



SEPTEMBER 2026

Highlights:

September 8-9: State Fair Project Drop-Off

September 11-20: Kansas State Fair

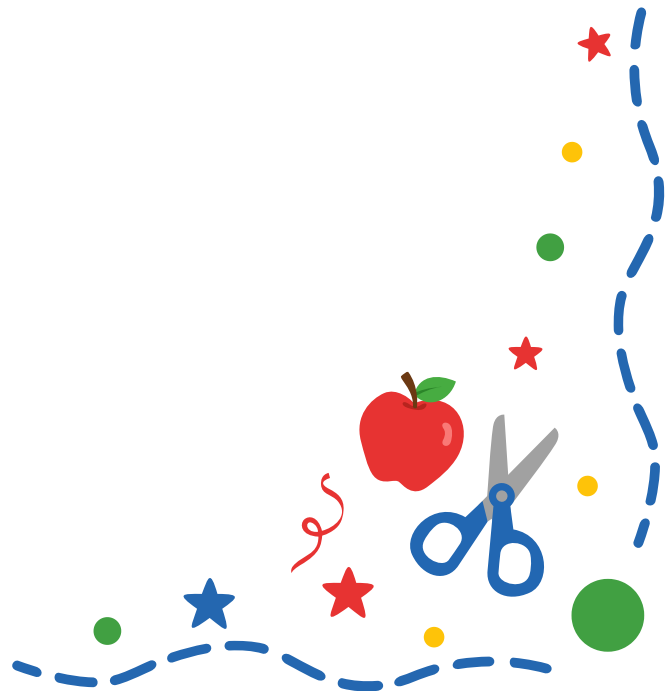
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Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Dates to Remember:

- September 7th: Office closed for Labor Day
- September 8th-9th: Project Drop-Off for State Fair
- September 11th-20th: Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson
- September 25th: Record Books & Achievement Paperwork due to Extension Office
- October 1st: New 4-H Year!
- October 4th-10th: National 4-H Week

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

Search for Shawnee County 4-H



Please send Chatterbox submissions to Grace by August 26th

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

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

A Word From Your Agent...

September in 4-H is all about the Kansas State Fair and record books! 4-H exhibits will be judged in Hutchinson starting the 10th, before the State Fair opens to the public. If you attend, we'd love to see pictures of your exhibits or from your contests! Please send them to me if you would like for them to be shared in a state fair highlight page in the Chatterbox. Good luck to all of our youth who are exhibiting!

If you are bringing an exhibit to the State Fair, projects can be dropped off on September 8th & 9th between 8 AM & 5 PM. We will have all the labels & paperwork you need available!. If you are bringing a foods item and would like for it to be fresh, you are welcome to bring those items between 7:30-7:45 AM on Thursday the 10th. All exhibitors should be aware, I will be leaving for Hutchinson by 7:50 AM.

Record books and achievement pin applications are due to the office by September 25th. Check with your club leaders to make sure you have met the requirements and have all the right signatures.

This year 4-H Achievement Night will be November 7th at Berryton United Methodist Church. Watch your mailboxes over the next month for postcard invitations!

Lastly, start making preparation for National 4-H Week Oct. 4th-10th. I hope your club can participate in their challenge to promote Shawnee County 4-H!

Opportunities for learning and fun are all over this issue of the chatterbox, be sure to read closely so you don't miss out!

-Grace

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

County Notes

Promotional Materials Available

If your club is having a table at an upcoming event, such as a Back to School night or similar event and you would like flyers promoting Shawnee County 4-H, please reach out to Grace! We do need a few days notice, so please keep that in mind. Enrollment for the new 4-H year opens October 1st so now is a great time to recruit new members and volunteers!



Fair Theme Contest

We are starting the fair prep early this year! Over the next couple of months, think about your best fair theme ideas. Consider things like decorating potential, snappy taglines, and potential cover art inspiration! The Fair Board will be voting on the theme at their November meeting, so submissions will be due to Grace by Monday, November 23rd.

Ambassador Information

All older 4-Hers who are looking for ways to become more involved in promoting the program are invited to join 4-H Ambassadors! The group is open to 4-Hers who are program age 12 or older and who have been in 4-H for at least 3 years. We meet on the 2nd Thursday of even months, at 6 pm before the Events Council meetings at 7.

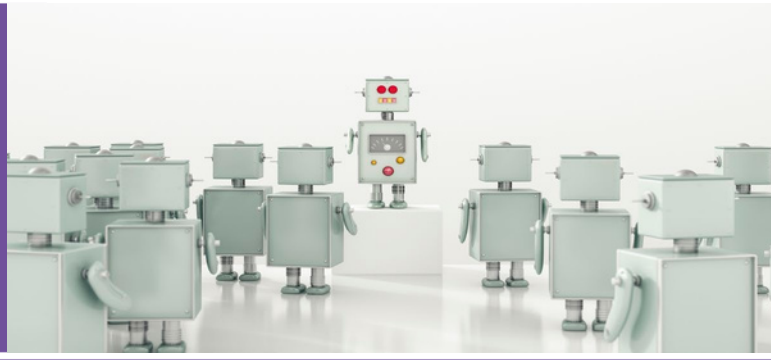


Firsthand Experience Hosting an International 4-H Exchange Student

This year we hosted a 4-H Exchange Student from Japan. We had the opportunity to learn about her culture and foods. She stayed with us and learned about Kansas and the United States. The exchange program is a great adventure that provides an immersion opportunity for a family to gain a connection to another culture while in the comfort of their own home. It is a chance to expand one's horizons to connect with another student. It is a great learning tool to teach your own children and yourself about a country and the world. Our family went to the library and checked out books about Japan. This gave us a starting point to know where our student was coming from and what she liked. We went to the store and had her pick out the foods she was used to and we had a table full of foods and drinks from her culture. This gave my children a culinary experience that expanded their palate and she even made one meal for our family from food back home. We compared her seaweed to the American seaweed; along with the differences in Miso soup from our stores and her stores. We have hosted in the past, and each student is different and have learned from everyone that we hosted. This is a great opportunity. Your child also has the opportunity to go to other continents through the 4-H exchange program, which may include Asia, Europe and United States. Don't miss out on the experience of a lifetime of traveling or hosting. If interested contact Grace for additional details.

- Sarah, Julia, & Max Diehl

Shawnee County eCommunity Youth Pitch Contest



A contest where 7th-12th grade students learn how to turn their business ideas into pitches!

There will be two optional learning sessions prior to the contest. All youth 7th-12th grade (2026-2027 school year) are encouraged to participate! No pitch experience necessary!

Learning Sessions:

The learning session is optional but an opportunity for youth to learn what a business pitch is and get help crafting a pitch for the contest.

Thursday, October 8th at 6pm and Saturday, October 17th at 2pm at The Shawnee County Extension Office, 1740 SW Western Ave, Topeka KS (Duplicate Sessions, you should only attend one)

Rules*:

- Youth must be a resident of or attending school in Shawnee County
- Youth must be in 7th-12th grade
- Pitches can be no longer than 5 minutes
- If more than 10 pitches are registered by the deadline, pitches will be submitted electronically by Oct. 28th) and the top ten pitches will compete on the contest date

**The full list of rules can be found at <https://www.shawnee.k-state.edu/community/>*

Contest:

November 4th at LinkInnovationLab,
220 SE 6th St 1st Floor, Topeka, KS 66603

Pitches begin at 5:00pm

Contest Prizes*

1st place \$1000 prize

2nd place \$750 prize

3rd place \$500 prize

4th place \$250 prize

*** Prizes sponsored by Go Topeka**

Registration due by Oct. 19th

You can register online at

<https://forms.gle/jTKqdquN9cadRTi88>

Or by calling the Shawnee County

Extension office at 785-232-0062 and asking for Candis



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Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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State News

Youth Council and National 4-H Conference Applications

Applications for the Kansas Youth Leadership Council and the National 4-H Conference will be open. All applications will be completed online and will be due by October 1, 2026, 11:59 p.m. CT.

Any Kansas 4-H member between the ages of 14 and 18 before January 1, 2027, may apply as a Council Rep, and those 15-18 before January 1, 2027, may apply for the National 4-H Conference.

This year's KYLF delegation will elect representatives from the four extension program areas (NE, NW, SE, SW) for one-year terms on the council. Up to 6 National Conference Delegates will be selected through an interview prior to KYLF, and they serve a two-year term on the council.

2027 Outbound Exchanges Announced

States' 4-H International Exchange Programs recently announced the Outbound Exchanges to be offered for summer 2027. The following exchanges are for four weeks beginning in June or July 2027 for Kansas Youth ages 12 or 15 to 18, depending on the destination country: Norway (June 17-July 17), Costa Rica (June 24-July 23), Taiwan (June 30-July 30), Japan (July 7-August 6), and South Korea (July 7-August 6). The Japan 8-Week Exchange will run from June 9 to August 6. More details will be available in early June with a flyer posted on States' 4-H and Kansas 4-H websites.

The online outbound application will be live in September. Kansas will again have a due date for applications on November 1. For more information, contact Kansas outbound coordinator, Mary Kay Munson at mkm2@ksu.edu or (785) 375-3189.

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

State News

Kansas 4-H Cyber Security Team Recruitment

We are recruiting 12 youth to form Kansas 4-H cybersecurity teams to participate in Heartland Harvest: Cyber at the Station! This opportunity is open to youth who participated in Discovery Day and/or are enrolled in the Computer Science project area. Participants will have the opportunity to experience a live Capture the Flag (CTF) competition, competing against middle school and high school teams from across Kansas and Missouri.

Heartland Harvest: Cyber at the Station will serve as the kickoff event for the 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Month series of activities, in partnership with Enterprise KC. More information will be shared soon.

Please share this opportunity with youth in your counties/districts who may be interested in cybersecurity, computer science, and hands-on technology experiences. Please encourage interested youth to respond ASAP. Space is limited, and registration is first come, first served. Registration link [Qualtrics Survey](#) | [Qualtrics Experience Management](#).

Details for Heartland Harvest: Cyber at the Station

Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026

Schedule: 9:30 a.m. – Registration opens

11:00 a.m. – Capture the Flag (CTF) competition begins

3:00 p.m. – Competition concludes

3:15 p.m. – Awards Ceremony (attendance is strongly encouraged)

Cost: Free! Registration includes snacks, beverages, and lunch.

Location: Union Station Kansas City, 30 W Pershing Rd, Kansas City, MO 64108

Transportation: Families are responsible for transportation to and from the event

School Absence: A 4-H excuse letter is available upon request

Deadline: September 12, 2026, at 11:59 pm OR will close when all 12 spots are filled, whichever comes first.

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Club Chatter

Riverside 4-H

The Riverside 4-H Club held its monthly meeting on August 10th at the Berryton United Methodist Church. Our parliamentarians had us make trail mix by making motions (and we got to enjoy it after the meeting!). We had elections for next year's officers. Our next meeting will be September 14th at Berryton United Methodist Church.

-Willa Tucker



Rossville Rustler

The Rossville Rustlers 4-H club held their monthly meeting at the Citizen Potawatomi Community Building August 17, 2026. The members reviewed the meeting agenda items and talked about upcoming 4-h activities. The next scheduled meeting will be on Sunday, September 20, 2026 at the Woods' house.

By Valencia Crawford, reporter

Deer Trail

The Deer Trail 4H Club met on August 10th. We played dodgeball with reusable water balloons and we elected offices. Our next meeting is September 14th.

-Kalman Odgers

Topeka Trailblazers

We had a foreign exchange student from Japan for the summer. We had the county fair. Our club did really well. We had 4-Hers in almost all of the categories: photography, cooking, table setting, goats, pigs, clothing, Legos, cake decorating, sheep, cows, horses, booklets, entomology, robotics, notebooks, bunnies, chickens, dogs. If you missed it, please come next year. I am the county prince, and the county princess was also from our club. We were on a 4-H parade float in Rossville. Looking forward to a wonderful year and wrapping up from last year.

- Max Diehl

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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Silver Lake

The Silver Lake 4-H Community Club convened its monthly meeting on August 9 at 4:00 p.m. at Silver Lake United Methodist Church. Members enjoyed a project talk from Clara Thomas, who demonstrated various crochet stitches. Officer elections were also conducted during the meeting.

Following the meeting, Clara represented the club at the Back to School Bash and assisted with pie preparation for Harvest Home at the church.

Please note that the next club meeting is scheduled for September 20 at 4:00 p.m. at SLUMC, adjusted to accommodate members attending the Kansas State Fair.

-Clara Thomas



Grove

The Grove 4-H Club would like to honor the Bahner family for all they have done for our club, and to Darwin Bahner for serving as our most recent leader as he hands over the role to our new leader.

Some of our favorite projects and events the Bahnners oversaw to help our club with were Christmas baskets our 4-H supporters really appreciated, flower deliveries at Easter, and the annual hayrack ride with fishing and a bonfire. Darwin was welcoming when many of us joined the club. Thank you to them for all they have done for all of the members and family of Grove 4-H!

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Shawnee County 4-H Calendar

September 2026

3 4-H Exchange, EMR 7 pm
7 Office Closed- Labor Day
8-9 State Fair Static Exhibit Drop Off
10 State Fair Judging & Volunteer Opportunities
11-20 Kansas State Fair, Hutchinson
23 Topeka 501 Family Night
24 Horse Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm
25 Record Books Due to Office by 5 pm
28 Paw Prints Dog Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

October 2026

1 Happy New 4-H Year!
1 State Youth Council Applications Due
4-10 National 4-H Week
8 Ambassadors & Events Council
10-11 48 Hours of 4-H
10 State Fair Judging & Volunteer Opportunities
19 Youth Pitch Contest Entries Due



EMR= Extension Meeting Room at Extension Office

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All dates and activities are subject to change.

