

FEBRUARY 2026

Highlights:

- February 1: Beef Tagging & Weigh-In
- February 12: Events Council Meeting
- February 22: County Club Day
- February 24: Fair Book Cover Contest Deadline

In this Issue:

- County Notes, Page 2-4
- Livestock Corner, Page 5-6
- State News, Page 7-9
- Club Chatter, Page 10-12
- Shawnee County 4-H Calendar, Page 13

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Dates to Remember:

- February 1: Beef Tagging & Weigh-In
- February 12: Events Council Meeting
- February 22: County Club Day
- February 24: Fair Book Cover Contest Deadline

In the event of severe winter weather watch our Facebook page for updates!



Search for Shawnee County 4-H

Please send Chatterbox submissions to Lisa and Grace by February 26

Visit us on the Web:
www.shawnee.ksu.edu

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4-H Youth Development Agent
wiensg@ksu.edu
785-232-0062 ext.120

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4-H Program Assistant
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A Word From Your Agent...

Hi everyone! I hope you are getting off to a great start on your projects and activities this year. As a reminder, if you are not enrolled in 4-H Online yet you will need to be in order to receive emails and updates from us. You also need to be enrolled both in 4-H and in all of your projects by May 1st in order to exhibit at the fair. If you have already enrolled and would like to add a project, please contact the office. If you are having a hard time with the 4-H Online site, don't hesitate to reach out to the office and we can help you through!

High school Seniors, this will be the first year the Extension Education Foundation offers the Key Award Scholarship. This will take the place of the previous scholarship program and receiving the Key Award is an eligibility requirement. The Langley Foster Scholarship for post-secondary education is still available, with no changes to the requirements. Full details and applications for both can be found here: https://www.shawnee.ksu.edu/4-h/awards_and_recognition/scholarships/

Club Day registration is now open! We would love to have you show off your talents on February 22nd from 2-5 pm. The deadline to register is February 18th. If you plan to bring a skit or dance performance, please call us by February 11th. These are smaller categories and it helps to plan for a judge. Sign ups and rules can be found here: https://www.shawnee.ksu.edu/4-h/current_events/

Changes to 4-H Online Messaging

The 4-H Online broadcast system will no longer allow us to send text message notifications when we send emails. If you would like to be signed up for text messages about county events and activities, please join our county-wide GroupMe here:

https://groupme.com/join_group/102815469/5JDLs55L

Ambassador Information

Ambassador meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of even months, at 6 pm before Events Council. If you'd like to join, we'll see you on February 12th in the upstairs meeting room!

We are updating our email list for Ambassadors! 4-Hers who are program age 12 or older and who have been in 4-H for at least 3 years are encouraged to join the group. For email updates, please sign up for the official Ambassador's email list here: <https://forms.office.com/r/42n2ayuTaC>

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

County Notes

County Club Day



County Club Day
February 22, 2026
2-5 pm

**Shawnee Heights Middle
School**



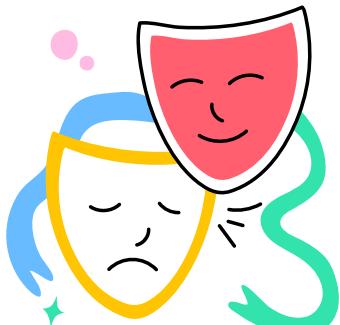
Club Day Quick Guide and 2026 Guidelines available at:

https://www.shawnee.k-state.edu/4-h/current_events/

Sign up at: https://www.shawnee.k-state.edu/4-h/current_events/

Deadline: Wednesday, February 18

If you have a Dance or Skit please call the office by February 11





Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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From the Fair Board

The Shawnee County Fair Board is happy to announce the youth 2026 Fair book Cover Contest! The 2026 Shawnee County Fair theme is: **Stars, Stripes & County Fair Nights**. Below are the rules for entries for the Cover Contest.

THE RULES:

- Must be on 8 1/2 x 11 paper (Must be done in Portrait Orientation NOT Landscape orientation)
- Design must be in black and white, do not use color
- Art can be hand drawn or computer generated, but must be original
- Must include the dates of the County Fair; July 19– County Fair Horse Show, July 23-26– County Fair
- Must mention Open Class
- Must include the theme of the fair (Barnyard Bash at the Shawnee County Fair).
- Put your name, phone number and Club on the BACK SIDE of the entry.
- Entries are due to the Extension Office by February 24th, turned into the extension office by 5pm. They can be scanned and e-mailed to wiensg@ksu.edu AND lsatter@ksu.edu.

If selected we will need the original artwork to make into the cover. There will be a \$50 cash prize for the cover chosen to be on the front of the Fair Book! The runner up will have their artwork printed inside the fair book and will win a \$25 cash prize.

Can't wait to see what our youth come up with!



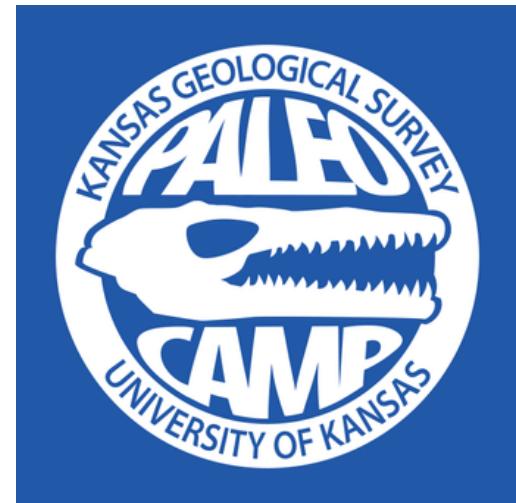


Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Paleocamp Elementary

The Kansas Geological Survey is offering a free camp over spring break for 4th through 6th graders. Campers will learn about, discover, and prepare their own Kansas fossils and engage with paleontologists. Sign ups for Paleocamp 2026 will open on this webpage February 1, 2026 at 9 am. **The camp is free but is limited to 12 spots.** They will accept campers on a first-come, first-served basis. More information is on their website at <https://kgs.ku.edu/paleocamp>.



from <https://kgs.ku.edu/paleocamp>

Farm to You- Help Needed

From Farm to You will be held April 15 from 9:00am-2pm in Domer Arena. We have Shawnee County second graders attending to learn about where their food comes from. We need 4-H'ers (8th graders and above) to act as group leaders throughout the day. 4-H'ers will guide the students and their teachers from learning station to learning station. This is a great service project and is also fun to watch the second graders learn about their food. We will provide lunch that day and if your school needs a note for your absence, we can do that too!

Please email Grace at wiensg@ksu.edu and let her know if you can help with this program.



Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Livestock Corner

2026 Weigh-In and Tagging Dates

Please note, all county fair animals must be tagged by the Friday following their species tagging date. Any 4-Her wishing to participate in the Rate of Gain contest must have their animal present at the tagging date for official weigh-in. Animals that are only going to State Fair or KJLS have a later deadline. Arrangements must be made with Grace for tagging state animals.

Beef

Sunday, February 1, 1-3 pm at Gleason's Farm (Address will be sent to project members)

Small Animal (Bucket Calf, Meat Goat, Sheep, Swine)

Sunday, April 26, 1-4 pm at Blythe Farms (Address will be sent to project members)

Livestock Educational Sessions

Attendance of at least 2 of 3 educational meetings hosted by the 4-H Livestock Committee is required to sell animals at the Shawnee County Fair Livestock Sale. Meetings will be recorded this year in the event that a 4-Her needs to make up the session.

February 25: Extension Downstairs Conference Room, 6-7 pm

May 20: Extension Meeting Room, 6-7 pm

K-State Junior Producer Days

These are one-day, educational events for families to learn about the selection and management of youth livestock projects.

Registration information will be released in the next few weeks. Once released, updates will be posted on the youth livestock program Facebook page, as well as at <https://www.asi.k-state.edu/extension/youth-programs/events/ks-jr-producer/>.





Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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2026 YQCA Dates

We are working on setting dates for our YQCA sessions. Since we are getting them out later than usual due to our new Ag agent starting this month, we are sharing the dates for Douglas County's sessions. We should have our dates set by the 1st of March.

YQCA | YOUTH FOR THE QUALITY CARE OF ANIMALS

2026 DOUGLAS COUNTY IN-PERSON CERTIFICATION

Saturday, March 7th 1:30 - 2:30 PM
Sunday, April 12th 3:30 - 4:30 PM
Wednesday, May 27th 6:00 - 7:00 PM

DREHER FAMILY 4-H BUILDING
2110 HARPER STREET
LAWRENCE, KS 66046

All Douglas County 4-H Members who plan to exhibit livestock that produces meat, milk, fiber or other saleable products must complete YQCA certification testing annually.

Our county deadline for completion is 6/15. You must have the certificate number in order to complete your Douglas County Fair entries and Kansas State Fair/KJLS nominations and entries.

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension
Douglas County

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
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2026 Spring Show

Details coming soon!

SHAWNEE COUNTY LIVESTOCK SPRING SHOW

MAY 9TH, 2026
NORTHEAST KANSAS HERITAGE COMPLEX
HOLTON, KS

K-STATE | Shawnee County



Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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State News

Communications Projects Resources and Information

As you prepare for 4-H Day, please remember there are great resources for project talks, illustrated talks, demonstrations, public speaking, and preparing visual aids on the [4-H Communications Project Page](#) under project materials.

Purple or top blue ribbons of those age 9 and older (before January 1) can take their project talks, demonstrations, and illustrated talks to the Kansas State Fair. Poetry entries can also be entered.

Public Speaking entries are welcome at the State Fair; however, regardless of the topic used locally, all contestants at the State Fair will use the same topic: "How has your journey in 4-H contributed to being Beyond Ready for current challenges and future goals?" More details will be available soon.

Note from Shawnee County: Make sure to review our current Club Day Guidelines before our event February 22nd. They may be different from Kansas State Fair guidelines.

IPM Insect Art Contest

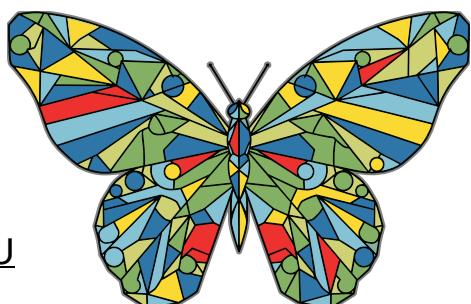
The K-State Extension Pesticide Safety and IPM Program is hosting its annual insect-themed art contest, open to all ages and skill levels in Kansas! This year's theme is "Metamorphosis Magic." The goal is to explore insects that undergo complete and incomplete metamorphosis, then create artwork that fits the contest theme. Artwork may include drawings or paintings, digital art, or a 3-D piece such as sculpture, stained glass, or other creative media.

Awards will be given for 1st-3rd place in each of the following age categories:

- Kindergarten - 2nd grade
- 3rd grade - 5th grade
- 6th grade - 8th grade
- High school
- Adult

Entries must be received or postmarked before April 15, 2026.

Full contest rules and details are available at: <https://bit.ly/3NHuIEU>



Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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Kansas 4-H Day *with* K-State Women's Basketball



K-State Wildcats Vs.
Iowa State
WILL BE TELEVISED



Step 1: Pick a Package:

\$28 Package Includes:

- Ticket
- \$10 Concession Voucher
- T-Shirt

\$18 Package Includes:

- Ticket
- \$10 Concession Voucher

Step 2: Register to get Tickets:
Use the QR Code or the link to register



Online registration
for this event will
be due February 8,
2026. No paper
registrations will
be accepted.



<https://tinyurl.com/5x84fp33>
Pick up ticket packages on
game day 10:00 am - 12:30 pm
Location TBA closer to event.

Doors open for the general
public at 12:00 pm

Tip-off at 1:00 pm

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Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of K-State Research and
Extension, Kansas State University, County Extension Councils,
Extension Districts. Resource:
<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>

Sunday, March 1, @ 1:00 PM

Why participate in International Exchanges with 4-H?

Sarah E. Maass, State 4-H Youth Development Program Leader

Why participate in International Exchanges with 4-H?

Have you ever wondered what life is like in another country—or how 4-H connects youth across the globe?

Traveling to another country or hosting a delegate from another country through 4-H offers an incredible opportunity for families to learn, grow, and make lifelong memories.

Why It Matters for Youth

- See the World Differently

Travel abroad or host a student from another country. You'll experience new traditions, foods, and ways of life—far beyond what you see online.

- Make Friends Around the Globe

Imagine having a friend in Japan, Costa Rica, Norway, or another country! These connections often last a lifetime.

- Level Up Your Skills

Adapt to new situations, learn to communicate across language barriers, and grow as a leader. These experiences will help you succeed anywhere, and a bonus is that they look great on college applications.

Why Parents Love It

- Expand Their Worldview

Experiencing life in another community firsthand helps youth appreciate different perspectives and develop empathy—skills essential for success in today's global society.

- Build Independence and Confidence

Living in a new environment or hosting an exchange delegate teaches adaptability, problem-solving, and resilience.

- Safe and Supported

Programs in 4-H prioritize safety and provide guidance every step of the way, so you can feel confident your child is in good hands.

Shared Benefits for Families

- Create Lifelong Connections

International exchanges often lead to friendships that span continents, providing your family with a global network of support and opportunities.

- Share Your Story

You'll represent your community and 4-H while learning how youth programs work in other countries.



Applications Open for 2026 4-H International Exchange Host Families



States' 4-H International Exchange Programs has opened online applications for next summer's exchanges. Families have begun applying to host Japanese youth who represent Labo and LEX organizations and Taiwan teens representing Taiwan 4-H. The applications from the international organizations will be arriving in February with placements assigned in host families shortly thereafter. Families wishing to host should apply early for a teen placement who best fits their children's ages, genders, and interests. Host families in this program should have a family member who is the same gender and with a couple of years the age of the exchangee.

Families who have hosted previously in the program need simply to update their existing applications online. The Taiwan group will be in the U.S. from June 28 to July 26. Kansas will host Japanese from July 21 to August 16. To locate the host family application, visit the [Global Citizenship tab](#) on the Kansas 4-H website.

For information on the Japan Inbound Exchange contact Pam Van Horn pvanhorn@ksu.edu. Contact Mary Kay Munson regarding the Taiwan Exchange at mkm2@ksu.edu.

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Club Chatter

Deer Trail

We had a meeting on January 12th for the Deer Trail 4-H club. We voted on our group shirt design. We plan to tie-dye them after they are printed. Our next meeting is February 9th at the extension office meeting room.

-Arlo Odgers

Topeka Trailblazers

Topeka Trailblazers had a monthly meeting. We helped at January Jamboree making bracelets.

-Max Diehl



Auburn

The Auburn 4-H Club had a pre-meeting craft activity of making bracelets. The January meeting started with planning for upcoming month events: 4-H Club Day skit and brainstorming on a fair theme. Kelsey Louderback reported on the January Jamboree event that was a hit! Our club's budget for the year was reviewed and approved. This month, we had three 4-H'ers who did project talks: Brooke Ladd on reading, Kinley Ladd on photography and Harley Brossard on Fiber Arts blanket. Our next meeting is planned on February 9th.

-Harley Brossard

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Rossville Rustlers

The Rossville Rustlers club held their monthly meeting at the ice rink in Manhattan, KS on January 18, 2026. The next scheduled meeting will be on February 16, 2026, 7 p.m. at the Citizen Potawatomi Community Building.



Bunny Bunch



This month we made plans for our Bunny Bunch 4-H youth show that we had to move to Alma Ks. We learned about the newest American rabbit breeders associations breed the Mini Californian and went over how to fill out comment cards and entries. Next month's meeting will be February 2nd and our March meeting will be on the 2nd as well, in the upstairs meeting room at the extension building. We hope to you there!

-Brooklynn Powell

Riverside

We talked a little bit about January Jamboree and new business. We discussed fair theme ideas and what our club might do for 4-H Day. We learned about making a motion by building trail mix. We sang for January birthdays. Our next meeting will be February 9th at 7 pm at Berryton United Methodist Church.

-Willa Tucker



Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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Grove



At the recent Grove 4-H meetings we have been learning about parliamentary procedure. They have been very informative and fun to learn.

-Chance Nolte

Silver Lake

Several members of the Silver Lake 4-H Community Club enjoyed making butterflies along with many other crafts at the Shawnee County January Jamboree, and after our January club meeting the officers liked bonding over the officer training activity. The next Silver Lake 4-H Community club meeting will be February 8th at 4 pm at Silver Lake United Methodist Church.

- Clara Thomas





Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Shawnee County 4-H Calendar

February 2026

- 1 Beef Tagging & Weigh-In, 1- 3 pm, Gleason's
- 2 Bunny Bunch Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm
- 4 Air Pistol, EMR, 6 pm
- 5 4-H Exchange, EMR, 7 pm
- 12 4-H Events Council Meeting, EMR, 7 pm
- 15-16 Citizenship in Action, Topeka
- 17 Air Pistol, EMR, 6 pm
 - Geology, TSCPL-Claire's Sunroom, 7 pm
- 18 Shooting Sports I, EMR 6 pm
- 19 Shooting Sports II, EMR, 6 pm
- 21-22 Horse Panorama, Rock Springs Ranch
- 22 Shawnee County Club Day, 2 pm, SHMS**
- 23 Paw Prints Dog Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm
- 24 Shawnee County Fair Board, EMR, 7 pm
- 25 Shooting Sports I, EMR 6 pm
 - Livestock Education Session, Downstairs Conference Room, 6 pm
 - Livestock Committee Meeting, Downstairs Conference Room, 7:15 pm
- 26 Horse Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

Chatterbox Submissions Due

March 2026

- 2 Bunny Bunch Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm
- 3 Air Pistol, EMR, 6 pm
- 4 Shooting Sports I, EMR, 6 pm
- 5 4-H Exchange, EMR, 7 pm
- 7 K-State Junior Beef Producer Day, Manhattan
- 11 Shooting Sports I, EMR, 6 pm
- 12 Sportfishing, EMR, 6 pm
 - Archery Info Meeting, EMR, 7 pm
- 17 Air Pistol, EMR, 6 pm
 - Geology, TSCPL- Marvin B, 7 pm
- 18 Shooting Sports I, EMR, 6 pm
 - Livestock Committee Meeting, Downstairs Conference Room, 7:15 pm
- 19 Shooting Sports II, EMR, 6 pm
- 21 Regional Club Day, Baldwin City
- 23 Paw Prints Dog Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm
- 24 Shawnee County Fair Board, EMR, 7 pm
- 26 Horse Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

Chatterbox Submissions Due

EMR= Extension Meeting Room at Extension Office

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K-State Research and Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the event contact (Grace Wiens) two weeks prior to the start of the event. You may make a request by calling 785-232-0062, ext. 120, or by e-mail at wiensg@ksu.edu. Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so.

All dates and activities are subject to change.



**Beyond
Ready**