newsletter and may also be found on our web site mercer.osu.edu.*

The *Annual Financial Statement* is the form found as the last page of your club treasurer's book. Your completed statement should contain a total of all club's income and expenses for 2012. It is good business to audit your account at the end of the year. Meet with your club treasurer to complete this information.

EIN Number

This is the number given to your club by the IRS when your club established a bank account. I have all the EIN numbers for all but 2 clubs!

Deadline to collect this information - January 31, 2012 (except constitutions)

Sooner is much better than later! Since clubs will not be allowed to exist without this completed paperwork, I would ask that you try to complete all these items except your constitutions by the end of January. The charter check list and the blanket exemption should only require a few minutes of your time. Your financial statement may involve some time depending upon the size and activity of your club. I have almost all the EIN numbers which is a plus! Remember, a copy must be filed at the Extension Office. See Erica at the office as she has copies of each document and a spread sheet indicating the paperwork she already has received from each club.

Livestock Quality Assurance Training

Please remind junior fair livestock exhibitors of the requirement to attend or test out of their annual quality assurance requirement. The policies regarding quality assurance remain unchanged for 2012.

Livestock Quality Assurance for Junior Fair Livestock Exhibitors: **4-H Age (Junior Fair Age) is the age a person is on January 1st of the current year**

Attendance at the Quality Assurance Training is mandatory for all junior fair livestock exhibitors ages 8 and in at least in third grade through age 11 as of 1/1/12. Exhibitors ages 12-18 as of 1/1/11 (this means that you were born in 1999 or before) have the option to either attend a Quality Assurance training or take a test and test out of this requirement. **If this is the first year you have ever taken a livestock project – you are not eligible to test out – regardless of your age.**

All junior fair livestock exhibitors must either test out (if age eligible) or attend a training session (if ages 8-11 4-H age as of 1/1 or older members and did not test out). Quality Assurance is **STILL** a state requirement in order to exhibit junior fair livestock.

- 1) Junior Fair exhibitors ages 12-14 and 15-18 as of 1/1 **may choose** to test out of the quality assurance program. To do this, the exhibitor must take a written test and pass it. (70% to pass)
- 2) The test is based upon appropriate skill level information for the age division.
- 3) Youth who **PASS THE TEST** will be exempt from annual quality assurance re-certification until they move to the next age bracket (which is 15-18 years of age) **OR** they are no longer a junior exhibitor (19 years of age or older as of 1/1 current year).
- 4) This means that if you are 12 years old and pass the test, you would not have to take the next test until you are 15. Once you pass the 15-18 year old test, you are finished attending Quality Assurance re-certification for your 4-H career.
- 5) An exhibitor who is age 12 and older, **DOES NOT have to take the written test.** The member can choose to participate in a Quality Assurance training/ meeting. If this choice is made, the exhibitor would have to participate in a Quality Assurance training/meeting **EACH YEAR.**
- 6) Exhibitors younger than 12 years of age **MUST** attend an Annual Quality assurance training/meeting. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend with their child or children.
- 7) **Horse project members** cannot test out of the quality assurance requirement. Quality Assurance training for horse members differs from other livestock requirements. Horse project members must complete horse safety and ethics training **EVERY** year. If you take horse and also show another type of livestock, you may select to test out of your other livestock project(s) if you are age eligible to take the test.
- 8) Any exhibitor living out of county due to attending college or living out of county due to custody situations and unable to attend one of these testing/training classes must contact the Extension Office at 419-586-2179. These members may attend QA training in another county **IF** permission has been granted by their “home” county.

The Quality Assurance Training and Test will be held in the Junior Fair Building at the fairgrounds. This meeting will last approximately 70-85 minutes. You can come to the meeting that best fits your schedule. You need to only attend one session – not all three!

The test will also be given at these meetings and generally takes about 45 minutes to complete. The person taking the test should wait until their test is graded before leaving. If you pass the test, you will be issued a certificate of completion to place with your record books. If you do not pass the test, you will need to stay for the remainder of the QA meeting or plan to come to another QA training.

Thursday, March 15 @ 7 p.m.

Monday, March 26 @ 7 p.m.

Thursday, April 19 @ 7 p.m.

Members who are 12 years of age or older may attend one of these evenings and take and pass the test. Members ages 8 (and currently in 3rd grade)-11 are not old enough to take the test and must attend one of these training sessions. Members, ages 12 and older, wishing to not take the test must attend the training every year.

(continued on next page...)

(continued QA info...)

Rabbit Project Quality Assurance will be held at the Junior Fair Building EITHER Monday, April 16 @ 7 p.m. OR Thursday, April 19 @ 7 p.m. ** If a member is taking rabbit and another livestock project – he/she may either attend rabbit QA or general livestock QA. They do not have to attend both.

A listing of members who will be tested out for 2012 plus a detailed letter about QA will be emailed to you in February. I just wanted to highlight the important facts and dates with you now.

Design a Thank you Note Contest - Due March 19

Encourage the artists in your club to submit an entry for this contest! This could be a fun activity during your February or early March club meeting.

1. Any 4-H member including cloverbud members may submit one design for the contest.
2. Criteria as to required size and use of color must be followed.
3. A selection committee will choose the five winning designs. Evaluation will be based upon quality, creativity, and originality of the design.
4. Each winning artist will have their name and the name of their 4-H club displayed on the back on their printed note. The 4-H member creating the winning entry will receive 2 dozen note cards and envelopes.
5. Clubs and all interested parties may purchase thank you notes at the Extension Office or during county 4-H activities.

Note Criteria:

1. The note must fit on a 4" x 5 1/4" card.
2. No more than three colors may be used in the design. Black does not count as a color.
3. The 4-H emblem or the name 4-H must be included in the card. (May find the emblem at this web site: <http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/ames1/graphics/4h.htm>)
4. The design should NOT represent ONLY the county fair. These note cards will be used as thank you notes year around by 4-H clubs for 4-H related activities.
5. All designs will become property of the Mercer County 4-H Committee.
6. The member's name and club should be written in the center lower edge of the backside of the card.

Junior Fair Awards – Ribbons

The 4-H Committee has been discussing how ribbons are awarded for 4-H project evaluation. The Committee members would appreciate advisors asking your club members for their input. Attached to this newsletter is a short questionnaire regarding this topic. Please discuss with your members and provide your club member's input. Please conduct the questionnaire at your club's February meeting and communicate responses to me. I can then share all these findings at the March 4-H Committee meeting.

Design a Tee or Sweat Shirt Contest - Due March 19

The 4-H committee is wishing to offer a county tee shirt and sweatshirt for sale again in 2012. The committee members would like 4-H'ers to tell them what they think is a really neat design for the shirt. This information will be emailed to all members for whom we have a valid email address, but encourage your members to submit an idea.

Criteria:

- The design should be your original work.
- 2T-shirt design should be submitted on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper with the member's name, age and club printed neatly in the lower right hand corner of the back of the paper. This can include a "picture" and a "slogan".
- Any number of colors may be used, but it is most likely that a printed shirt would not be made with more than 3 colors. (In other words – the design may need edited if more than 3 colors are used) Black does not count as a color.
- Computer graphics may be used as long as these graphics are your original design.
- Copyrighted and protected characters or logos are not permitted with the exception of the 4-H emblem. You can find the emblem at <http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~ames1/graphics/4h.htm>.
- A selection committee will choose the winning design. Evaluation will be based upon quality, creativity, and originality of the design, originality of the message and the design's ability to persuade the viewer.
- The winning artist will be given a free shirt.

Designs are due to the Extension by March

Opportunities for Money!

The 2012 4-H Scholarship Information has been posted at: <http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/awards/index.html>. The last week of December, teen 4-H members were e-mailed information about 4-H scholarship programs. Scholarship applications are due to the Extension Office by February 6th. All those 4-H members or 4-H alumni currently attending Ohio State University and applying for scholarships must do so online with the form provided at the above web address. Members not attending Ohio State should download the application, complete it and return it to me at the Extension Office by the February 6 deadline.

Opportunities for Learning...

Ohio Volunteer Conference - March 10, 2012

I hope you will mark this date on your calendar and try to attend. Registration fees will be provided by the 4-H Committee. Registration information is available on line at ohio4h.org/volunteerconference or request a hard copy from the office. This conference is designed for both adult and teen volunteers. Check out the class offerings. Let me know if you are interested or have questions. Send your class choices to myself or Erica at the office and we will take care of your registration. I will contact everyone planning to participate and perhaps carpooling will be possible.

Buckeye Leadership Workshop - March 28-April 1, 2012

Buckeye Leadership Workshop is an amazing 5 day experience that provides tons of new ideas for working with youth and adult groups. I have attended two of these workshops and I can attest that both were among the best training I have ever experienced. The event is held at Recreation Unlimited 7700 Piper Road, Ashley, Ohio which is about 30 miles north of Columbus in Delaware County.

Each person attending the workshop will select a morning and an afternoon class. Subjects range from outdoor education to crafts to program planning to high energy recreation. A person also chooses a morning and an afternoon mini session in which to participate. Brochures about the workshop are available at the office and at www.buckeyeleadership.com.

Full registration fee is \$340 per person. I can approach the 4-H Committee for possible funding if interest is expressed from 4-H volunteers. Graduate Credit and Continuing Education Units are available to those interested.

3rd Annual REINS Conference on Feb. 18-19

You are invited to the 3rd Annual REINS Conference at the OSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. Direct link to the registration form: <http://4hansci.osu.edu/registrations/REINS%20Registration%20Form%202012.pdf>. In addition to the informative presentations, this year's schedule includes a tour of the OSU Veterinary Hospital and Galbreath Equine Center.

Opportunities to BRAG...

Ohio 4-H Week - March 4-10, 2012

I am always looking for news release ideas for this week. Here are some ways you can help and build honor club points at the same time! For your January or February club meeting's roll call – have each member answer this question – “The thing I like best about 4-H is...” or “The reason I joined this club is”.

Write an article about some event held in your club. This article could be written by advisors, parents, your club's news reporter, etc. Send it to me at the office. I really appreciate those article emailed to me and created in WORD! Submit photos with captions of members enjoying an activity during a club meeting or event.

Opportunities for Club Outings!

Mercer Healthy Living Expo III March 31, 7:30-11:30 a.m.

This event, to be held at the Galleria in Celina, will feature health screening in addition to featuring COSI on Wheels. This could be a fun club outing stressing the importance of one of the 4 “H”s – Health! There will also be several booths at the health fair spotlighting health services available throughout the county. And the best part is the price – Free! (some health screenings may carry a small fee – but there is no admission for COSI or other activities).

Planning for a Special Event in your Family, club or some other group?

I know that cold weather is here but next spring will be here before we know it and that means many family activities such as graduations, first communions and confirmation celebrations. A great informal place to hold a large family gathering is 4-H Camp. If you have not been at camp for a period of time, you would not believe how great the facilities are! There is a dining hall that will seat 160 people, 3 stoves with ovens, a large refrigerator, a huge walk in frig (I would not think too many groups would need that!) and a freezer. There is a volleyball area, 4 basketballs courts, the inlet for fishing, a large very nice level grass field for playing games and restrooms facilities for men and women. There is a parking lot plus parking in the lane inside the camp grounds.

Cost is only \$50 per day to rent camp! I know from renting tents what a bargain this price is and just think... you don't have to do all that extra house cleaning! For camping, there are bunks for at least 150 people and a cement walled basement for storm shelter. Really, this is a deal that cannot be beat! Interested parties reserve camp through the Extension Office by phoning 419-586-2179.

**Ohio State Fair scholarships available
Application Deadline July 1, 2012**

In an effort to recognize outstanding Ohio youth and to help those interested in furthering their education, the Ohio Expositions Commission has established a scholarship program.

The purpose of these scholarships is to assist high school juniors and seniors (2011-2012) and graduates who are continuing their education at an accredited institution in an undergraduate course of study in any field.

Scholarships will be awarded to junior exhibitors during the Ohio State Fair. Applicants will be judged on scholastic standing, citizenship and leadership, Ohio State Fair participation, county fair participation, and financial need.

Last year 2 Mercer County 4-H members, Kelsey Brockman and Paige Pottkotter won scholarships through this program. Please share with your age eligible 4-H members. Applications may be downloaded at ohiostatefair.com or requested at the Extension Office.

Ohio Agricultural Council Scholarship Opportunity

The Ohio Ag Council is pleased to announce a new scholarship opportunity for Ohio students pursuing a degree in agriculture. Up to five \$1000 scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors preparing to enter college or any undergraduate student currently enrolled in college. Applicants or their parent or legal guardian must be a resident of the State of Ohio. The applicants must have declared, or plan to declare, a major in agriculture at any two-year or four-year college or university.

For more information and to download the application, visit www.ohioagcouncil.org. Completed applications must be submitted no later than February 15, 2012.

**News from the Mercer County Ag Society
Tickets for the 2012 Junior Fair**

The prices of tickets will be as follows: (all passes valid for the entire week)

- ◇ Junior Fair Exhibitors \$ 10 – only one ticket will be permitted per exhibitor – even if the exhibitor shows through 2 4-H clubs or through 2 organizations such as a 4-H member and as a FFA member
- ◇ Junior Fair Advisor \$15
- ◇ Both of these passes will be photo ID passes – keep reading.
- ◇ Weekly passes/Exhibitor passes will be \$30
- ◇ Ride Bands will be \$8 per day (pre-sale ride ticket - good for 7 days of rides - \$30)
- ◇ Gate admission has been lowered to \$6

Photo ID Passes

For Junior Fair and Advisor Passes, the board will be issuing a photo ID. The ID is presented at the gate for admission. It is not needed to purchase a ride band. The fairboard is working on photo release permission forms (our 4-H photo release permission forms are NOT valid for Ag Society use) and developing a system to get all these pictures taken.

If a family does not want their child's photo and name on this ID pass (only needed at the gate and then can be safely placed with the parents), they will have to purchase regular priced tickets.

~ CHERYL'S CORNER ~

Earn a High School Sports Letter---with Your Horse!

You ride, train, show your horse all year---now you can earn recognition to add to your high school sports letter jacket.

Any high school student can earn a sports letter for each of their high school years by participating in the United States Equestrian Federation's special awards program.

By documenting a minimum of 100 hours of riding, driving or training with your horse, showing in three competitions, and as a youth member of the USEF, you can earn a complimentary sports letter and recognition certificate.

Each year of award eligibility runs from June 1 to May 31 of the following calendar year.

"High school equestrians have earned their place among the most dedicated athletes," shared John Long, USEF Chief Executive Officer. "not only are they putting in long hours to train for and compete in a sport they love—they do so while taking the concept of teamwork to the highest level, forming a partnership with a horse to achieve their goals."

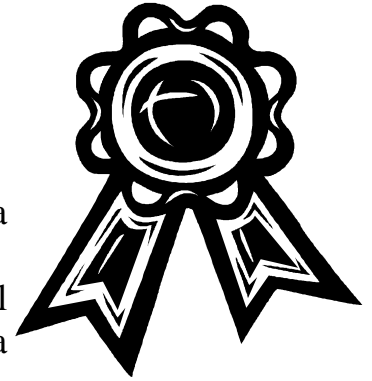
The High School Equestrian Athlete program is open to equestrian athletes in all breeds or disciplines and who are enrolled in grades 9—12. The youth must be, or become a USEF member (most basic membership is \$15. per year). Documented training, riding, driving and competition participation will be rewarded with emblems and pins which are designed to be worn on existing high school letterman's jackets as a symbol of achievement.

These and more opportunities are available at www.usef.org/highschool or by email at; high-schoolequestrianathlete@usef.org.

Project Awards for 4-H Projects

The current method of awarding ribbons for 4-H project work is as follows:

- 1) Everyone who comes to judging or the skillathon will receive a blue completion ribbon
- 2) If that person's project is deemed "outstanding" – that person will receive both the above mentioned blue completion ribbon AND a purple outstanding ribbon. (2 ribbons)
- 3) If that person's project is selected as the Best in the Class – that person will receive 3 ribbons on their project card – a blue completion ribbon, a purple outstanding ribbon and a rosette Best in Class ribbon.
- 4) In the case of Special Interest projects – some projects may also qualify as the state fair representative from our county. In that case, the 4-H member would receive 4 ribbons on their project card – a blue completion ribbon, a purple outstanding ribbon, a Best in Class rosette (usually the Best in Class is the state fair winner – unless more than 1 project can be sent in the same project to state fair) and a State Fair Rosette.



The question has been raised – does a kid need 4 ribbons for one project?

The 4-H Committee would appreciate receiving input from the members. Regardless of how many ribbons are ultimately decided upon for a project, please rest assured that EACH CHILD will receive at LEAST ONE AWARD.

- 1) Explain to the kids how the ribbons are currently given
- 2) Ask them if they wish to keep getting so many ribbons for each project or if they would receiving their top placing ribbon would be adequate.

For example – if the 4-H'er gets an outstanding ribbon – that is the one ribbon that they would get. If they get a Best in Class – that would be the ribbon that they would receive.

Over the years, I have received comments about how many ribbons one member might get for one project. The cost is also becoming an issue. Please let me know what the members think! You are also asked to share your opinion!

Thanks!

Barb

Approve and Review 4-H Club Constitution and By-Laws

Use this checklist to evaluate and discuss rules, policies and procedures to appear in your club constitution and by-laws.

Rule, Policy, Procedure Statement	Yes	No	Notes
<i>Is the rule or policy necessary?</i>			
<i>Does the rule insure equal treatment for all members?</i>			
<i>Is the rule accurate or simply worded?</i>			
<i>Are there provisions to deal with rule violations?</i>			
<i>Does the rule or policy have more than one meaning?</i>			
<i>Can you enforce the rule?</i>			
<i>Is the policy consistent with current Ohio 4-H policy?</i>			

Adapted by Bill Harris, OSU Extension, 4-H Specialist - Clubs, from Betty Wingerter, OSU Extension, 4-H Educator, Montgomery County.

Developing Constitution and By-Laws to Govern your Club

Every club should write a set of guidelines on how they are going to operate and function. You may know these as the Polices and Procedures, Rules of Governance, or Constitution and By-laws. Most 4-H clubs choose to develop constitution and by-laws. It does not really matter what you call the document, but it is important that your members create and your club adopts the policies.

A constitution provides the foundation and framework that defines the club and helps provide equality and fairness to all club members. The constitution should be a document with lasting value, therefore seldom changing. The by-laws provide additional information and complement the constitution by outlining more details on how the club operates. By-laws should change to reflect members' needs.

Constitution and by-laws do not have to be complicated or lengthy. Rather, strive for simplicity for easy reading and understanding. Writing your constitution is one of the most important tasks to complete the first year the club forms. Annually, a committee should review the by-laws and make suggestions to the club for changes. What a great opportunity for members to develop leadership, citizenship, and decision making skills.

How to Get Started?

A small committee of four to five members directed by an adult 4-H volunteer is a good way to begin in designing your club polices and procedures. The adult should serve in an advisory/support role and allow the members to work through the process. This not only allows the members to build new skills, but it helps build a feeling of ownership of the club by the members.

Step I. Share a sample outline of a club constitution and by-laws with the members. Have them review the document and make notes on the items they feel are important for their club. (*Found at: <http://advisorshandbook.ohio4h.org/clubmanagement/files/Sample Club Constitution and By-Laws.pdf>*).

Step II. Start with their first idea from the sample outline. The PURPOSE of the club is often a good beginning point. Write this on top of a piece of poster board, flip chart or dry erase board. Have members outline their major ideas for the club's purpose. Allow about 10 minutes or more of discussion and move on to their second priority. Follow the same process. Focus on getting the main thoughts and ideas down on paper. Later you can divide the various ideas between members and have them work on sentence and paragraph form for the documents.

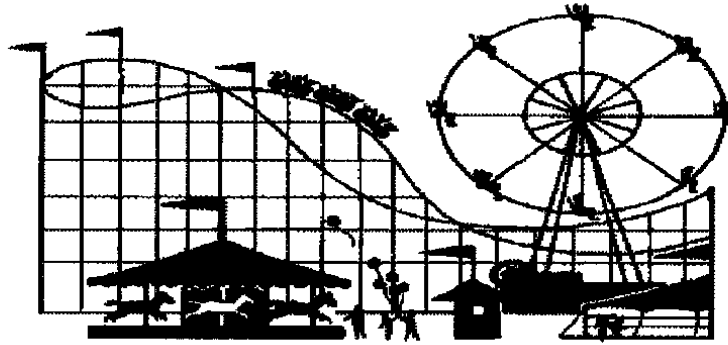
Step III. At your second committee meeting, use the "Approve & Review Club Rules and Procedures" checklist with each article. Work through each section and challenge one another on each point in the checklist. Make changes as necessary. (*Found at: <http://advisorshandbook.ohio4h.org/clubmanagement/files/Club Constitution and By-Laws Review Checklist.pdf>*).

Step IV. Once the first draft is completed, make copies to provide all members for review prior to the next club meeting. At the club meeting, work through one Article at a time and give the entire membership the opportunity to provide suggestions. The committee members should take notes and begin the process of writing a second draft.

Step V. After writing the second draft, again copy and distribute to all members prior to the next club meeting. Hold a special Club meeting that focuses entirely on the review and approval of the Club Constitution and By-Laws. Once again, work through each article and hold a vote of approval for each section.

Step VI. After adopting your club's Constitution and By-law documents, make a final copy and distribute to each member and your county Extension office. Celebrate your club's accomplishment!

Mark Your Calendars!



4-H Day at Cedar Point Friday June 29, 2012

~ Attention all 4-H Members, Advisors, Parents, and Friends ~
Get to the "Point" and Support 4-H!

4-H Rate Ticket Prices:

Discounted Ticket	\$34.00
Junior/Senior	\$22.00
(Junior – Under 4 feet tall)	
(Senior - Ages 62 and Over)	

Regular gate price: \$51.99

Tickets are available at the 4-H window from 9:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. Please have a representative purchase tickets for a club or group.

Representatives should have a membership card or something representing 4-H membership. Individual tickets may also be purchased.



~ Proceeds benefit the Erie County 4-H Committee ~



Barbara Phares - Phares

Barbara Phares

Extension Educator

4-H Youth Development

Cheryl McKirnan

Cheryl McKirnan

4-H Program Assistant



OSU Extension embraces human diversity and is committed to ensuring that all educational programs conducted by Ohio State University Extension are available to clientele on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, age, gender identity or expression, disability, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or veteran status.

The Ohio State University, The United States Department of Agriculture, and Mercer County Commissioners Cooperating.



**Ohio State University Extension
Mercer County
220 W Livingston Street, Room B252
Celina, Ohio 45822**