

Kalamazoo County



4-H



Welcome Packet
For New Families

Sept. 1, 2024 - Aug. 31, 2025

Dear 4-H Family,

Welcome to 4-H, the youth development program of MSU Extension! 4-H provides youth with positive learning experiences that help build character, while developing knowledge and skills that prepare them for the future.

We hope that your experience with MSU Extension - Kalamazoo County 4-H provides your family with a positive experience that you will look back on and remember for years to come. Participation in 4-H should be educational as well as fun for the whole family. We know that 4-H is a large program and can be difficult to navigate, especially for new families; and we hope that this guide will give you the information you need to find your way around. The monthly newsletter is an excellent source of information, please take time to read it. You can find the newsletter and other important documents at canr.msu.edu/Kalamazoo4H

As you become more and more involved with 4-H, you will continue to have new opportunities – even beyond Kalamazoo County – because 4-H events occur at the county, state, national, and even international levels! All the fun starts at the club level. We encourage you to become very active with your 4-H club. Throughout the year, we ask that you keep in mind that most 4-H experiences are made possible by volunteers. Volunteers and 4-H staff will do their best to make the experience positive for your family. Throughout the year, you and your family may also be asked to lend a hand; please remember that many hands make light work, so if everyone pitches in a little the job will be done quickly. We understand that families are very busy, but any amount of help your family provides is appreciated to make sure everyone has an opportunity to enjoy the experiences.

If you have any questions throughout your 4-H journey, you can always reach out to the MSU Extension office by calling 269-383-8830 or reach us via email. Please remember that MSU Extension staff may be out in the community doing programs or attending partner meetings and may not always be in the office.

We look forward to working with you and helping the best to become better!

Sincerely,

Veronica Bolhuis
4-H Program Coordinator

KALAMAZOO COUNTY
Michigan State University
Extension

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Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or veteran status.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal opportunity employer.

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4-H and Kalamazoo County MSU Extension

4-H is a youth education program for youth ages 5 through 19. It is the youth development program of our nation's Cooperative Extension System. Approved MSU Extension volunteers work with youth to provide fun educational experiences. Michigan State University Extension staff are responsible for the management of 4-H as well as providing support and resources for its members and volunteers. Youth who participate in 4-H develop the skills needed to be capable, productive citizens and leaders as they learn about new project areas or increase their knowledge in a variety of educational experiences.

The Smith-Lever Act formalized Cooperative Extension Service (CES) in 1914 to expand the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) partnership with land-grant universities to apply research and provide education to communities. Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is the USDA agency responsible for 4-H and Extension. 4-H programming is delivered locally and operated at the state and national levels through a partnership between county governments, the Cooperative Extension Service at the state's land grant university (in Michigan, through Michigan State University Extension), and the USDA. 4-H is one of the programs offered by the county Extension office. Other programs include Master Gardeners, Food and Nutrition, and Agricultural Programs.

For more information on CES, please visit <https://nifa.usda.gov/extension>

For more information on CSREES, please visit <https://www.usda.gov/topics/rural/cooperative-research-and-extension-services>

For a helpful chart on the larger 4-H system, please see *Appendix A* at the end of this packet.

Location and Contact Information

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Website: <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/county/info/kalamazoo>

4-H Website: canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo4H

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Kalamazoo-County-4-H-Youth-Program-122047197873078> (some clubs and projects have their own closed Facebook pages, talk to your club or project leader for more information.)

County General Email: msue.kalamazoo@county.msu.edu

Office Hours

Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:30pm, closed 12pm-1pm for lunch

Please call ahead if you plan to visit, as MSU Extension staff are not always present.

Our office is closed during National, Kalamazoo County, and MSU holidays.

MSU Extension, Kalamazoo County Staff

Julie Pioch, District 13 Director

Veronica Bolhuis, 4-H Program Coordinator

Nancy Hostetler, Administrative Assistant

Julie Ford, District, Administrative Assistant

Amanda Hulet, Community Nutrition Instructor

Jane Toll, Community Nutrition Instructor

Valorie Snyder-Pitts, Nutrition Instructor

Mariel Borgman, Community Food Systems Educator

Kellie Jordan, Food Safety Educator

Jeremy Jubenville, Commercial Horticulture

Wrifton Graham, Extension Master Gardener Coordinator

Beth Clawson, Natural Resources

Cheyenne Sloan, Small Fruit

Stay in the loop!

Make sure you are connected to Kalamazoo County 4-H through the following means:

- Make sure your 4-H Online email address is current! Most communication is done via email through 4-H Online, including sending out our monthly newsletter.
- Visit our website regularly at: canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo4H
- Follow Kalamazoo County 4-H on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kalamazoo-County-4-H-Youth-Program-122047197873078/timeline/>
- Please make sure your projects are updated in 4-H Online. We do send project-specific emails only to those participants enrolled in certain project areas as relevant.
- Many community clubs and projects have their own information page, be sure to look.
- Fair information can be found on the fair website at: <http://www.kalcounty.com/parks/fair/>

Kalamazoo County 4-H Policies

Non-Discrimination: 4-H clubs cannot discriminate by means of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

4-H Age: A 4-H member's age is determined by whatever age they will be during the 4-H year. The 4-H year begins on September 1, but 4-H age is determined by the age that the child will be on January 1 of the programming year. Youth that have a 4-H age of 5 – 19 years of age may join the 4-H program. 4-H members are ages 8 – 19 and participate in both non-competitive and competitive settings. Youth that are 4-H age 5 – 7 years old are considered Cloverbuds, who only participate in non-competitive settings. As part of a Community Club, Cloverbuds often have their own hands on activities separate from the older members. There are Cloverbud-specific projects available, and several regular 4-H projects are available to Cloverbuds as well.

Enrollment/Reenrollment: The enrollment/reenrollment process begins each year on September 15th. Returning members and volunteers must reenroll by November 15th and new members must enroll by April 1st to be eligible to show at the fair. New members can join 4-H anytime during the year, but they may not be able to meet all county, club, or project requirements to participate at the Kalamazoo County Youth Fair. All enrollments and reenrollments occur via 4-H Online, our online database. More information about 4-H Online and registration can be found at <https://mi.4honline.com>. Please note that you are not considered a 4-H member until you have enrolled or reenrolled in 4-H Online (including correct authorizations, club, and project participation) AND your enrollment has been verified by the MSU Extension office

Volunteers: Volunteers play a vital role in the ongoing growth and development of those in the 4-H Youth Development program. Adults have a lifetime of experience to share, including education, work experience, hobbies, and talents! Any adult that wishes to enroll as a volunteer with 4-H must successfully complete the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process (VSP) prior to enrolling in 4-H Online. The online application is located at http://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/msu_extension_volunteer_selection_process. All volunteers have 60 days from the date their application is turned in to complete the process; volunteers who do not complete the process within 60 days will be required to restart the process. Volunteers who are inactive (have not completed reenrollment by the county deadline) will be required to go through VSP again prior to being considered an active volunteer. Note there are 2 levels of volunteers, *silver and gold*. Please research the differences prior to starting your application to be sure you are completing the correct application.

4-H Clubs: Clubs must complete paperwork and be registered with the Extension office to be considered a 4-H club and allowed to use the 4-H name and emblem. Clubs must consist of at least five members from two or more families, have at least one approved adult volunteer, and meet a minimum of six times per year. Club benefits include assistance and support from Community Project Superintendents, access to the 4-H bus for educational program trips,

4-H Clubs Con't

recognition for members and Leader's, scholarships, leader training reimbursements, and much more. More information regarding starting a club can be found by calling the Extension office.

Club Leaders: Club leaders are required to:

- Attend at least 50% of Leader's Council meetings
- Offer a minimum of three projects to members
- Complete at least one community service project per year
- Participate in county fundraisers
- Turn in bank statements, treasurer reports and meeting minutes monthly to the office
- Turn in their Annual Financial Summary in September for financial review
- Meet deadlines set by MSU Extension and the 4-H office

Financial Guidelines: All clubs, volunteers, members, and parents are required to follow the financial guidelines for Michigan 4-H clubs. New financial guidelines were released in the fall of 2016. The volunteer book can be found at

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/uploads/resources/pdfs/4H1687_4-

[H_Volunteers_Financial_Manual_WEB2.pdf](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/uploads/resources/pdfs/4H1687_4-H_Volunteers_Financial_Manual_WEB2.pdf) and the youth/adult treasurer book can be found at http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/financial_manual_for_4_h_treasurers. Please contact the MSU Extension office with any questions.

Fundraisers: All 4-H fundraisers must have a completed fundraising authorization form submitted to the Extension office **at least two weeks prior** to the start of the fundraiser. Fundraising may not start until the club receives approval from the 4-H staff. A follow-up report form must be completed and submitted **no more than 10 days** following the event. Only authorized 4-H groups may use the 4-H name and emblem in fundraising, and all funds raised using the 4-H name and emblem are considered 4-H funds. This means that fundraisers for personal use may not use the 4-H name or club name. The fundraiser should have an educational component for the youth who are participating. Deciding on the best activity to raise the funds, making a good impression, money handling, and record keeping are good skills to acquire during a fundraiser. Above all be sure youth are safe when implementing a fundraiser.

Our newsletter goes out once a month and is an integral part of 4-H communication. The newsletter is e-mailed to all members with a valid and current e-mail address of file with our local 4-H office. It can also be viewed at canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo4H under General Information. It also can be found on the home page of 4-H Online after you are logged in. The newsletter includes 4-H information on the county and state level, our local 4-H calendar of events, articles, and photos. Articles from 4-H members, superintendents, and Leaders are welcome and encouraged. If you have information you would like included in the newsletter, please e-mail it to the 4-H office (msue.kalamazoo@county.msu.edu) by noon on the 15th of each month for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Kalamazoo County 4-H Website

The Kalamazoo County 4-H website can be found at canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo4H.

The website has a wealth of information for 4-H'ers including many forms and helpful links. Please note there are separate sections for project guidelines and 4-H forms in the list on the right side of the page. Each club has a link to their own page here as well.

Kalamazoo County 4-H also hosts a Facebook page containing useful information. It can be found at Kalamazoo County 4-H Youth Program.

4-H Pledge

I pledge....

My head to clearer thinking

My heart to greater loyalty

My hands to larger service

My health to better living

For my club, my community, my country, and my world.

The 4-H pledge, which should be said at the beginning of every club, project, and association meeting, addresses all four areas of youth development (cognitive, emotional, social, and physical). All youth should be encouraged to memorize the 4-H pledge.

4-H Emblem



The 4-H emblem is a four-leaf clover with an “H” in each leaf. The four H’s stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. The 4-H emblem (commonly called the 4-H clover) is protected by federal law from commercial and unauthorized use. Due to this protection, only chartered 4-H clubs and organizations are authorized to use the 4-H clover in publications and advertising. The clover must also always be seen with the 18 USC 707 trademark (with few exceptions). There are also very strict policies regarding how you may use the clover in documents, apparel, etc. (for example, text or images cannot be placed over the clover). For a quick reference guide to further explanation of these policies, visit <https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2070/2013/07/4H-Emblem-Quick-Ref.pdf> .

National 4-H

4-H is the nation’s largest youth development organization, empowering six million youth in the U.S. and is part of the Cooperative Extension system of land-grant universities.

National 4-H provides a wealth of resources, including curriculum and activities as well as fund development, for local 4-H programs. They coordinate National 4-H Week, which occurs in October each year, along with the 4-H National Youth Science Day that occurs the same week. They partner with Tractor Supply Company to host the Paper Clover Campaign (customers can donate \$1 to their local 4-H program at each TSC store) each fall and spring. There is also a partnership with JoAnn Fabrics to offer a 4-H families, volunteers and alumni a 15% discount on all purchases.

National 4-H also runs Shop 4-H, which is your go-to source for 4-H gear, including curriculum, apparel, club supplies, and more. Visit <http://www.4-h.org/home.aspx> to find all that they offer!

For more information on National 4-H, please visit <http://www.4-h.org/>.

Did you know?

*The 4-H Motto is
“TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER”*

This expresses a continual goal of excellence—to always strive to build on our goals and skills.

Michigan 4-H Youth Development

Michigan 4-H Youth Development operates under Michigan State University Extension. The program creates non-formal, hands-on educational opportunities to help youth thrive in a complex and changing world. There are seven guiding principles that provide the foundation for educational methods, activities and events that positively affect the lives of Michigan's youth. These are:

1. Youth develop positive relationships with adults and peers.
2. Youth are physically and emotionally safe.
3. Youth are actively engaged in their own development.
4. Youth are considered participants rather than recipients in the learning process.
5. Youth develop skills that help them succeed.
6. Youth recognize, understand, and appreciate multiculturalism.
7. Youth grow and contribute as active citizens through service and Leadership.

Michigan 4-H provides a wealth of resources and activities around a variety of project and topic areas, including animal science, arts, careers and entrepreneurship, citizenship, leadership, community service, environmental and outdoor education, global and cultural education, healthy youth, life skills, science and technology, volunteering, and mentoring.

Michigan 4-H coordinates different awards and scholarships at the state level. Scholarships include

- the Michigan Rabbit/Cavy 4-H Scholarship for those involved with the rabbit/cavy project area,
- Michigan State University 4-H Scholarship for high school seniors who have applied to MSU,
- Michigan State University Pre-College Program Scholarship for students in 8th, 9th, or 10th grade who attend an MSU pre-college program (such as 4-H Exploration Days, 4-H Great Lakes & Natural Resources Camp, 4-H Renewable Energy Camp, 4-H Animal & Veterinary Science Camp, or 4-H Capitol Experience)
- Michigan 4-H Foundation Scholarships.

For more information on Michigan 4-H Scholarships , please visit

https://www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_scholarships_and_recognition_program/4_h_scholarships

Michigan 4-H Foundation

The Michigan 4-H Foundation is a non-profit fundraising organization that solicits, manages, grants and stewards support from private individuals, organizations, foundations, and corporations to support Michigan 4-H Youth Development programs. Gifts made to the Foundation support:

- 4-H volunteer training at a reduced cost
- County 4-H volunteer recognition
- State 4-H youth awards and recognition
- College scholarships for 4-H youth
- County and state 4-H grant opportunities
- Creation of new curriculum and learning materials
- Development of new and current 4-H programs
- Development and maintenance of Kettunen Center, Michigan's 4-H volunteer training center in Tustin, MI.
- Development and maintenance of the Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens at MSU

For more information on Michigan 4-H Foundation, please visit <http://mi4hfdtn.org/>.

State 4-H Workshops and Events

There are many statewide 4-H workshops and events that 4-H members can attend throughout the year. Visit the website <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/events> to find more information about each event. Keep an eye out on the monthly newsletter for more information closer to each event.

4-H Animal & Veterinary Science Camp – Occurs at MSU and is for youth interested in exploring animal and veterinary science projects and activities. Open to youth ages 13-16 and involves a competitive application process to attend.

4-H Capitol Experience – Occurs at the State Capitol and surrounding area and is a four-day conference to prepare youth for active citizenship, focusing on civic engagement and public policy.

Citizenship Washington Focus – 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus participants learn about our nation's government by participating in hands-on leadership workshops and touring of historical sites in Washington, D.C.

4-H Exploration Days – The most popular 4-H event! Occurs in June on MSU's campus in East Lansing and is for youth ages 11-19, Leader's, and parents. All adults who attend will need to complete the MSU Extension Gold Level Volunteer Selection Process prior to registering. Spend three days at MSU, experiencing life like a college student and attending fun hands-on workshops and events with approximately 1000 youth from across the state.

4-H Exploration Days Cont.

Registration begins in March; you will want to register ASAP when registration books are available as sessions fill up very quickly. Registration fees are partially covered by Kalamazoo County 4-H Leader's Council.

4-H Great Lakes & Natural Resources Camp – Occurs in August at Camp Chickagami in Presque Isle for youth ages 13-15 (going in to 8th – 10th grade). Experience all that our great lakes have to offer as you go charter fishing, snorkeling, sailing, hike through forests, explore dunes, and more. There is an application process that is due in May.

4-H Renewable Energy Camp – Occurs on MSU's campus and is a five-day camp for youth ages 13-19. Youth explore ideas, research, and opportunities relating to renewable energy (biofuels, solar, and wind energy).

4-H Creative Arts Celebration – Open to youth ages 12 and older and volunteers, this event features a variety of workshops focused on the visual arts, crafts, sewing, and textile projects.

4-H Youth Leadership & Global Citizenship Spectacular – This event focuses on youth leadership, civic engagement, global citizenship, and international cultures.

4-H Winterfest – This event for youth 8-12 years old occurs in February. Youth get to participate in a variety of workshops and explore winter activities.

4-H Veterinary Science Teen and Adult Leader's Workshop – youth ages 13 and older and volunteers can learn about veterinary science.

4-H Beef, Sheep and Swine Teen and Adult Leader's Workshop – youth ages 13 and older and volunteers can learn about a variety of topics related to beef, sheep and swine project areas.

Michigan 4-H Dairy Conference – youth ages 11-18 can attend this event, at the Kettunen Center, to learn about dairy management.

4-H National Congress - This five-day conference in Atlanta, Georgia, offers workshops on topics such as diversity, cultural experiences, leadership and team development.

For more information on State workshops and events, please visit

<http://msue.anr.msu.edu/events>

Travel Opportunities

4-H International Exchange – There are several international 4-H programs available. Families may host inbound students from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Norway & Costa Rica or students may choose to go overseas, being hosted by families in Romania, Japan, Korea, Costa Rica, Taiwan, Norway. Call the 4-H office or visit the following link for more information on the different exchange programs and other countries that may participate. https://www.canr.msu.edu/international_exchange_programs/

Kalamazoo County 4-H Year

The 4-H year runs from September 1 – August 31. Our county calendar of events can be found on the Kalamazoo County 4-H website. Below is an outline of a typical program year in Kalamazoo County 4-H:

September:

- Enrollment for the new program year begins on September 1 of each year.
- Clubs usually hold their reenrollment meetings in September or October. Reenrollment information is given out at the Fall Mandatory Leader Update meeting this month and is due November 15.
- Nominations and elections for club and association/committee officers are also held in September or October.
- Council, club, and project financial reviews are completed.

October:

- National 4-H Week is the first full week in October. Events during this week include the 4-H National Youth Science Day and the Tractor Supply Company fall paper clover fundraising campaign. A tool kit for volunteer can be found at <https://4-h.org/professionals/marketing-resources/4-h-week-toolkit/>
- 4-H Councils vote for new officers.
- Member Record Book/record keeping workshop.



November:

- Reenrollment information for youth and volunteers are due in the 4-H online database by November 15.

December:

- State 4-H award forms for members ages 14-19 are available (usually due in February).
- 4-H Scholarship information available.

January:

- Beef/steer tag-in occurs this month.



February:

- Usually 1-2 countywide winter workshops (craft, science) are held this month.

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March:

- Horse Council tack sale.
- 4-H Exploration Days registration books are available (sign up early!).
- Spring Mandatory Leader Update meeting is held to provide information about fair.
- Leader's Council Auction- Families are asked to solicit businesses for donations of at least \$25. These funds are used to support Exploration Days scholarships, senior/upperclassman scholarships, educational programming, awards, and more.

April:

- New member enrollment deadline is April 1 to be able to show at the fair as a 4-H member.
- Hog tag-in is due by the end of the month.
- Lamb weigh-in occurs this month.
- Livestock Buyer's Workshop for youth who are selling in the Livestock Auction.
- 4-H Exploration Days registration deadline is this month.
- Member Record Book/record keeping workshop.



May:

- Exploration Days mandatory orientation for youth and volunteers who are attending.
- Sign up for helping set up, tear down, food booth and 4-H information booth during the Kalamazoo County Youth Fair.
- FairEntry Registration Opens

June:

- Kalamazoo County Open Horse Show.
- 4- H Exploration Days occurs at MSU.
- Sign up for helping at the Kalamazoo County Youth Fair - set up, tear down, food booth and 4-H information booth.
- FairEntry Registration Closes

July:

- State horse show applications are due
- Fair camping forms are due to the Kalamazoo County Parks office.
- Begin to purchase fair passes and ride wrist bands.
- Fairgrounds cleanup day



August:

- Kalamazoo County Youth Fair
 - Mandatory livestock meeting is held Thursday before fair week.
 - Non-livestock judging takes place the Saturday before fair begins; members can begin getting parking passes for the week at the Kalamazoo County Youth Fair office after non-livestock judging.
 - The Livestock Auction is on the Thursday of fair week.

Kalamazoo County 4-H Associations and Committees

Kalamazoo County 4-H has a variety of associations and committees to guide certain project areas and events. **Youth participation is highly encouraged** and many offer great leadership opportunities!

4-H Leader's Council

4-H Leader's Council is the association that helps to oversee activities for the county Kalamazoo County 4-H program. Meetings are the fourth Monday of the month at 7:00 pm. 4-H Leader's Council is run by an adult and youth board. All clubs are encouraged to send representatives to this meeting to have a voice in shaping our county program.

4-H Leader's Council oversees the following activities:

Scholarships – 4-H Council will reimburse youth for up to 50% of registration fees for educational workshops for youth who attend state events. For specific requirements, see the 4-H Council section of the website.

County Awards – Member record book learning, completing a project, and receiving recognition are important parts of the 4-H program. Recognition enhances the member's self-esteem, increases their motivation to learn, to become more involved in 4-H, to accept new responsibilities and set new goals. Youth must complete their member record book to qualify for county awards. There are county medals awarded in different project areas, as well as

Did you know?

Many of our associations and committees offer Leadership opportunities for youth and teens! 4-H Leader's Council, LSA, Horse Council, and Dog Council have youth boards. Voting for youth boards occurs at each association's first meeting in the fall of each year. Youth are also encouraged to be involved in and take a Leadership role with committees!

Special Awards. There are also awards for educational trips for each age group. Contact the 4-H office for more information.

A note on awards/recognition: A 4-Her's greatest reward should come from personal achievement, service to others, helping other 4-Her's, and sharing their experiences with other, while striving to be better today than they were yesterday.

Volunteer Recognition Celebration – This is held at the county's annual recognition banquet. Volunteers are recognized for years of service.

Food Booth – 4-H Council organizes the 4-H food booth during the Kalamazoo County Youth Fair each year as one of their main fundraisers. All clubs are expected to help work shifts during fair as the funds raised help to support the Kalamazoo County 4-H Leaders Council activities and some county programs.

Livestock Superintendents Association

The Livestock Superintendent Association (LSA) is a council that consists of the Superintendents of all market livestock. The auction, policies, and procedures for Kalamazoo Livestock Projects are set by this council. LSA meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM.

Livestock Auction:

The Livestock Auction occurs the Thursday of fair week. There is a buyer's workshop held in the spring, that is very beneficial for first year sellers and covers information from sale forms to approaching buyers. Here are a few things to note about the sale:

1. LSA takes a commission off of each transaction (animal sale). The commission varies depending on if the animal was a grand/reserve champion and varies by species. This commission is used to pay for any trucking of animals, check-off fees, and auction expenses.
2. Sale checks for youth who sell in the sale take approximately 30-45 days to mail following the sale. Please be patient after fair; we will always send an email when checks are ready. We cannot cut the youth checks until we receive the payments from buyers to cover the checks. Appropriate thank you notes, to buyers, must be turned in (addressed and with postage) by the Saturday of fair.
3. It is highly encouraged that you talk to potential buyers prior to fair week, and that you continue a positive relationship with your current buyers throughout the year.

Horse Council

Horse Council consists of horse project leaders and teen leaders from different project groups. It provides educational opportunities for youth involved in the horse project, as well as setting policies and procedures, fundraising, and countywide events. The council also coordinates the annual tack sale and open horse show. Horse Council meetings are the third Thursday of most months at 7:00 PM.

Dog Council

The dog council provides educational opportunities for youth involved in the dog project. Council meetings are held prior to or following the dog project meetings. See the annual calendar for specific dates.

Kalamazoo County 4-H Clubs

There are several different types of clubs within the 4-H structure. Kalamazoo County consists mainly of community clubs, which involves members of a variety of ages and interests. These clubs have general club meetings which may be held on a monthly basis that all club members attend and include club business and educational activities.

These clubs may also hold project-specific meetings throughout the year under the guidance of their project leader. The clubs meet on a weekly or monthly basis and focus mostly on project work. 4-H members may be involved with more than one club as fits their needs (members join a community club and also join a project club, or may be in two community clubs that focus on a different range of projects).

A 4-H SPIN club is a special interest club where five or more young people get together to learn about a topic of interest. The SPIN club model provides increased flexibility in when and how long groups meet. Each club meets a minimum of six times but not more than eight times within an eight-week period.

The current list of Kalamazoo County 4-H clubs, along with a contact person, contact information, location, and project areas is located at

https://www.canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo/kalamazoo_county_4_h_1/general-info

Kalamazoo County 4-H County Programs

There are a variety of countywide programs offered each year to 4-H and non-4-H members. These can vary from one day workshops to a short program or camp. These programs may

have a small fee to help cover the costs of the program and you will need to register for the programs.

Examples of county programs held in the past:

- Cloverbud Craft Workshop
- Spring Break Workshops (crafts and science activities)
- Robotics Camp
- Start a Business Series (4-H entrepreneur project)
- Summer Workshop Series (crafts, science, cooking)

Kalamazoo County 4-H Projects and Life Skills

The 4-H slogan is “**Learn by Doing**” - Based on the experiential learning model (doing an activity, then reflecting on the activity and applying the knowledge learned), youth in 4-H participate in specific program areas through the learn-by-doing approach. These specific program areas are known as projects. Youth will select the projects they want to work on with the support of an adult volunteer leader. You can find the list of available projects for Kalamazoo County 4-H, and the guidelines at:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo/kalamazoo_county_4_h_1/Project-Guidelines/ . Many of these projects and guidelines will correspond to Kalamazoo County Youth Fair classes. Note that not all projects are available in all clubs, depending on the volunteers in the club. Some projects may not have a project leader and youth will either work with a family member or friend or do independent learning.

In addition to gaining the valuable content knowledge of the project the youth works with, the 4-H model also teaches members important life skills, including practical skills such as goal-setting, critical thinking, and record-keeping, as well as personal and interpersonal skills such as leadership, teamwork, character, communication, self-esteem and responsibility. Iowa State University Extension has a Life Skills Model that connects the various life skills to the four H’s within 4-H. This model can be found at

https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/life_skills_resources

The Kalamazoo County Youth Fair is the largest event each year where 4-H members can showcase the projects they have been working on all year. The Kalamazoo County Youth Fair is run by the Kalamazoo County Parks Department, which is spearheaded by the Fair Council, a group of 9 volunteers who manage the fair. Fair Council meets the fourth Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm.

Here are a few things to note about fair:

1. The answers to most questions can be found by looking in the fair book, which is available online at <https://www.kalcounty.com/parks/fair/>
2. The fair book will include the schedule for fair, general rules, camping rules, livestock regulations, and class entry information. Fair book changes must be submitted to the fair office by November 1. The fair council reviews changes, approves, and compiles the fair book. This process can be lengthy. It may take until February until the current year's fair book is released.
3. Superintendents are those volunteers that are in charge of a particular project area(s) at the fair. Please remember that they are volunteers! They also hold a wealth of information about their project area and are most likely to be able to answer questions regarding their project area. Each animal species has its own rules and policies (located in the fair book). Please contact your superintendent for further information. Contact information for each superintendent can be found in the fair book.
4. Community clubs help with a variety of volunteer shifts before, during and after the fair. Sign-ups will be done online through SignUpGenius. A link will be posted in May, June, and July's newsletter. Please help your club fulfill the shift duties!
 - a. Still Project Room set-up and tear-down. Each club is asked to participate in either set up or tear down and rotates each year.
 - b. 4-H Information Booth & Project Monitoring: Each club is asked to complete a shift to interact with the public, answer questions, and to ensure the safety and security of the projects in the building.
 - c. Food booth shift: Every 4-H club is expected to complete shifts at the 4-H Leaders Council food booth during fair, helping to cook and serve the food to customers.
1. All projects that you would like to exhibit at fair must be submitted via the [FairEntry](#) website by June 15th. Youth must have met club and project requirements prior to having their club form signed.
2. Youth and families may camp at fair. Camping forms are turned in to the Kalamazoo County Parks office on an individual basis. For more information, visit <http://www.kalcounty.com/parks/fair/>.

MSU Extension and 4-H Youth Development Organizational Structure

