

4-H *in Action*

A special supplement to *The Delmarva Farmer* for 4-Hers by 4-Hers • October 8, 2024



Senior 4-Her, Caroline Allen, helps her nephew Sam work with his market lamb.

Teaching how I was taught

By CAROLINE ALLEN

I remember attending day camp as a Cloverbud, always looking up to my counselors. They were so much bigger than I was, more experienced, knew all the songs, and were so much braver. I was determined to be like them one day! Nine years later, that's exactly what I did, but I didn't stop there. My desire to step up in 4-H may have been fueled by my day camp experience in 2011, but it continued because of my passion to impact others and embrace the motto of 4-H: To Make the Best Better.

I wrapped up most of my 4-H journey in 2023 after serving as State Teen Council president and graduating high school. However, I

could not stay away for long as my nephew was becoming a Cloverbud fall of 2023. I saw my younger self in him – full of potential and a desire to learn. He immersed himself in all the opportunities a Cloverbud can, such as public speaking, fair crafts, and even a market lamb.

While it's not uncommon to show a market lamb at the state fair, even at five years old; in our family, it is. We aren't a family formed around agriculture. In fact, both my nephew and I grew up in the suburbs with nowhere to keep a lamb or an homeowners' association that would allow it. For my nephew, Sam, showing a

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Lessons in dairy leasing

By MAGGIE WIEBER

When most people think of Delaware 4-H, they think of the many leadership opportunities for the youth, the entries for the Delaware State Fair, or all the contests held year-round. Another possibility they may think of is agriculture, and all the things that come with it, including livestock showing. I have shown dairy cows for three years and the only thing I regret is not doing it sooner!

I first started to show cows in 2022 after a close friend in my club recommended I give it a try. I had seen cows at the fair before, but the thought of being so close to them and showing them was mind-blowing to me then. My parents did some research about how we would be able to show cows, and we soon found an answer: My 4-H club's Dairy Lease Program, run by Gregg and Stephanie Knutsen. In order to lease a dairy cow for the 4-H year, we would need to pay a lease fee to cover the cost of a few expenses, such as hay and transporting the cows to various yearly shows. Dairy members also have to complete a Dairy Project Group Record Book. By the time the first meeting came around, I was a little nervous with so many questions running through my head. I wanted to know what my cow would look like, if showing them was hard,



Maggie Wieber stands with her leased dairy project, Norma, on show day.

and I was a little scared that she might be a mean cow. During the meeting, Mr. Gregg was calling out each member's name and telling them which cow they were assigned. My cow's name was Buttercup, and I couldn't be more excited (and nervous) to meet her.

After the meeting, Mrs. Stephanie led my mom and I to her pen, and I saw Buttercup for the first time. She was a Jersey cow, and was my height! I was used to seeing huge cows, taller

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Project reaches all ages

By DECLAN WEST

The Delaware 4-H Diamond Clover program is very similar to the Boy Scout Eagle program. When planning a Diamond Clover project, it has to be an event or program that connects to the community and can be repeated in future years.

When I attended the National 4-H Ignite Summit as a delegate from the Delaware 4-H Program, they encouraged us to develop a community service project. My sister, Ainsley, had previously attended the Nation-

al 4-H Agricultural Summit and had thought that one thing we truly needed was a program connecting agriculture and farmers to kids in elementary schools. Unfortunately, the COVID pandemic made that impossible.

When I started to think about my Diamond Clover project, I felt that maybe my sister was right, that it wasn't just elementary schools, but all ages that needed to learn more

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Garrett club keeps youth hopping year-round

By **DEREK A. COSNER**

The Hopper's Club had a busy year so far! Unfortunately, the club's January meeting was cancelled due to a snowstorm, but thanks to technology, they met virtually to plan the upcoming year.

Along with playing games at meetings, such as 4-H/animal trivia and rabbits around the world bingo, they also did demonstrations on the different breeds of rabbits and ATV safety. Throughout the year, club members volunteered their time helping in the community. The club planted flowers for the Senior Center where it holds its meetings, participated in an Easter event helping with games and bringing animals for a petting zoo and put out flags on veteran's graves for Memorial Day.

The annual 4-H Achievement Night was held in April. Club members received record book awards, and the President's Service Award for community service. The club had 941.5 hours of community service in 2023.

Diamond Clover awards also were



Hoppers club members pictured with their recycled tire tree are: front row from left, Jubilee Vose, Jadzeia Vose and Noah Whiteside; back row from left Ava Cosner, Cheyenne McClean, Bristol Ketterman, Jacob Vose, Julia Reckart, Derek Cosner and Isabel Whiteside.

presented, along with volunteer service awards. One member won a memorial award for having the most community service hours in 4-H in Garrett County, another won a memorial award for having the most entries in the 2023 Garrett County Fair, another member won an achievement award for participating in club activities on the county, state and national level.

Some club members traveled to other places for rabbit shows, such as the Pennsylvania State Rabbit Breeders Association Show, the Washington County (Pa.) Rabbit Show, the Butler (Pa.) Rabbit Show, the Wisconsin Polish Club Specialty Show, and the Maryland State Fair.

Many members also participated in the Western Maryland District show, held in McHenry, Md., for 4-H and FFA members of Garrett, Allegany and Washington Counties.

Of course, the club held its annual Hopper's Show in June and everyone went to the 67th Annual Garrett

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Archery program about more than target practice

By **ALEXIS ROWLAND**

I have participated in the Delaware 4-H Shooting Sports Program in Kent County as part of the Archery program for seven years. Archery is one of the many projects you can do through 4-H. I have learned how to not only shoot a bow, but have become knowledgeable of the safety rules used in archery and the proper way to compete. I definitely believe that no matter what level you decide to take your archery experience to, you will certainly have fun, learn a lot and enjoy yourself.

There are three different types of archery that are available to compete in through the 4-H Program – recurve, barebow, and compound. These programs are separated by the types of bow used or the add-ons the shooter decides to add to the bow.

There are many opportunities one can have while participating in archery. They can be events or competitions at the local, county, state, regional or even national level. Throughout my years in my 4-H archery project, I have competed in a mixture of both recurve and barebow shooting events.

Barebow is competing with a recurve bow without any sights or additional add-ons. Recurve is competing with a recurve bow and sights. I enjoy learning more about the different types of bows that you can use as well as the different competitions that are held from year to year. Archery is not all about shooting and seeing how well you place. It is also about following the safety rules which is a big part of the activity as well. When I first joined my 4-H archery project group, the safety rules were the first thing I learned. These included range rules, distances to shoot, dress code, and many more.

In my opinion, the 4-H archery project is one of the best things you can get involved in with 4-H. It



Through 4-H Shooting Sports, Alexis Rowland competed in the Kent County 4-H Archery competition and the Delaware State Fair State 4-H Archery competition.

is a fun way to spend time outside and inside, and you are learning skills that you can use outside of

archery. While shooting archery, I have improved my precision, focus and accuracy. During every archery practice, I get to do something a little different, even if it is just shooting a different pattern of distances and I always have fun.

The two competitions that I have competed in throughout my archery project are the Kent County 4-H Archery competition and the Delaware State Fair State 4-H Archery competition. I have always had an amazing time at both, whether I placed well or not. Throughout the years, the competitions have always been a way for me to do my best and see how well I compare to the other archers in our state while getting to interact with other 4-H members who enjoy the same thing as I do.

Archery has helped me make so many memories and experiences that have helped me grow into a better 4-H member and a better person. I have been able to focus more on the important things in my life with the help of my 4-H club and 4-H Project Leader. Joining the 4-H archery project was the best choice I could have made when I was deciding what I wanted to do in 4-H.

I do not believe any other project would have been a better fit for me. I have gained friends and lifelong knowledge about archery itself as well as other key skills that I use daily. From helping others with their own archery struggles and receiving help myself, I have been able to turn archery into something of my own. I find it easier to get up and shoot now that I care less about the score and care more about the learning experiences I get from practicing. I could not be happier with my 4-H archery project experience!

(Alexis Rowland is a member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)



Declan West delivers a "Meet the Farmer Talk" to youth about his chickens.

Garrett ...

Continued from Front Page

County Agricultural Fair, not only showing rabbits, but beef, meat goats, dairy goats, chickens, ducks, horticultural, artwork, woodwork, photography and record books. Before the fair, the club met to install new LED lights and fans to help keep the animals and people cooler during the hot week.

Some painting also was done in the Rabbit and Poultry barn, and club members worked hard to prepare a nice barn for the busy week. During fair week, members gave demonstrations on rabbits, other market animals, and welcomed and educated visitors. Club members also participated in other fair events such as the Costume Animal Parade, Pedal Tractor Pull, Fashion Review, Lawn Tractor Engineering Event, showmanship for multiple species of animals, Dairy Goat Milk Out and Lead Contest.

In the month of September, the club held a memorial picnic at the Rabbit Barn in honor and remembrance of our assistant club leader, Rachel Schmidt, who tragically died

last September in an automobile accident.

In October the club plans to have a lesson on raptors and start to wind down for the year. November's meeting is always a Thanksgiving feast with the election of new officers. Last November the club made and decorated a Christmas tree out of recycled tires to enter in the Festival of Trees. The club decorated it with 4-H and animal-themed ornaments that they made.

The tree won 3rd place and was auctioned off to benefit charity. At the Christmas meeting the new officers are installed and awards are handed out by Darlene Schmidt, our leader. She has been a club leader in Garrett County for nearly 30 years. Another delicious dinner is enjoyed by all, and it is a fun day ending the year with our club family. We are grateful for the support of our community and the Garrett County office of the University of Maryland Extension. If you want a fun club to join, hop on over and visit us, we would love to see you!

(Derek A. Cosner is the club reporter for the the Hopper's 4-H Club of Garrett County, Md.)

Project ...

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about agriculture in Delaware. From these thoughts, "Meet the Farmer Talks" were born.

We designed a program that brings agricultural professionals into classrooms, 4-H clubs, or other youth groups to speak about what they do and why they do it. This program was developed to reach the various student audiences in elementary, middle and high schools.

In elementary schools, students learn where their food comes from and what animals are raised on farms. Middle school students learn about what careers are in the agricultural industry, and high school students learn how to make their hobby or pas-

sion into a career they love. As part of this program, we have also connected Rotary Clubs to local farmers to have them speak about their work.

It is fantastic to see how excited kids are to touch lambs, but it is even more important to reach adults. My sister said one of the best things is to be able to go into a room of adults that genuinely want to learn about agriculture in Delaware.

If you have a youth group, library, community group, or you are a teacher in a classroom and you would like a lamb to visit your group or have a farmer come and speak about agriculture, please reach out. We will make it happen and bring "Meet the Farmer Talks" to you!

(Declan West is a member of the Hollymount 4-H Club in Sussex County, Del.)

Teaching ...

Continued from Front Page

market lamb was a very new experience. After learning to take care of his lamb, he got used to getting dirt on his hands. After getting dragged around by his lamb a couple times, he learned to balance his weight and teach her who was boss. He learned to wash his lamb, feed his lamb, walk her, and set her up. To Sam, showing a lamb was a lot more than just preparing for the state fair — it was the

great opportunity of learning how to raise a lamb despite the hard work, hot days and late nights.

When I look back at my day camp experience 13 years before Sam would show his lamb, I am thankful for the older, more experienced 4-Hers who stepped in to lead me and push me to try and learn new things. When Sam joined 4-H, I was excited to share with him not only the experiences I had at his age, but to create new ones that I hadn't had.

(Caroline Allen is a member of the Westville 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)

National 4-H Week is Oct. 7-12



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LifeSmarts program focuses on skills teens need for growth

By CARTER BRADLEY

In my many years of 4-H, I had grown accustomed to the standard 4-H events — the camps, conferences, and contests. They were all very enjoyable, but after nearly a decade, I wanted to have a chance to try something new. Then, in 2022, I learned of a new event Delaware 4-H would be adding, the National LifeSmarts competition. It was a Quiz Bowl style event that focused on life skills teenagers need as they grow. LifeSmarts is not exclusively a 4-H program and it includes many different organizations and high school teams as well.

I was always the type of person to try all of the opportunities presented to me through 4-H. As a member of the Delaware 4-H State Teen Council, I figured I should help grow this new event that will hopefully become a staple of the Delaware 4-H program. I joined a team and prepared for the event. We would go on to place 2nd at the state competition, and it appeared that my LifeSmarts dreams would be over as we did not win the trip to the National competition. My team did not reform for the next year and I did not expect to compete again.

However, one thing that we all failed to realize in that first year was the importance of a fifth team member. Both of the teams at the Delaware state championship only had four team members as only four can compete at one time. Having a fifth team member means you can focus and specialize in other areas, leading to



The Delaware 4-H Program LifeSmarts team received 3rd place in the nation at the 2024 National LifeSmarts competition.

an overall more knowledgeable team. This is what led me to be brought over to this year's state championship team for LifeSmarts. I was thrilled at being able to compete once again in this event and honored to be asked to join the team. All five of our team members had their strengths and weaknesses, and we felt very confident heading out to the national competition in San Diego, representing Delaware 4-H.

Quickly we realized we may have been a little overconfident, as we ended the first two days of the competi-

tion ranked in the 30s of almost 50 teams. These first days were unlike what we had prepared for, as it mainly consisted of team challenges with another team and "Speed Smarts," a group of quick challenges that were based on a time constraint. Four of our team members, myself included, were at their first national competition, and while we had practiced these alternate competitions briefly, there was no substitute for the real thing, and we felt a little rattled overall. We knew we needed to bring our A-Games on day three. This third day

entirely consisted of the traditional, Jeopardy-style buzzer rounds we had prepared for. We did exceptionally well in this and even upset the 3rd ranked team in the tournament. By the end of this fantastic day, we were ranked 14th, just enough to move us into the tournament bracket. LifeSmarts uses all of these scores and points scored in each competition to determine seeding for the tournament at the end of the event.

The top 16 teams qualify and are split into four sections on the bracket and the winner of each of those four rooms will advance to the finals. We were the underdogs in our room, being ranked 14th and having to play the 3rd-ranked team in our very first matchup. Our team was fantastic and upset both them and the 8th-ranked team to win our room and advance to the finals the next day. We were not successful in our semi-final matchup but ended up placing 3rd out of all 48 teams, and was the highest placing 4-H team in the nation.

The program appears to be thriving in our state as it is now holding meetings to form both middle school (which competes virtually) and high school teams throughout the state.

I learned so much, had an amazing experience and made life-long friends and memories. I am honored to have participated and proud to say that I helped to grow LifeSmarts here in Delaware.

(Carter Bradley is a member of the Bridgeville Mustangs 4-H Club in Sussex County, Del.)

Favorite Foods Contest combines learning, fun, nutrition

By ALEXIS STARKE

The Favorite Foods Contest is a 4-H competition in the Delaware 4-H Program for all 4-H members who are involved in the 4-H Foods and Nutrition project. It is an event enjoyed by many 4-H members and has five main objectives: 1) Increasing knowledge of the importance of good nutrition and creating an interest in improving food standards, 2) helping 4-H club members improve skills in food preparation and display, 3) Increasing knowledge on table setting placement, 4) Encouraging originality, creativity, initiative and poise in the 4-H member, and 5) Developing interview skills.

There are four different divisions that 4-H members can compete in based on their age. The senior division is ages 14 to 19 years old, junior division is ages 11 to 13 years old, beginner division is ages 8 to 10 years old, and the Cloverbud division is

ages 5 to 7 years old. Senior, Junior and Beginner participants can choose to make food dishes from several categories. They include Appetizers, Breads, Desserts, International Dishes, Main Dishes, and Side Dishes. Beginner and Cloverbud participants can make Cupcakes, Brownies, and Cookies.

The main elements of the Favorite Foods Contest are to choose a dish to make, learn how to correctly write a recipe, learn how to properly make the dish you have chosen, and learn how to properly develop a table setting for your food dish. 4-H members can use their 4-H leaders, parents or even a sibling to help prepare to meet the judge and participate in an interview about their food dish and table setting.

All participants receive ribbons of their entries. In addition, overall winners in each category for each age group are also announced. These individuals receive a food related prize

that is sponsored and provided by the Delaware 4-H Foundation.

During the contest, the County Foods and Nutrition Judging Contest is also held. All contest participants in the Beginner, Junior and Senior age divisions are encouraged to take part in this event to test their knowledge gained from being part of the Foods and Nutrition 4-H project area. There are two divisions of judging – Senior and Junior. The top 10 individuals who place in the Senior Division are invited to participate in the State Foods and Nutrition Judging Contest that is held during the Delaware State Fair.

The Favorite Foods Contest is a lot of fun and it allows 4-H members to have fun and learn so much about food and nutrition. I strongly encourage all 4-H members to try this event. I know you will enjoy it also!

(Alexis Starke is a member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H club in Kent County, Del.)



The Favorite Foods Contest allows 4-H members to have fun and learn so much about food and nutrition.

State 4-H Teen Council officer an award in itself

By AINSLEY WEST

The Delaware 4-H State Teen Council is composed of six to seven members — a president, vice president, secretary, and three to four state ambassadors. The 4-H Teen Council leads events and assists in statewide outreach programs. One of their major initiatives they lead each year is the State 4-H Teen Conference. It is a weekend event held at the University of Delaware and consists of workshops such as leadership, community service and mental health. The workshop topics are different every year and are planned and implemented by the council officers.

The weekend also includes a classic 4-H dance and one or two other fun activities such as attending an ice hockey game, ice skating, or even going to the Little Bob Gym on the University campus. 4-H members always love getting to practice their volleyball skills as State 4-H Camp is only a few months away! This event is something everyone looks forward to

State 4-H Teen Council is one of the best things Delaware 4-H has to offer. So, when those applications come out in the late summer of 2025, don't forget to fill one out and help make the best better.

going to the first time as well as many years in the future.

This past year State 4-H Teen Council officers worked diligently to develop a new statewide event that will take place each year. We all love a 4-H dance so it was fitting to have a 4-H Formal as many of us only see each other one to two times a year. The council is also working on other new statewide activities to take place in the next year or two. Other events you can see State 4-H Teen Council officers at are the Delaware 4-H Hall of Fame, multiple 4-H events at the Delaware State Fair, County 4-H



The 4-H Teen Council leads events and assists in statewide outreach programs. One of their major initiatives they lead each year is the State 4-H Teen Conference.

Achievement Banquets, 4-H Legislative Day, and so many others. This year some officers were also able to travel to Queen Anne's County in Maryland for their 4-H Officer training to help make the best better and teach the upcoming club officers about their roles.

State 4-H Teen Council is one of the best things Delaware 4-H has to

offer. It is one of the greatest honors and an award in itself to be a part of this group. So, when those applications come out in the late summer of 2025, don't forget to fill one out and help make the best better.

(Ainsley West is a member of the Hollymount 4-H Club in Sussex County, Del.)

STEAMrollers 4-H club touches on several areas of science

By ISABELLA SHORT

The STEAMrollers 4-H club meets in Smyrna in Kent County, Del. This was my first year as a member of the Delaware 4-H Program. I am excited to share several things I did this past year as a new 4-H member.

Every month that we meet I get so excited to learn something new. My favorite part of the STEAMrollers club is my new friends and all the fun science lessons we do. One activity I really enjoyed was setting off rockets. I like seeing my older friends in 4-H build their own rockets and I hope to build one myself someday. The rockets teach me a lot about different types of sciences. This year our club had water rockets and I got to put one of the rockets together and blast it off. It was a lot of fun!

This year was my first time going to 4-H camp. I went to day camp for a week and State Environmental Camp for the weekend. I like them both so much and cannot wait to go again next year. I learned so many

fun songs and met really nice friends. My favorite songs are "You Can't Ride in My Little Red Wagon" and "Pork and Beans." I get to teach my little brother all the songs now that he is a Cloverbud in our 4-H Club. It's only been a year that I have been a 4-H member and I am so happy I am. I hope to be a counselor someday. My camp counselors were the best! Some of their names were Ava, Chloe, Levi and Brogan.

This summer, I got to see the 4-H building at the Delaware State Fair for the first time. It gave me so many ideas on what I want to enter in the fair next year like different types of art work and photography. I liked that I could see familiar faces while I was there in the building and also see my friend's entries.

I want to share with all my school friends how fun it is to be a 4-H member. I hope they join 4-H, too!

(Isabella Short, 8, is a member of the STEAMrollers 4-H Club, Kent County, Del.)



STEAMroller 4-H club members set off rockets at a recent club meeting. The club meets in Smyrna in Kent County, Del.

‘They went far’

By **AUSTIN YOUREK**

STEAMrollers 4-H club has been doing something exciting for the past few years. We have started an annual model rocket launch. The meeting begins with our 4-H volunteer leader, my dad, talking about model rockets and how they work. This was very interesting. Then we go to the field and set up the launcher. While I was setting up the rocket launcher with my dad, the younger group members launched bottle rockets. They went far!

After my dad and I set up the launcher, I was the first person to launch their rocket. I launched the Crossfire ISX rocket. I put too much recovery wadding in my rocket, and the parachute didn’t deploy.

Our next few rockets went high in the sky. The rockets deployed their parachutes correctly, and we were able to catch some of them. It started getting a little windy after, but we still launched rockets. The wind caught the parachutes and landed some rockets in the cornfield behind us. We were not able to recover those rockets. Our club had a lot of fun launching off our rockets, and we hope to do it next year.

(Austin Yourek is a member of the STEAMrollers 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)



Austin Yourek and his father set up the Crossfire ISX rocket for launch at the STEAMrollers 4-H club’s annual model rocket launch.

State camp most memorable

By **REID BRADLEY**

I’ve experienced some unforgettable moments in my 4-H career, but nothing is more memorable than this past year of Delaware 4-H State Camp. State Camp has been around for over 76 years and occurs two weeks every June. My siblings and I have all attended the second week of camp and we have enjoyed everything about it. But, let me explain why this year was the best in my camp career.

Every single year of camp is amazing, meeting new first year campers and seeing old friends. Attending every people group meeting, each night’s council circle, and of course, the beloved rest period each day, are all highlights. Something this year that was different than all the other years was that my brother, Carter, would be the Voice of the Moon and Stars people group. It was his ninth year of camp and I was excited to see him have that opportunity. Being the Voice is an honor and something you are selected for based on your leadership ability. It was also great as many of my family members were at camp. My twin sister Lillie was there, as well as two of my cousins, Ella and Lucas. The stage was set for a great year.



REID BRADLEY

It all started on Monday with my brother getting named Voice of his people. We got to meet the new Echos and Sparks (other leaders) that night and earlier in the day, everyone in my group and cabin. Day one was

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Ava Gallo (Spark), Sara Zink (Echo), and Bailey Fletcher (Voice), each represented The Bears people group at the 1st Week of Delaware 4-H State Camp.

When I think about 4-H

By **AVA GALLO**

When I think about 4-H, I normally think of all the busy nights filled with fun 4-H activities and meetings, but when I think about 4-H more in-depth I think about all of the friendships and leadership opportunities I have been blessed with as a member of this group. I have held many leadership roles in my club, county and state. Those leadership roles and opportunities include being a club officer for 7 years in Peach Blossom 4-H Club, participating in my club’s leadership project group, holding an office for the past 3 years for Kent County 4-H Jr. Council, being a Kent County Day Camp Counselor for 3 years, being an Environmental Camp Counselor for 3 years, holding an office for Delaware 4-H State Teen Council for the past two years, and being a spark for my people group at Delaware 4-H State Camp.

As a 4-H club officer, I must fulfill the roles assigned to me. For the 2024-25 4-H year, I am vice president of my club. I have to do attendance, help out the president when he needs it, and be able to help out my club leader when it is needed.

I am a 5-year member of my Peach Blossom 4-H Club’s leadership project group. Through this project group, I get to help plan the monthly meetings and get to learn about the yearly topic. This year we are covering citizenship. Peach Blossom 4-H Club also holds a Camp Peach Blossom where this year I was the song leader. I will also be the vice president for the 2024-25 year for Kent County Junior Council.

While holding this position, I help

the other officers when they need it, fill the president’s role when he is unable to make meetings, and keep track of attendance. As a Camp Counselor for both Kent County 4-H Day Camp and our State 4-H Environmental Camp, I have held the leadership roles of Voice, Echo, Song Leader, and One-Voice. Through being a Voice and Echo at both day camp and environmental camp, I have improved my skills in leading a group of kids.

When I was song leader for both camps, I was the head counselor and had to make sure all campers and counselors knew what they were doing and where to go, and I also had to lead camp songs. Two years ago I was elected to be a State Ambassador for Delaware 4-H State Teen Council. This past July, I was elected to serve as state president. I always looked up to the state teen council officers when I was younger, so I hope I can be a role model to other 4-H’ers. I learned a lot being a state ambassador and hope to serve Delaware 4-H well this upcoming year. Another leadership role 4-H has presented me is being able to serve as “Spark” for my people group at Delaware 4-H State Camp. Through this role, I helped my Voice and Echo, other leaders of people groups, keep the group on task, and help lead them when my Voice and Echo were working on other items.

I am grateful for all of the leadership opportunities and friendships the Delaware 4-H Program has provided me and I cannot wait to see what 4-H has in store for the next few years!

(Ava Gallo is a member of the Peach Blossom 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)

Shore Good club takes on impactful service projects

By ISABEL COCKEY

The 4-H community in Wicomico County eagerly welcomed the formation of Shore Good, a volunteer-based club founded by Amber Cockey, Jen Johnson, and Tracey Yates in March 2023.

Over the past year and a half, Shore Good has completed a variety of im-

impactful service projects, including the following: Beach cleanups with OC Beach Heroes; watershed cleanups with Nanticoke Watershed Alliance; gardening with Boundless Garden; nature walk with Blind Industries; both a fall cleaning and running craft tables at Furnace Town; hauling boxes at Maryland Food Bank; painting the education room at Salisbury Art Space; throwing a holiday event with

Westside Community Center; laying pavers, landscaping, and site maintenance at Town Cats of Ocean City; and painting murals, building a touch tank, and setting up the Nature Center at Pemberton Park. The club's officers — President Isabel Cockey, Vice President Claire Moreno, Secretary Jane Johnson, and Treasurer Guinevere Cockey — are dedicated to making each meeting engaging and mean-

ingful.

Shore Good is actively seeking new 4-H members who are passionate about giving back to their community. If you're interested, reach out to Amber Cockey at ambercockey@yahoo.com or connect with the club on Instagram (@shoregood4h)

(Isabel Cockey is a 4-H member in Wicomico County, Md.)

Camp ...

Continued from Page 6

a blast. Tuesday is when we finally got to go to our classes. I had Barnes Owl (yearbook) in the morning, and People Group Pride (a craft) in the afternoon. Both nights we had a great council circle and many memories were made.

Wednesday is when we had the dance. Everything went well, we all jammed out to all the new music this year as well as some classics. Prior to the dance each group performed skits based on reality TV shows. They all worked hard on them and they were hilarious.

Thursday is when everybody starts to get tired. Also I got to do

my favorite camp song that we do every Thursday, which is Boom Chicka Boom. Friday was a big day. Closing council circle, the volleyball showdown between the Big Feet (our counselors) and V's and E's (camp leaders), and the famous turkey dinner. But the main thing everyone looks forward to is council circle. Starting with the high council, our ceremonial final night entrance, to the game of Buzz, it started off great. Each group performed their traditional songs, skits and yells. But the ending is where tears start pouring for many campers.

When campers get to give their counselor thank you's, Voices thank people at the camp who mean a lot to them, and the announcement of H's and Spirit (recognition of who has helped make camp special that

year). All of the Voices ended up getting an H and Carter, my brother, got the Head H for his clear and logical thinking during the week. I was proud of him. Now after a long night, everybody was tired but not ready for the morning as that meant they would be going home and camp would end.

When the morning siren rang around six in the morning everybody was tired. After all the cabin duties, breakfast, and Smooth and Creamy (a camp tradition between the counselors and group leaders), everybody got ready for their last people group meetings. The Voices shared some words with their groups and everybody tried to yell louder at the other groups. Finally, everybody gathered in a circle in front of the flagpole. That was our closing ceremony, the end of camp. Everybody got their string to

keep, a collection of all the camp colors, showing how we are all one big group at camp, a memento of the year that we can hold on to forever. I love camp, because we make friendships that last a lifetime and learn how to be better people.

After camp was closed, everybody packed up and left ready for camp to start again next year.

This year was a roller coaster of emotions with tears of sadness and joy. From my brother as a Voice, and my family experiencing it all together, it meant the MOST to me for many reasons. This year was the best so far, and I can't wait for next year.

(Reid Bradley is a member of the Bridgeville Mustangs 4-H Club in Sussex County, Del.)

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Jill Bramble,
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Ignite Teen Summit offers day full of education

By **NIDHISH GUPTA**

I kicked off the day at the Ignite Teen Summit with a visit to the Firebird Research Farm, where we learned how to grow plants using hydroponic and aquaponic systems.

We were also shown how compost is reused as a sustainable food source for plants. After that, we attended a workshop titled “What Will 2050 Look Like?” where we were intro-

duced to futuristic technologies like holograms and flying cars.

Later, there was an exciting keynote presentation by one of my favorite YouTubers, Daniel Mac, who shared his journey to becoming a YouTuber. I even got the chance to get his autograph and take a selfie with him!

Following that, another well-known YouTuber led us in an interactive activity where we simulated

being on Mars. I played the role of a blindfolded Rover, receiving navigation commands from Earth to move left, right, or straight.

We wrapped up the day with a 3D printing class, where we explored the intricacies of 3D printing technology. Overall, my experience at Ignite was incredible.

I learned how to enhance my resume and got a glimpse of what the future might look like in 2050. This

was one of the best 4-H camps I have attended.

One of my favorite quotes from the event was, “The intent was to inspire young people to continue learning and growing, making their best efforts even better through educational experiences.”

(Nidhish Gupta, 14, is a member of the Voyagers 4-H Club in Worcester County)

Clothing and Textile Showcase puts skills on display

By **CARRIE CALLAWAY**

The 4-H Clothing and Textile Showcase is a contest open to all 4-H members currently enrolled in the Clothing project or Exploring 4-H project. The objectives for the contest include: Encouraging 4-H members to learn construction skills in order to make clothing for themselves and others, developing judgment and creativity in planning an attractive outfit, building self-confidence and poise and the ability to make the most of one’s personal appearance, and acquiring knowledge and skill in planning, presenting and participating in a fashion show.

This event allows 4-Hers to showcase their sewing skills, consumer skills or both as they participate in three areas of competition – Clothing Construction, Ready to

Wear or exhibiting sewing projects in the Sewing Contest. 4-Hers can participate in one portion, two portions or all portions of the showcase.

Completed garments are evaluated according to sewing level and according to project guidelines. 4-Hers also participate in interviews with judges about the construction and selection of their completed garments and model their garments in the showcase portion of the event.

For the contest this year, I participated in several sewing sessions with my 4-H Sewing Project leader to sew and construct a new blouse. While sewing my garment, I was able to choose my pattern and fabric, cut out my pattern, sew in a straight line, and learned how to operate the sewing machine much easier. I also learned how to

sew sleeves in on my blouse and bunch the sleeves. I did find sewing a hook and eye on by hand a challenge however, but I was very happy how the blouse turned out. As part of the competition, I participated in interviews with two judges on the construction and selection of the fabric and pattern for my blouse. I felt very confident during the interview and was able to answer the judge’s questions. For my sewing efforts, I received a blue ribbon and was named a member of the Beginner Division Honor Court.

I really like participating in the 4-H Clothing and Textiles Showcase and I look forward to this event every year.

(Carrie Callaway, 11, is a member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)



CARRIE CALLAWAY

‘I was excited and ready to take on this new adventure’

By **FLYNN MUCHA**

When I was a Cloverbud 4-H member, I would never have guessed that one day I would be leading a group of Cloverbuds. Now here I am, a proud 10-year member of the Peach Blossom 4-H Club, where I serve as the Cloverbud Liaison. This role involves helping the leader organize activities and making sure Cloverbuds are having fun at our monthly meetings.

With 25 Cloverbuds in my club this year, it’s a significant responsibility to be the Cloverbud Liaison. When my leader appointed me to this position, I didn’t know what to think or what I was getting myself into. I didn’t believe in myself that I could handle all those little kids, however, I was excited and ready to take on this new adventure. How many of you know what it is like to manage little kids? Hard, right? Managing little kids can be challenging, especially when they

are energetic and not always attentive. This is where I came in as Cloverbud Liaison. It was my responsibility to ensure they were engaged and well-behaved. When the Cloverbuds arrive to our meeting, they come to the front, which involves leaving their parent, which is sometimes hard for the kids.

When I was little, I never wanted to come to the front. I always wanted to stay with my mom, but my mom dragged me up to the front. I just wrapped myself around her and wouldn’t let go. It was hard for me to adjust, but after a while, I went to sit down by myself. At the first meeting as Cloverbud Liaison, I wasn’t sure of myself. Should I just stand and watch or go and greet the Cloverbuds? Then I remembered back when I was a Cloverbud. I decided to walk the kids up to the front of the room and let them pick out their carpet square. The carpet square, which I like to



FLYNN MUCHA

call the “Magic Carpet”, is used so the Cloverbuds would sit in one spot, and it also made them more comfortable. Then I thought about what else

I could do, so I tried to engage them by asking about their day and encouraging them to talk to each other. One memorable experience was when a particularly energetic Cloverbud was having a hard time, so I asked him what his favorite superhero was. We both shared the same favorite superhero. This connection helped calm him down and enabled us to become good friends. Through this position, I have developed patience, improved my leadership skills, and gained confidence in working with kids of any age. This role has opened many doors for me, including serving as a counselor at 4-H Day Camp and State 4-H Environmental Camp. I have found joy in working with young kids in 4-H, as there is never a dull moment.

(Flynn Mucha is a member of the Peach Blossom 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)

STEM club starts Sparkling Lights project to help homeless

By **WENQING GUAN** and **CAITLYN YEE**

On Aug. 15, 10 members of the MoCo Sunny STEM 4-H Club arrived at an emergency residential home in Rockville to serve warm dinner to people in need.

Club member Derek Jiang and volunteer Dr. Jiang brought some crispy fried chicken. Club members worked with charity organization staff together to set up and serve a hearty meal, ensuring that residents at the county emergency shelter were well-fed and cared for. But the club's efforts didn't stop at dinner. Club members brought a large birthday cake, ice cream, fruit, and birthday cards, a birthday banner and balloons, transforming the evening into a joyful birthday celebration. The club members' efforts brought smiles and moments of happiness to the residents, many of whom are facing significant challenges in their lives.

Montgomery County, with a population of 1.06 million people and a median household per capital income of \$99,000, is one of the wealthiest counties in the United States. However, despite this affluence, the number of households and individuals experiencing homelessness has seen a significant rise — from 581 in

2022, to 894 in 2023, representing a 54% increase, according to county data.

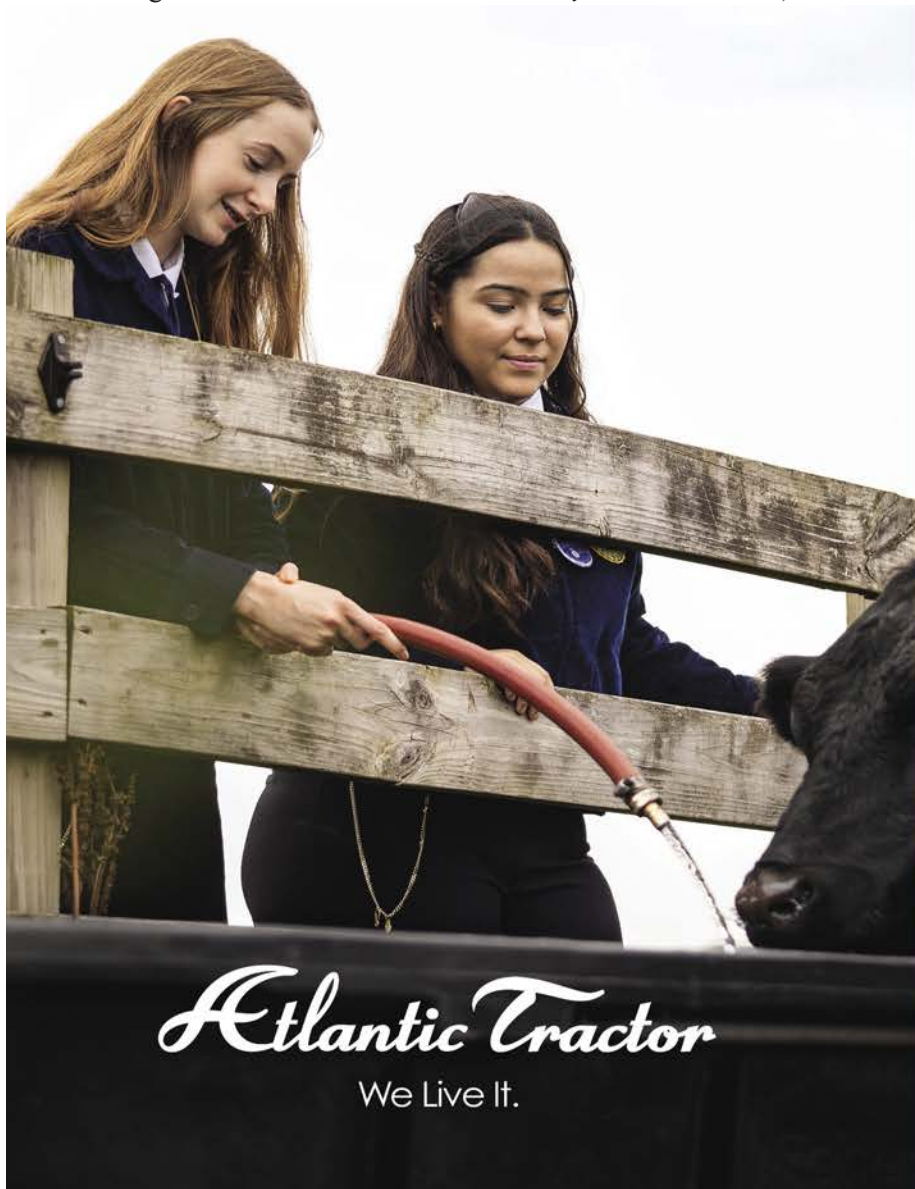
Some people who are homeless rely on shelters for support and need ongoing assistance, including meal services. To address this need, the Sunny STEM 4-H Club initiated "Sparkling Lights", the Diamond Clover Level 6 Community Service Learning Project. During the weekend, 4-H members prepared and cooked meals to the homeless in our community, and the club has provided over 250 meals since 2023. When shelter managers share their challenges with us, the club also donates supplies like boxed cereal, toothbrushes, shampoo, body wash, laundry detergent, women's underwear, toilet paper, and paper towels to emergency shelters. This project supports the Montgomery County HHS program, which works to help people experiencing homelessness.

The MoCo Sunny STEM 4H Club's commitment to making its community a better place shines through in these acts of kindness. Their dedication to bringing hope and joy to those in need is a testament to the power of community service.

(Wenqing Guan and Caitlyn Yee are members of the Montgomery County Sunny STEM 4-H club.)



MoCo Sunny STEM 4-H Club members worked with charity organization staff to set up and serve a hearty meal at an emergency residential home, part of their Sparkling Lights service project.



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Making Hay in the show ring

By MASON HAY

I have been showing livestock for the majority of my life. Starting at just 3 years old, I was showing breed sheep at the Delaware State Fair. I then got into the market side of the livestock industry when I was six years old where I started showing market lambs and market pigs.

Each year in early spring, I travel out west to purchase my animals for the upcoming season. Once I get the animals, the majority of my time is dedicated to countless hours in the barn. The animals get fed twice a day, which means a lot of early mornings. They also must be worked at least once a day and the lambs have to get a walk and a run on the treadmill as their daily workout to burn fat and build muscle.

To start our show season, we travel around to various jackpot shows most weekends all over the East coast to get our animals more comfortable in the ring before the state fair.

This past season I attended the You Gotta Believe Livestock Camp in April. This camp teaches showmen of all ages all over the country how to become better and more confident showmen. Following the camp, my

show season went into full swing starting the beginning of May. I went to three shows close to home in Delaware, two shows in Maryland and one show in West Virginia.

My last show of the jackpot circuit was in the beginning of June. I was then able to dedicate our final hours and weekends of hard work in the barn the next few weeks to prepare for our state fair, which takes place at the end of July.

This year at the 2024 Delaware State Fair I showed two pigs and two market lambs. From those four animals, I won Grand Champion Market Hog, Grand Champion Market Lamb for the second year in a row, along with Overall Showman which I earned for the third year in a row.

The hours spent in the barn and the dedication it takes to learn how to be able to exhibit each species to the best of their ability has taken time and many of years to get me where I am today. This hard work will allow me to have the ability to continue to keep earning these accomplishments for several years in the future.

(Mason Hay is a member of the Peach Blossom 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)



From left are Sunny STEM 4-H Club members, Brian Diaz, Leo Wang, Wenqing Guan, Derek Jiang and Caitlyn Yee.

STEM team places second

By CAITLYN YEE

BALTIMORE — The Montgomery County Sunny STEM 4-H Club's team earned second place at the 2024 Maryland Engineering Challenges (MEC). The MEC is a renowned project-based STEM competition that encourages high school students from across the state to delve into the fascinating world of engineering.

2024 Maryland Engineering Challenge (Cargo Ship Challenge), which spans from January to April, is designed to introduce students in grades 9 to 12 to the pivotal role engineers play in society. By connecting classroom learning with real-world engineering concepts, the MEC provides a unique platform for students to develop their comprehension and problem-solving skills.

The Montgomery County Sunny STEM 4-H Club's achievement underscores the value of such initia-

tives. Their five members engaged in hands-on, project-based learning that also integrates reading, writing, and public speaking. This science project not only strengthens students' STEM abilities but also fosters teamwork, self-confidence, and meaningful mentor relationships with engineering professionals.

The Sunny STEM 4-H Club demonstrated exceptional dedication, knowledge, and skill, earning them a well-deserved spot among the top competitors.

The team received a plaque award, and each member received award certificates and Amazon gift cards, with the prize money being generously provided by the Propeller Club of Baltimore and the Baltimore Museum of Industry.

(Caitlyn Yee is a member of the Montgomery County Sunny STEM 4-H club.)

Aquaponics activity inspires

By CAMERON STRAWDERMAN

Several Allegany County 4-H members recently participated in a summer aquaponics activity club. Aquaponics is a system that raises fish and plants together. The fish create waste and the waste is used by the plants to grow and thrive. The aquaponics program was led by 4-H educators Amy Lang and Jessica Mellon. The club was a blend between virtual and in-person meetings that met weekly through the summer. Members also had the privilege to work with University of Maryland aquaponics professors during the virtual meetings and ask questions

about their systems. After the initial virtual meeting, members had a chance to meet in person at their local Extension office. On that day, 4-Hers had an opportunity to participate in hands-on activities such as testing pH of water and making bracelets to help them remember the cycle of aquaponics. Participants left the activity with a full aquaponics kit including a ten-gallon fish tank, fish food, grow light, \$10 coupon to buy fish at a local pet store, and much more.

(Cameron Strawderman, 13, is a member of the Just Hoofin' It 4-H Horse and Pony Club in Allegany County.)

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Exchange program pairs 4-Hers from Arizona, Delaware

Groups see state, national landmarks in 6-day trip

By **JULIETTE ANGER**

As a 6-year member of the Bridgeville Mustangs 4-H Club in Sussex County, Del., I am involved with various 4-H projects including horticulture, shooting sports, foods and nutrition, woodworking, and my favorite goats.

Within 4-H, I participate in many activities within the county. One activity that has always been a great opportunity has been the Sussex County 4-H Exchange Trip Program. I have been in the Exchange Program for four years. Every two years, we exchange with a new county from a different state across the United States. My first exchange experience was with Goodhue County in Minnesota. Both exchange groups had lots of fun learning about each other's state history, lifestyles, and of course 4-H programs.

This past 4-H year, the Sussex 4-H Exchange group had several fundraisers including our annual Quarter Auction, 4-H Apparel sale, and Sussex County 4-H Cookbook sale. The monies raised provided the opportunity to host an Exchange Group from Mohave County, Ariz. We spent monthly meetings planning our schedule for six days filled with adventures to best showcase Delaware. Throughout the trip, we visited all three Delaware counties, as well as Washington D.C.

June 30 arrived and it was finally time to meet our Arizona 4-H Exchange partners. On our first day, we met our new friends in Washington D.C., where we had a private bus tour. Some of the sights we visited were the Capitol Building, Washington Monument, World War II Memorial, the White House, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Kennedy Center. The group learned a lot of U.S. History, importance of the memorials and monuments, as well as many traditions. Day two was in Sussex County, Del. We showed off our awesome beaches, which Arizona 4-Hers enjoyed immensely. Some of the group members had never been to a beach before or seen the Atlantic Ocean!

That evening was spent at the Rehoboth Beach Boardwalk, enjoying Funland's rides and games, Grotto's pizza, Thrasher's fries, ice cream, shopping and a gorgeous sunset. On the third day, we traveled to Kent County, Del., to learn more about Delaware's industries and traditions.

What is more Delaware than a chicken house? We had an informative presentation and tour of an organic chicken farm and learned Del-

aware history on a tour of The Dover Green. We then continued to Dover Downs International Speedway, "The Monster Mile". This tour provided everyone a timeline from the tracks beginning, information about all the NASCAR Cup Series, and facts about some of the famous drivers. Our daring highlight of the tour was experiencing a ride around the one-mile track with its high bank turns and narrow straightway...in my mom's SUV!

We traveled upstate to New Castle County, Del. on day four. We explored Fort Delaware — "Pea Patch Island." We learned it was used as a Union Prison Camp during the Civil War and observed how life was during that period. Later that day, we toured UDairy Creamery at the University of Delaware and enjoyed their homemade ice cream.

Closing the day, we ventured to an escape room for team-building skills and a fantastic dinner at Dead President's in Wilmington!

The next day with Arizona 4-H was Family Day, which also coincided with 4th of July. Everyone spent quality time with their Delaware host families that morning before attending a pool party and picnic with delicious blue crabs and Delmarva fried chicken while watching dazzling fireworks. We loved sharing our family traditions of food, fun, and fireworks with our new friends!

Our last day consisted of saying our goodbyes until next summer when we will travel to Mohave County, Arizona! I am excited and looking forward to visiting my exchange partner, Kym, that I have become the best of friends with, and seeing what adventures await us.

Through the 4-H Exchange Program, I have made lifelong friendships, experienced different ways of life, and traveled to places I otherwise would have never gotten the opportunity to visit. This is another advantage of being a member of 4-H — you have friends all over the United States.

I credit my experiences in 4-H with empowering me to reach my total potential in communication skills, community service, confidence, and compassion. The skills I continue to learn will allow me to succeed in my future endeavors, and the experiences I have had will be memories that last a lifetime, from a local 4-H event to all the way in Arizona!

(Juliette Anger is a member of the Bridgeville Mustangs 4-H Club in Sussex County, Del.)

Through the 4-H Exchange Program, I have made lifelong friendships, experienced different ways of life, and traveled to places I otherwise would have never gotten the opportunity to visit.



4-H youth members from Delaware and Arizona participated in the 2024 Sussex County 4-H Exchange.

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Bird feeders made in service

By NATALIE MOORE

In June, our 4-H robotics team, the Observational Orioles met at our local 4-H club, Frostburg Rise and Shine Club to make bird feeders. We were making bird feeders as our community service project. We decided to make bird feeders to give to local elderly bird watchers since the 4-H Robotics theme was The Birdwatchers.

Meg Roque, one of our robotics coaches, helped our team research what foods birds could and could not eat. Next, we picked our favorite foods on the list and decided to put them on the bird feeders. After that, we looked at different ways to make bird feeders. When we established what food we were going to put on the bird feeders and what feeders we were going to make, we started to work with the leader of our 4-H club, Mrs. Roque, to get a date to make bird feeders with our club.

We decided to do it at the Frostburg Rise and Shine Club because most of our team members are part of the club. After we made our bird feeders we gave them to nursing homes or any elderly people we knew. The reason that I decided to write about the



Natalie Moore gets help from her grandfather in making bird feeders.

bird feeders is because I enjoy 4-H robotics very much. I also wrote about 4-H robotics because I feel that many people are unaware of how many things that you can be involved with in 4-H.

(Natalie Moore is a 4-H member in Allegany County, Md.)

Rager in the ring...



The first show of the season for Sophie Rager and her calf Drama was the Delaware 4-H Spring Dairy Expo. Sophia is a member of Peach Blossom 4-H Club in Kent County Del. Showing dairy is something she really enjoys doing in 4-H.

National Conference a blast

By LIAM ABER

Recently, I attended the 4-H National Conference as a delegate for the Delaware 4-H Program. My Uncles attended the National 4-H Congress in 1999 and my brother attended it several years ago so I knew about that National 4-H event. However, I did not know anything about the National 4-H Conference when I applied to attend. For the conference, I traveled to Washington D.C. and stayed in Arlington, Va.

I really had only met one of my state group members once at a meeting to set ground rules and explain what we would be doing. In the car to D.C., I met the other member of my group. So, I was feeling a little as if I were surrounded by strangers.

When I got to the conference, it was even more intimidating with all the people there. I thought this was going to be a long few days. The first night, we had assigned dinner seating and that's when I found that 2 people, one from Iowa and one from Missouri, and we all shared a lot in common. Starting with these two people and hanging out with them and others, I met a lot of people from all over the country. And, many of us had a lot in common. When I realized this, I found the whole experience less intimidating and way more comfortable.

At the conference, you get assigned a roundtable with other people, and you work on a presentation

“This conference taught me a lot about meeting new people, more about how to work in a group, and how to have fun with things that you might not actually expect to be fun.”

for a certain agency to have ideas to try to fix issues. I got assigned to Roundtable #11 Propensity for Military Service with the Department of Defense. There was actually a person in my group from a Civil Air Patrol encampment I had attended last year.

The next two days were a full schedule with our round table discussions. My group consisted of 16 people and I made friends with all of them. For the roundtable we split into 2 groups, one for research and the other for slides. I was a part of the slides group. We had around 4 round table sessions a day, and at first I thought it would be boring, but I learned when you are working together with people the time is enjoyable and goes by quickly.

The most exciting part of my round table was that we would be presenting in the Pentagon. When we first got to the Pentagon, we went through security which was very thorough. We had to remove our belts and shoes. After

See CLUB
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Afterschool programs provide enrichment activities

By DANIELLE H., COLIN N., and GRACELYNNE K.
4-H Afterschool Students

The Delaware 4-H Program provides oversight for a 4-H Afterschool Program in the Milford School District. Funding for this grant program is provided by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers that are overseen by the State of Delaware Department of Education. There are afterschool programs occurring during the school year as well as during the summer at Milford Central Academy for grades 6th through 8th and Mispillion Elementary School for grades 1st through 5th.

The afterschool programs at both schools are held Monday through Thursday every week during the school year. The daily program includes recreation time, a snack, homework help, and a 4-H enrichment activity. The program starts immediately after the school day ends and lasts for two hours. During the summer, a 6-week session is conducted Monday through Thursday for 6 hours each day. Academic activities are provided, 4-H enrichment activities are expanded, and there are several opportunities for students to participate in interesting and fun field trips.

The students in the program like be-

ing able to learn more about the Delaware 4-H program as well as the 4 H's: Head, Heart, Hands and Health. They like having help to do their homework and really enjoy the 4-H enrichment activities that are planned each day. Arts and Crafts are a favorite activity as they allow everyone to express themselves, do crafts for themselves and others, and have fun! Students like being with their friends and being able to do things together.

They like new activities and enjoy the experiences they are having in the program. They especially like doing things by hand such as woodworking and enjoy making things to use. Recreation time is also fun and playing games like four-square is something they look forward to since it is so much fun. Students also really like being able to make exhibits to be entered in the 4-H Department at the Delaware State Fair.

The students feel the afterschool is really important for them. They feel the program teaches them life lessons that helps prepare them for the future, gives them the opportunity to learn, provides support for their school work and homework, and allows them to make new friends. We are very lucky to have these programs and look forward to doing and learning more in the future.



The afterschool programs at two schools in the Milford School District are held Monday through Thursday every week during the school year. The daily program includes recreation time, a snack, homework help, and a 4-H enrichment activity. The program starts immediately after the school day ends and lasts for two hours. Academic activities are provided, 4-H enrichment activities are expanded, and there are several opportunities for students to participate in interesting and fun field trips.

Leasing ...

Continued from Front Page

than my dad, at the fair, and I didn't realize that cows that were a little smaller could be shown. When I first walked up to her, she was a little skittish, staying close to the other cows in the pen. However, I would try so hard to win her over, during the many times that we would go to the farm to practice walking. By the end of the year, I didn't want to get a new cow, I loved Buttercup so much. But with a new year came new experiences, and I would have a new cow to show, Blush.

By now, I knew a little bit more of what to expect — the hard work showing cows required, and how much effort is put in during show days. I also

found some tips to keep my show ring clothes clean and white!

Blush was a bit different than Buttercup - she was a little smaller, but also more stubborn. If she didn't want to do something, she would do the opposite of what I wanted her to. I had dealt with my fair share of this last year with Buttercup, but it was a little harder with Blush. During one of my dairy shows, she even tried to flop down in the ring, but I managed to keep her on her feet. Needless to say, she wasn't my favorite cow, but I did learn some valuable lessons of keeping my cool in the ring.

My most recent dairy year was absolutely my most memorable one, with my favorite cow. I was assigned Norma, a Brown Swiss cow. There are only a few Brown Swiss cows at the dairy farm, and if you get a Brown Swiss cow for the year it's a big deal.

I was super excited to meet her,

and Norma was so cute! She was okay with being walked, so long as I stopped to pet her every now and then. She didn't get wild and rambunctious, like Buttercup or Blush, who were both Jerseys. She would just stand still. She was very sweet, and I wish I could have shown her for another year.

This year would also be the year that Mrs. Stephanie, one of the dairy farm owners, would start pushing for raw milk legalization in Delaware.

For those who may not know, milk sold in grocery stores is pasteurized milk. This type of milk is heated to 161 degrees F, then cooled to kill off certain bacteria. However, it also will kill off good bacteria, which is gut-healthy and has many benefits. There had been declines in the Delaware dairy industry, and Mrs. Stephanie knew that if another option of raw milk could be legalized for selling,

it could help boost income to dairy farms and maybe bring some back. It was a long, hard battle with a lot of effort put in. In July, we finally got the news: The bill passed and would be signed into law by the Governor. We were all so proud of all the work the Knutsens had put in, and there was even an ice cream party at the fair for everyone who supported the bill.

While showing dairy cows may not be for everyone, it's taught me a lot about hard work, giving it your all, and keeping your calm in high-pressure situations. The Knutsens have taught me so much, and I appreciate how much effort they put in to make sure all the 4-H club dairy members have a positive experience.

(Maggie Wieber is a member of the Peach Blossom 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)

Club ...

Continued from Page 12

waiting a little, we were taken to the conference room. We had 4 escorts surrounding us: front, sides, and behind us. We walked through the visitor's entrance at the center, which was cool. The center had a Building

in the middle, and it was like a park. We then walked to the other side, and went to the conference room. There was a panel of four people listening to our presentation, two of whom were active U.S. Army Officers. Our escorts stood at the wall. Our presentation went well, and we got good comments from the review board.

After the presentation, we left the Pentagon and went to a career fair. This career fair had representatives

from everything from the Smithsonian to the CIA talking about different internships they have available. That was pretty much the end of our work activities for the conference. Our trip was not all work as we did have time to socialize, see museums and travel around D.C.

This conference taught me a lot about meeting new people, more about how to work in a group, and how to have fun with things that you

might not actually expect to be fun. I had a great time, learned things about the military, met a lot of new people, and made some friends with whom I will probably remain in contact for many years in the future. The National 4-H Conference was definitely a 4-H memorable experience for me!

(Liam Aber is a member of the Holy Angels 4-H Club, in New Castle County, Del.)

Wicomico Home Arts Club delights in crafts, cats

By OLIVIA SZCZURKO

Each month, the Wicomico County Home Arts Club meets to create a new craft. Throughout the years, the club has made a variety of crafts, from pinecone succulents to clothespin figures (a club favorite). Crafts were also made for the holiday seasons, including a 4th of July candle, a Grinch or snowman candle, and an Easter themed yarn basket. Not only were these crafts fun to make, but they can also be used as decorations around the house, whether it's hung up on the wall or set on the dining table. Our leader, Mrs. Gladys Brookman, also made sure that the crafts that were made could be entered into one of the categories in the 4-H section of the county fair, so everyone in the club had plenty of entries.

Along with making crafts, this club also participated in a small community service event. The members

of the Home Arts club helped take care of the cats at a nearby Petsmart and raise money for the animals.

In preparation for this event, the Home Arts club created small, crinkly stuffed toys that pet owners could take and play with their animal(s). This event had three major benefits: the cats got a lot of time to play with humans, money was raised for the animals, and the members of the club had a fabulous time petting the fluffy, cute cats.

This event also helped the members work on their social skills, when talking to strangers about the Home Arts Club or anything cat related. Overall, the Wicomico County Home Arts Club is a fantastic place to make crafts, spend time with friends, and even get to pet adorable cats!

(Olivia Szczurka, 15, is a member of the Home Arts 4-H Club in Wicomico County.)



Several members of the Home Arts club, holding their Q-tip flower creations. This craft was led by one of the members of the club, Brecken Hurd.

Allegany robotics team wins second state championship

By EDWARD BUSER

On the morning of Aug. 25, the Calvary Christian Academy robotics team arrived at the State Fair for its second State Robotics Championship. The team, based out of Cresaptown, Md., consisted of Edward Buser, Elijah Toner, Zefora Marquina, and Bobby Madero. They were among six teams competing in the junior division of the finals of the Maryland State 4-H Lego Robotics Challenge.

Their first presentation was at 9:45 a.m. They presented their robot's design, attachments, code, and missions. Then they had a break, so they played games and visited the fair and enjoyed seeing many of the state's animals on display at the fair. At 12:30 p.m., they presented their service project, and told a panel of judges about how they crafted homemade bird feeders for the birds of Western Maryland.

In the afternoon, each participating team would play the robot game three

times. First, the team practiced its robot missions on practice boards and adjusted their code. At around 1 p.m., the robot games began. The robot game consisted of nine bird-themed missions that required manipulating Lego pieces and models. The Calvary attempted to complete 8 of the 9 missions and beat their personal high score with 175 points during their first round. During the competition, another team from Harford County set the high score in the state with 210 points. However, Calvary tied them on their last run with 210 points.

To close the contest, judges calculated the overall score based on the results of the robotics games and judging of the service and technical projects. They called the teams to receive their awards, and Calvary was the final team called and were awarded their second State Championship in a row!

(Edward Buser is a member of Allegany County 4-H.)



The Calvary Christian Academy robotics team based out of Cresaptown, Md., consisted of Edward Buser, Elijah Toner, Zefora Marquina, and Bobby Madero.

Families join in learning activities during Bee Night

By LUCY SHERRIER

On June 10, the Sherrier Family hosted a bee night at their house for the Paws and Claws Cub of Harford County, Md. Six families attended. The Sherrier Family was chosen to host this event by their 4-H club leader Ms. Lisa Andrews, because the daughter and father, Lucy and George, are both beekeepers.

There were many activities held that evening. The main activity was

painting three bee boxes that were given to the club. These boxes were auctioned off at the Eastern Apicultural Society Conference in August. The money raised from selling the bee boxes will go to the Paws and Claws Club. The boxes were painted with a honeycomb and 4-H theme. The second activity was teaching the children about the differences between Honeybees and Mason bees. Club leader Andrews then taught the children how to create Mason bee hotels.

The bee hotels were constructed from recycled Gatorade bottles and rolled paper. Lastly, the third activity was touring the Sherriers' bee shed. The club members learned about different beekeeping equipment and how honey is extracted from the comb. Many members took turns wearing Lucy's half suit and inspected the hives with George. Others toured the bee garden which includes wildflowers, pumpkins, squash and blackberries. They also visited the Sherriers' chickens

and explored their vegetable garden.

The evening concluded with snacks and free play on the trampoline and swing set. Overall, this was a successful and exciting event for the Paws and Claws Club. The children and adults learned interesting information about beekeeping, painted bee boxes, and constructed bee hotels.

(Lucy Sherrier, 12, is a member of the Paws and Claws 4-H Club in Harford County, Md.)

Team eclipses last year's experience at state event

By ANNA WHITE

This year's theme for the Maryland state robotics competition was Maryland Birds. There are 3 parts to the competition. We had to conduct a technical presentation, prepare a service project and presentation, and do the robotics tasks.

Our team consisted of Jorydn Railsback, Rylee Case, Samantha Morrow, Klara Case, Gavin Calrin, Anna White, Kolton Railsback, and Evah Case. Half of our team competed last year and half were brand new members.

We had a really good time this year, maybe even better than last year! Our team, The Bay Brigade Bird Edition, placed 1st in the Senior Category.

We chose to do our service project at Kinder Farm Park. We set up an information booth at the park and worked with the rangers. We educated the public with various bird facts, like "Ravens are really large crows and crows live on every continent except for Antarctica." We handed out flyers on how to feed the birds and build bird houses. We gave away window clings, so that birds can see them on windows and won't fly into the window.

We spoke about Lights Out Bal-

timore that is an organization that works to rescue injured birds and encourages the public to turn out unnecessary lights during migration season.

During the event, we presented to the judges a tech talk. It was a closed room meeting to discuss the hows, whys, and coding of our robot. I can't disclose much, because it was top secret!

We started building our robot in June and working on programming the missions. We tried out several body styles before we landed on Buddy Junior. Buddy Junior had three wheels and was slanted. This gave our team the ability to maneuver well for high and low obstacles and easily add attachments. Our team worked well on coding the missions and we were able to figure out just about all of them.

Our team went on a field trip to our sponsor's office, Realm One. We told them what we worked on and they offered feedback. We practiced our skit and tech talk. They presented us with our t-shirts. We shared our ideas and drawings and the graphic designer turned them into our wonderful t-shirts! We got to play games and have snacks as well. It was sensational!

At the competition, we got to do



The Bay Brigade Bird Edition robotics team consisted of Jorydn Railsback, Rylee Case, Samantha Morrow, Klara Case, Gavin Calrin, Anna White, Kolton Railsback, and Evah Case. Half of our team competed last year and half were brand new members.

our skit for the judges. Our skit had a reporter, Peregrine Falcon, interview the team of super heroes who protect, defend, help and save our Maryland Birds! We had so much fun.

I highly recommend joining a team

next year or coming out to watch the competition.

(Anna White is a member of the Friendship Outdoor Skills Club in Anne Arundel County, Md.)

Aquaponics club great for science

By SYLVY KOCH

When my mom told me about the aquaponics club, I was so excited. I was already in a 4-H leadership club and a 4-H horse club which are both super fun. At the time I had had a guppy tank up and running for several years, so by then I knew about aquariums and loved them.

This was a great club for kids who like science. Here are some things I learned in the aquaponics club. Aquaponics is a system with a fish tank and a tub of plants. In aquaponics, bacteria break the fish waste down into nutrients. The plants use those nutrients, so they don't need soil. In some systems, you eat both the plants and the fish. In my system the fish are pets, and we eat the plants.

When I first got the fish, the water had no nutrients. We used a chemical test kit to see how much ammonia, nitrite and nitrate was in the water. We also tested the pH. As time went on and I added more fish, the nutrients grew and grew. Soon I could put the plants



"My aquaponics system is doing well," said Sylvvy Koch. "I recently added a goldfish to my tank, and I'm growing basil and mint."

in. I entered a display about my aquaponics project in the Allegany County Fair and won first place.

My aquaponics system is doing well. I recently added a goldfish to my tank, and I'm growing basil and mint.

I loved this 4-H project. It gave me a new opportunity. I thought

this was a very fun experience. I hope there is an aquaponics club next year, so other kids can do it too.

(Sylvvy Koch, 11, is a student at Braddock Middle School and is a member of the 4-H Aquaponics Club in Allegany County, Md.)

'4-H was a big breakthrough'

By CHARLOTTE CARROLL

I am in Goat Club, and it's my first year. My goats weren't ready to show yet, so I did an indoor photography unit instead. I took four pictures, one was called Passing View, another Old House, Pretty House, Sky Dreams, and Riding Glory. I couldn't wait until the judging finished. When it finally did, I raced in and saw that one of my pictures (Riding Glory) had won first place! Old House, Pretty House got third, and the other two got participation. I was amazed! I had never gotten first in anything before! It felt great! When I took them home, I put them up on a cabinet where everyone could see them. 4-H was a big breakthrough for me. I encourage anyone who loves animals, or just likes to take pictures, make place settings, or grow things, I would advise 4-H. For anyone over eighteen who likes to do that kind of stuff, there is an Open class. So again, if you have the time in your schedule, I would join 4-H.

(Charlotte Carroll, 10, is a junior 4-H member in Queen Anne's County, Md.)

Del. State Fair an ‘amazing time’ filled with activities, competitions

By LILLIE BRADLEY

I had an amazing time this year at the Delaware State Fair. Surprisingly, my time at the fair started before it even began!

I dropped off my entries for the 4-H building and helped set up the building by constructing the displays and stapling paper to them so that all of the amazing entries that 4-Hers across Delaware made could be displayed beautifully.

Throughout the fair, I was able to see a ton of familiar faces, some that I hadn't seen since last year, which is why the fair is so special to me. I was able to be a hostess at the 4-H building twice; one time with my cousin and the other with one of my friends.

I participated in the 4-H Demonstration Contest with my cousin, Ella, and we won first place and the premium award for our demonstration entitled “Napkin Folding 2.0.”

We demonstrated how to properly fold napkins for different events. I also was able to participate in the 4-H Wood Science and Clothing Judging Contests at the fair.

I placed 7th in Wood Science and 11th

in Clothing.

I had a blast learning about them and being able to express my knowledge about these specific categories.

While I spent the majority of my time in the 4-H building, I also got to walk around the fair and enjoy everything it had to offer like livestock, the marketplace, and even enjoy fundraising contests like The Pig Kissing Contest.

I also got to work the Delaware Farm Bureau Booth with the Sussex County 4-H Leaders. On the last day of the fair, we had our annual 4-H awards ceremony where I won The Future Blue Hen Award for my participation in 4-H throughout the fair.

After the fair had ended, I helped take down the 4-H building which included taking down the displays and sorting through all of the 4-H entries.

It was great to see it through from the set up to the take-down. Overall, I had an amazing time at the State Fair and made many new memories all thanks to 4-H!

(Lillie Bradley is a member of the Bridgeville Mustangs 4-H Club in Sussex County, Del.)



Lillie Bradley and Ella Marquez teamed up as 4-H Demonstration Contest Winners at the 2024 Delaware State Fair.

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4-H Influencers: The Shortall family's volunteer legacy

An interview with Maryland State Fair 4-H Flower Department Superintendents Glenn and Theresa Shortall and 4-H volunteer Joey Shortall

By CAITLYN YEE

Q. Mr. Shortall, It was very nice to meet you and your family at the fair entry day. Please share your role within the 4-H program at the 2024 Maryland State Fair and your primary responsibilities at the indoor exhibition building.

A. Mr. Glenn Shortall introduced himself as superintendent, having worked in the 4-H Horticulture Department for the Maryland State Fair for 12 years. He stated that as the superintendent of the Horticulture Department at the 4-H indoor exhibition building, the primary responsibilities would likely include organizing and overseeing exhibits, which manage the setup, display, and arrangement of horticulture exhibits to ensure they meet the fair's standards. His role also includes assigning space for different types of plants, flowers, and other horticultural entries.

Mr. and Mrs. Shortall manage and receive participant entries, ensuring they are properly labeled and categorized. Superintendents oversee the horticulture judging process, ensuring that it is conducted fairly and impartially according to the State Fair's established criteria. Their expertise is crucial in upholding the integrity and high standards of the horticulture competition. Mr. Shortall's responsibilities ensure that the 4-H horticulture section of the Maryland State Fair is a well-organized, educational, and enjoyable experience for all participants and visitors.

Q. How did you become involved with 4-H, and what motivated you to volunteer or work in this capacity?

A. Mr. Shortall mentioned that he joined 4-H at 15 in 1965.

Mrs. Theresa Shortall shared that she became a member of 4-H in 1958 when she was nine years old.

Mr. and Mrs. Shortall both are graduates of the University of Maryland, College Park. Over the years, both have taken on various roles, including University of Maryland Extension Agents, University of Maryland Extension 4-H volunteers, county 4-H program leaders, county horticulture competition judges, and horticulture business owners, among others. Within the 4-H community, Mr. and Mrs. Shortall have found great joy in helping youth and other volunteers learn and grow through 4-H programs. In particular, Mr. Shortall has coached the Cecil County Horticulture Judging team to win



Montgomery County 4-Her Caitlyn Yee, standing left, joins longtime 4-H volunteers, Glenn Shortall, standing right, Theresa Shortall and Joey Shortall at the Maryland State Fair.

multiple state and national awards. These successes have inspired and encouraged many 4-H members to pursue college degrees and find their passion in related industries.

His motivation to volunteer and work in this capacity comes from his positive experiences in 4-H and the personal connections he made through the program. In fact, he met his beautiful wife, Theresa, through 4-H activities over 40 years ago when they were both volunteering. These experiences have inspired him to continue giving back to the organization that has played such a significant role in his life while also inspiring the next generation of leaders in horticulture and community service.

Not only were Mr. and Mrs. Shortall actively involved with the 4-H programs, but their dedication also inspired their family members. Their sister, brother-in-law, and their son, Mr. Joey Shortall, have all engaged as volunteers with the 4-H program, as well as with the county and Maryland State Fairs.

Mr. Joey Shortall joined 4-H at the age of seven. Joey shared that he grew up in a supportive family environment surrounded by vibrant flowers and plants. He enjoyed reading his mom's horticulture books and appreciated the nurturing atmosphere that fostered his love for horticulture. By the time he was 16, he had earned the National Award for Artistic Arrangement at the National Junior Horticulture Association Convention

for his "Glorious Gardens" flower display. Additionally, he received other National Awards showcasing his expertise in identifying over 200 plant species in a very short time. He observed how his parents positively contributed to 4-H and the community. Inspired by their example, he followed in their footsteps by volunteering as a judge for Horticulture programs, as well as contributing to 4-H programs. Even after graduating from the University of Maryland, College Park, and working as a music educator, he likes to share his knowledge and experience to help the 4-H'ers to learn and to grow. He continues to stay actively involved in the 4-H community.

Q. What do you enjoy most about your role, and what aspects do you find most rewarding?

A. Mr. and Mrs. Shortall enjoy the opportunity to educate 4-H'ers and young people interested in flowers and plants. They share their passion for horticulture and help them develop their skills and knowledge. They find it most rewarding to see the growth and achievements of the 4-H members they mentor, especially when they excel in competitions and pursue their interests further.

Q. Do you have any memorable experiences or stories from your time volunteering or working here that you would like to share?

A. Mr. Glen Shortall shared a memorable experience of witnessing the excitement on the faces of kids

during horticulture judging at Cecil County. He fondly recalled his role as a dedicated program leader and coach for the Cecil County Horticulture Judging team, where he not only led and coached but also recruited additional coaches for each specialized area of the event, such as ornamental plants, fruits, and vegetables. Under their leadership and guidance, the team grew significantly from just two to over 25 kids and actively contributed to local, state, and national horticulture programs for many years.

Mrs. Theresa Shortall reflected on the incredible support she observed from the community for the 4-H programs, which she found deeply inspiring and rewarding.

Q. What advice would you give to someone interested in volunteering or working in a role similar to yours?

A. Mrs. Shortall advises anyone interested in volunteering or working in the 4-H program to start by getting involved in local 4-H activities and events to understand the organization's values and goals. Building relationships with other volunteers and staff members is key, as it provides valuable support and learning opportunities. She emphasizes the importance of being patient, organized, and willing to learn, as working with youth and managing events requires careful planning and adaptability. She also recommends finding a specific area of interest, like horticulture, and gaining expertise in that field to effectively mentor and inspire young participants. Above all, Mr. and Mrs. Shortall suggest embracing the experience with an open heart and a genuine desire to help youth learn and grow, as these roles are deeply rewarding and impactful.

Q. What advice would you give to 4-H members about the life skills they should learn that will benefit their future?

A. Mrs. Shortall suggested that learning horticulture can significantly enhance daily life by making it more colorful, beautiful, and enjoyable. She believes these skills not only promote a connection with nature but also foster patience, responsibility, and creativity. Additionally, she emphasized the importance of developing strong public speaking skills. Regardless of the career path one chooses, effective communication is essential for success. Whether educating others, delivering job reports, or collaborating with colleagues, communicating clearly and confidently is invaluable.

Q. How do you think 4-H members volunteering at the 4-H indoor exhi-

World, 4-H much clearer with new glasses

By **CHANCE WRIGHT**

Have you ever lost your glasses? I have and it's embarrassing when you find them sitting on your nose after you searched everywhere. I felt like I was blind but then I could see.

I'm 10 years old and a 5-year member of the Peach Blossom 4-H club. This was the introduction to my public speech this year. I chose the topic of getting new glasses because it was a big moment in my life.

As I started fourth grade, I struggled to see the board. My eye doctor

confirmed that I needed eyeglasses. Once I got them, I was amazed at how many things I couldn't see before. Then I started wondering what else I've been missing.

As a Cloverbud, I was blind to 4-H. I was shy and didn't like our large club meetings. As I got older, I started to enjoy projects such as sheep and archery. I've worked hard on my showmanship skills while showing market lambs and my new glasses helped me improve my archery shot. My woodworking project is a hobby I enjoy with my dad while my hor-

ticulture project is time well spent with my mom in my garden and at my grandparent's produce business.

Let me ask you, "What are you blind to?" Perhaps a new pair of glasses or lens could help you see better. My view changed by giving 4-H an honest chance. I was blind but now I see. The answer was right in front of my eyes all along.

(Chance Wright is a member of the Peach Blossom 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)



Morgan Rostien participates in many 4-H activities, but said she likes raising and showing goats the most.

'You learn so much' in Wood Science Contest

By **GABRIELLE FLETCHER**

Have you ever wondered what it is like to participate in the 4-H Wood Science Judging Contest? Or to be able to go to the Delaware State Fair and do the State judging level after placing in top 10 for the county judging level? Well, thanks to Delaware 4-H and my dad helping me study and supervising me as I am building all of my woodworking projects for the State Fair, I was able to do what I love and do both. I love to help my dad build things for our house and this is what created the interest in me to do the Wood Science Judging Contest in my county. I started competing in this judging contest in the 2021-22 4-H year and have done it every 4-H year since then. I enjoy it and like learning new things that have to do with woodworking.

Before I was able to participate in the State Wood Science Judging Contest, I had to compete at the county level. I used the training guide to prepare and study and learned about different types of woods that are used, how to identify different woodworking tools, fasteners, and joints, safety measures to follow when doing woodworking, and woodworking glossary terms. I also developed skills to judge woodworking items for workmanship.

At the county contest, I placed fourth in 2022 and have placed first for the last two years. This allowed me to compete at the state level contest each year. My hard work in preparing for this contest allowed me to place in the state level contest all three years earning ninth place in 2022, fourth place in 2023, and in 2024, I placed second overall.

One of the advantages of doing the 4-H Wood Science Judging Contest is that you learn so much about woodworking. I strongly encourage everyone to give it a try by studying the material, do the best that you can, and believe in yourself!

(Gabrielle Fletcher is a member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club in Kent County Del.)



Gabrielle Fletcher said she loves helping her dad build things, which created the interest to do the Wood Science Judging Contest in Kent county.

Hard work pays off in show ring

By **MORGAN ROSTIEN**

I have been a member of 4-H for four years and I enjoy being in the Westville 4-H Club. I participate in many 4-H activities, but the thing I like the most is raising and showing goats. I have shown at the Delaware State Fair, many local county 4-H fairs, and I show in the Mid-Atlantic Buckle Series.

By being in 4-H and being involved in showing livestock, I have learned and accomplished many things. I can tell you that from the first day that I walked into the show ring to now, I have improved and gained confidence in myself. I remember the first day I walked in the show ring. I was so nervous I couldn't even set up my goat correctly.

But I kept working at it and learning. Hard work and determination does pay off as I finally won my first Grand Champion ribbon in 2022 at the Delaware State Fair. I was so proud of myself and realized that I could go anywhere and do a good job at whatever I chose.

(Morgan Rostien is a member of the Westville 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)

Legacy ...

Continued from Page 17

Leadership building helps them to grow?

A. Mrs. Shortall believes volunteering at the 4-H indoor exhibition building offers valuable opportunities for personal and professional growth. It helps 4-H members develop important skills such as

leadership, organization, and time management. Collaborating with other volunteers also fosters strong communication and teamwork abilities, which are crucial for any career. Additionally, the hands-on experience can boost 4-H members' confidence and enhance their public speaking skills, which are essential for their future success.

Q. What impact do you believe your work has on the 4-H program and its participants?

A. They believe that although 4-H has agriculture as its heart, it has evolved to incorporate so many different aspects and projects such as public speaking, robotics, leadership development, and fine arts. In judging and promoting horticulture and interest in flowers they would be able to help youth explore and find new interests.

(Caitlyn Yee is a member of the Montgomery County Sunny STEM 4-H club.)

State 4-H Camp 'by far' the favorite of year's activities

By EPHRAIM YOUREK

Another 4-H year went by way too fast! I participated in many 4-H activities, but by far my favorite was Delaware 4-H State Camp.

At camp, we do many activities, like shooting archery, spending time with friends, and having a nightly council circle or campfire.

State camp is a weeklong overnight camp that is the best camp ever. Every year I count down from months to weeks, to days waiting for the moment to hop on a bus and head over

to Camp Barnes. I have made many friends at state camp, many who I'm sure will be lifelong friends. This year I was a third-year camper, and I am a part of the Thunderbirds People Group.

There are 4 people groups, Moon and Stars, Thunderbirds, Bears, and Turtles. There is also a fifth group that is made up of counselors, and they are called Bigfeet.

On Monday I arrived at camp and found my cabin. I set up my blankets and went outside to see my friends. On Monday night, New Voices, or leaders

of our groups were chosen, along with Echoes who are the "Vice-leaders" of our people group.

On Tuesday it was First Year night at council circle so all of the first year campers went up on the first row of benches. Usually, they sit on the back benches. On Wednesday we had a dance and a camp alumni member was our DJ. He played the best songs, and at the end, there was a slow dance.

On Thursday, there was talent night, so each group chose one of their people to do a talent challenge, and the other groups tried to replicate

it. In the turtles, their talent was a first-year camper auctioneering.

On Friday we did our last night traditions, and sadly watched the week come to an end. Saturday morning we got up bright and early and packed up, ready to go back home.

State camp is an awesome experience and I cannot wait until next year to attend again!

(Ephraim Yourek is a member of the STEAMrollers 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)



For the last couple of years, Talbot County 4-Her Jack Chapple has volunteered to operate the Dime Pitch at the county fairs. "I consider myself a Dime Pitch Expert," he says.

Diamond Clover goes purple

EASTON, Md. — Jack Chapple, a junior at Easton High School and a member of the Talbot County 4-H Skipjacks Club in Easton, Md., is in the process of completing his Level Six Diamond Clover 4-H project — "Tackling Drug and Alcohol Education and Awareness." Jack has teamed up with two local organizations, Talbot Goes Purple and Grace Street Recovery, which are promoting substance abuse awareness and also working with the addiction and recovery community.

This summer, Jack completed a portion of his project for Talbot Goes Purple. He created a game that can be used safely at county fairs, school events, and other educational activities about substance abuse. The Drug Information Roulette Wheel portion of his project included working with his father to design the game, researching drug and alcohol information, and raising funds for materials

through community donations and outreach. The game was first used at Easton's National Night Out in August 2024 and even got a mention on WBAL-TV 11's website.

Jack has really enjoyed working on his project and said, "I learned so much about substance abuse, treatment, and recovery. I also learned a lot about myself." He added, "This project opened my eyes to real-world issues that affect many families." Through his work, Jack discovered the complexities of addiction, noting, "I got to dive into the science behind it, understand its psychological and social impacts, and explore different recovery methods." Jack said he will continue to stay active in educating his peers and children about the dangers of drug and alcohol use.

(Jack Chapple is a member of the Talbot County 4-H Skipjacks Club in Talbot County, Md.)



Members of the Hollymount 4-H Club in Sussex County Delaware look forward to providing community service hours annually to help maintain Conley's Chapel Cemetery in Lewes, Del.

Club cleans up cemetery

By KEIRA FLETCHER

Sussex County, Delaware's Hollymount 4-H Club has been partners with Conley's Chapel in Lewes and, for several years, has helped out by cleaning its cemetery.

This cemetery clean-up occurs twice a year — prior to winter holidays, and again in springtime. The club picks up any old, faded or tarnished decorations, with respect to the families. Participants also help out by cleaning up anything resembling trash and tidying up memorials.

In the winter this is done to pay respects to the families by preparing the cemetery for the holiday season and the colder months ahead. Likewise, in the spring, club members make room for fresh flowers as well as new decoration and color to be brought into the space.

During the spring cleaning, 4-H members also replace flags on veter-

ans' graves. This part is always a favorite for the club members because they get to go around and acknowledge all of the many veterans of Conley's Cemetery, learning about each one of their stories in the process. It's incredible how many people dedicated their lives to serve, some even dating back to the Civil War.

This beautiful, small cemetery is hundreds of years old, and holds more than 250 gravestones, each with their own story to tell.

There is so much to learn, simply by acknowledging those that have passed. Although the Hollymount 4-H Club members are helping out by participating in this cemetery clean-up, they are getting just as much out of it by serving the community.

(Keira Fletcher is a member of the Hollymount 4-H Club in Sussex County Del.)

Exchange program with Montana 4-H 'awesome'

By WESTON WILLIAMS

When meeting new people, sometimes people's first instinct is to notice how they differ from themselves, and sometimes, they see differences as a bad thing; but sometimes, these differences help us appreciate how you do not need to be the same to get along.

In 2023, I traveled to Montana as part of a Delaware 4-H Kent County 4-H Exchange program. We had hosted youth from this state the summer before, and got to know the people we would be staying with. Now that it was our turn to travel, it was an exciting adventure for us. While it has been just over a year since then, I can still remember some of the exciting things we did together, and certainly remember the awesome people who showed us around their home state.

One of the first things we did after getting settled in was having some fun together at a local lake. While I myself did not get in because I did not want to get too cold, it was a nice chance to

relax and see how everyone got along together. The next day, we got a tour of a local fish hatchery, which was awesome to see. We even got to feed some of the fish and see how everything worked up close. After that, we got to see a wind farm that provided clean power to the surrounding area. The next day, we took a long drive to Yellowstone Park. This was my second time there, but it was just as beautiful as the first. We stayed at an amazing cabin that night, but not before we got the chance to see an amazing rodeo performance. As a photographer, I got some really good pictures, and it was a really exciting experience.

The next day, we went back into Yellowstone and saw Old Faithful erupt. It was really cool to see all the natural wonders that the park has to offer. We also saw the Grand Prismatic Hot Springs, which were really beautiful.

As cool as Yellowstone Park was, it is important to remember that Montana holds much more than just that.

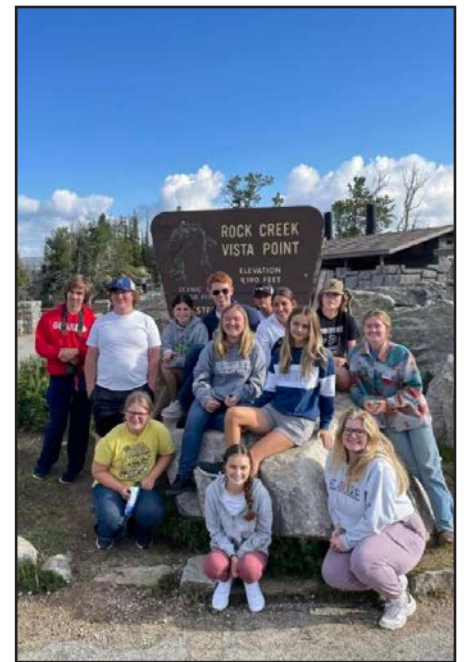
The next day we went whitewater rafting. This was a good chance to get even closer to the wonderful people that were hosting us, as we had to work together to help steer the boat.

That night, we saw pig races, where pigs were let out of their cages and raced to food on the other side of the track. I just want to mention that this was done in a very humane way and that the pigs raced solely of their own volition, and the pigs placing had no effect on how they were treated.

The next day, we went to the airport, and on the flight home we had a chance to reflect on what we had done on the trip.

It was awesome to see all the activities the people in Montana could enjoy, and I encourage everyone in 4-H to enroll in their local exchange program, if possible, to have this same great experience.

(Weston Williams is a member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)



4-H members from Delaware 4-H and Montana 4-H gather at Rock Creek Vista Point during the 4-H Exchange Program.

Moreno's 'United We Grow' project to aid racers a success

By GUINEVERE COCKEY

Ever since she was young, Claire Moreno of Wicomico County 4-H has volunteered to help at races for people of different abilities.

"Watching them for so many years is part of what inspired me to start running," she said.

Now a senior in high school, Claire

runs as a wingman with TEAM 360 — the non-profit organization that holds the races — as often as she can.

Naturally, Claire chose to use her Diamond Clover Level 6 project to do even more for TEAM 360. The goal of Claire's project — named "United We Grow" — was to fundraise for one new jogger chair which allows the wingman to push the athletes.

Claire set to work writing letters and emails and giving presentations to local civic groups, foundations, and businesses.

Claire even applied for a few grants. She went to events with two trifold posters spoke about how the community "can be made more welcoming and accessible."

After only seven months of fund-

raising, Claire made enough money to buy not only one, but four joggers.

Claire has not only exceeded her goal but also made it possible for four more athletes and wingmen to experience something special.

(Guinevere Cockey is a 4-H member in Wicomico County, Md.)

Ready to move up in contest

By AUSTIN COVERDALE

WOW! All these years of practice, determination and hard work have paid off. I have participated in the Delaware 4-H Compact Lawn Tractor Driving Contest for the past six years.

This contest requires me to identify parts of a mower, answer questions about safety, troubleshooting issues of a mower, and to drive a compact lawn tractor on a course. Some parts I have needed to know are the muffler, tire tube, and oil filter. The safety questions are related to pre-riding/mowing, height of grass, and about mower oil. The mower troubleshooting issues could be identifying a flat tire, seeing something lodged in the deck, a gas cap missing, and any other issue you might see when looking at the lawn mower.

Shew! After completing all these sections of the contest, I now move on to driving the lawn tractor on

the course. While driving, I had to weave in and out of blocks set up on the course, drive around a half circle curve which is like the edge of a flower bed, drive between two sets of cones until you reach the block which simulates something in the grass while you are mowing, stop, continue on and pull up to the flag, and back into an area which simulates a shed. Once in this area, you must put the mower in park and throw your hands up to signal you are finished.

My preparation and hard work definitely paid off this year as I placed third in this 4-H contest at the Delaware State Fair! Now that I am 14 years old, I am excited to be able to try the 4-H Tractor Driving Contest next year with the big tractor. I cannot wait!

(Austin Coverdale is a member of the Westville 4-H Club in Kent County, Del.)



Austin Coverdale drives around a half circle curve as part of the Delaware 4-H Compact Lawn Tractor Driving Contest at the Delaware State Fair.



Snapshots in 4-H



Jacob Burrows, a Kent County 4-H Peach Blossom Club member, participated in the 2024 Dairy Show at the Delaware State Fair. He is involved in several 4-H project areas, but said working with his cow is his favorite activity.



Westville 4-H Club member Gracie Satterfield works on her club's County Trim-A-Tree project, one of many projects 4-H offers that she looks forward to each year.



Kaitlyn Johnson, member of the Country Clovers 4-H Club in Sussex County, participated in the Delaware 4-H State Tractor Driving Contest this year held during the Delaware State Fair. This was her 2nd year to do his event and she placed 2nd in the Senior division.



During the 2024 Delaware State Fair, Matthew Johnson of the Country Clovers 4-H Club in Sussex County, participated in the Conservation Box exhibit that is sponsored by the Delaware Association of Conservation Districts. The theme this year was "Renewable Energy for a Suitable Future." "I decorated my display box with information about solar power and wind power," Johnson said. "I explained how both types of energy work and how they can be beneficial. Inside my box I had a model of a house with solar panels and I had two different types of wind turbines for wind energy. I received 3rd place for my display for my age division. I enjoyed making my display and look forward to next year."



Cypress Hands and Hearts 4-H Club in Sussex County, Del., enjoys finding ways to volunteer in their community to make a difference. They do a lot of different community service projects as a 4-H club for various people and organizations. The service project included shopping as a group for their Adopt a Family Program and they made Chemo Care bags to help individuals going through difficult times with cancer.



At the Delaware 4-H Military Youth Day Camp, youth got to experience many different activities. The campers discovered facts about agriculture and animals that work with agriculture. In this photo, you can see the campers are in the henhouse collecting eggs and sorting them out into cartons. The campers got to see and pet chickens while also learning about different types of chickens and the types of eggs they lay. While 4-H may have learning involved, we like to do hands-on activities so what the campers learn sticks with them as they get older.
Submitted by Adriona O'Neal, New Castle County Camp Counselor Club member



Carleigh Campbell and her 4-H friends in the Westville 4-H Club in Kent County, Del., visit Dover Place Assisted Living monthly. In December, they shared treats room-to-room, spreading a little Christmas spirit and cheer to the residents.



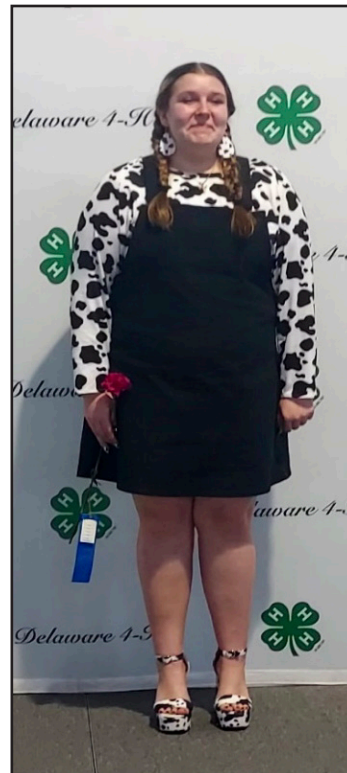
During the recent Kent County Delaware 4-H Junior Leader Retreat to prepare for Younger Member Weekend, Kent County 4-H Junior Council and Westville 4-H Club member Carter Benini, left, participated in a service-learning activity for the SPCA. 4-H members made dog toys from old t-shirts for dogs at the SPCA.



Frederick Patrick of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club in Kent County makes crafts that he can enter in the Delaware State Fair 4-H Department. He said he really enjoys making different crafts as it keeps him busy and allows him to be creative.



Tyler Bell of the Midstate 4-H Club shows his market goat project at the Delaware State Fair. He has been showing goats for five years and worked very hard by feeding and exercising his goat, "Small Block" regularly.



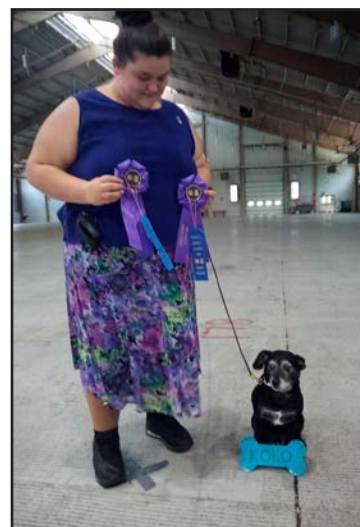
Emma Patrick participated in the Kent County 4-H Clothing Showcase Contest. This is her 4th year participating in this event. She is a member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club. When she first started sewing, she thought it was going to be very easy. But as she continued to sew and use different fabrics, she learned that not all fabrics are easy to sew on. She encourages more people to learn to sew and participate in the 4-H Clothing Showcase. She also entered her garment in the 4-H Department at the Delaware State Fair.



Jamie Rowland, age 13, is a member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club. He competed in two intermediate divisions at the 2024 Delaware State Fair State 4-H Archery competition. Jamie placed first in recurve and fifth in bare-bow. He has been participating in the 4-H archery project for over 5 years and greatly enjoys it.



At the 4-H Counselor Training Camp in New Castle County, Del., Counselors in Training learned how to effectively teach concepts and skills to campers. In this case, using visual and auditory cues, Manav Suresh, C-3 4-H Club, demonstrates the basics of how to create a paper airplane by showing step-by-step folding techniques while verbally explaining the process, ensuring the campers understood both through observation and listening.



Kaya Kriner, 16, a member of the Carroll County 4-H Dog Club, won first place and Champion in Rally and Obedience with her dog Koko at this year Carroll County 4-H/FFA Fair.



Westville 4-H Club member Jayden Hutson presents her demonstration at the Delaware State Fair on Harry's Forever Home. Harry is Hutson's mom's classroom rabbit that her family takes care of on weekends, holidays and in the summer. Hutson won a blue ribbon and the premium for my demonstration.



Lyla Hughes, Peach Blossom 4-H Club member in Kent County Del., shows her pig Buddy at the Delaware State Fair. This is one of her favorite activities to do in 4-H each year.



At New Castle County Cloverbud Day Camp, campers participated in many different classes including STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). In this class, they made paper airplanes, experimented with the egg drop challenge, and made bubbles. Photo submitted by Brogan Raughley Delaware 4-H member, Camp Counselor Club, Porter Gang 4-H Club, and State Teen Council Representative.



Evan Callaway, 9, a member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club in Kent County, Del., participates in the 4-H State Compact Lawn Tractor Driving Contest at The Delaware State Fair. This was his second year in this event and he said he felt more confident driving the course and was able to identify more equipment parts this year. He looks forward to participating in this 4-H contest each year.



Hadleigh Gissy, 4-H member in the Peach Blossom 4-H club in Kent County, Del., is participating in the 4-H shooting sports project for her second year. She enjoys shooting her compound bow at home and in 4-H shooting sports contests.



Kent County 4-H Peach Blossom member Lillian Burrows learns how to wash her cow in preparation for the Delaware 4-H Cow Camp. She has participated in the camp for two years and says it is a great learning experience.



12 year-old Savanna Starke, member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club in Kent County Delaware, participated in the "Wreaths Across America" program with her 4-H club. She and her sister enjoyed putting wreaths on the graves at Barrett's Chapel Cemetery for all the service members. She especially cherished being able to put a wreath on her great grandfather's grave site, too.



Emily Willey, a 9-year old member of the Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club, participates in the Kent County Delaware 4-H Favorite Foods Contest. She was the winner of the Beginner-Dessert category. She baked a Cinnamon Roll Bundt Cake. "I was so excited to enter this contest with one of my favorite cakes to bake!" Emily said, adding she is already looking for recipes to enter in the contest again next year.



James Patrick from Harrington Sunshine 4-H Club in Kent County, Del., is working on the club's litter barrel for the Kent County 4-H community service contest. The club decorated the barrel to be put by the Harrington Police Station hoping people would put trash in it and not litter on the ground. The litter barrel's theme was "Spring into Action - Don't Litter." James really enjoys doing different activities for his community.



Kenedy Barrett, president of Westville 4-H Club in Kent County Del., helps paint the club's yearly Litter Barrel project. She said this event is one of her favorite projects in 4-H and appears around earth day every year. The project helps to promote anti-pollution and influence ways to better our world!

The Carroll County 4-H and FFA Fair held it's Small Engine Contest and Lawn Tractor Contest on Friday, July 26. The Senior division, top photo, from left, is Lucas Barnett, Champion in lawn tractor, fourth in small engine; Mich Krispin, Champion in small engine and fourth in lawn tractor; Gavin Kidwell, Reserve Champion in Lawn tractor and third in small engine; Jacob Braun, Reserve Champion in small engine and third in lawn tractor; with Superintendent Jason Ridinger.



The Intermediate division, middle photo, from left is Superintendent Jason Ridinger; Trent Rill, Champion in small engine and Reserve Champion in lawn tractor; Hope Ridinger, fourth in small engine and third in lawn tractor; Logan Barnett, Reserve Champion in small engine and fourth in lawn tractor and seated on the Lawn Tractor is Philomena Daley, third in small engine and Champion in lawn tractor.



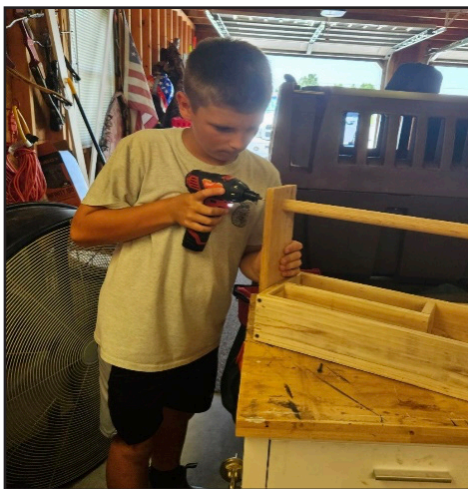
The Junior division, bottom photo, from left, is Bentley Hill, Reserve Champion in small engine and lawn tractor; Lorelai Barnett, fifth in small engine and sixth in lawn tractor; Luke Brower, third in small engine and fifth in lawn tractor; Lane Nichols, sixth in small engine and eighth in lawn tractor; Laney Mae Barnett, fourth in small engine and third in lawn tractor; Calvin Deluca, Champion in small engine and lawn tractor; Luke Daley, seventh in small engine and fourth in lawn tractor and Superintendent, Jason Ridinger. All of the Champion and Reserve Champion wooden box awards were donated by Chesapeake Chapter of the American Society of Safety Professionals.



Photos courtesy Sandy Ridinger



On Sept. 8, the Talbot Skipjacks 4-H Club members met early in the morning to run a virtual 5K to support Ducks Unlimited. Skipjacks members have been working on a Waterfowl Project this year that has included volunteering for the Waterfowl Festival Building in preparation for new areas for storage, promoting waterfowl conservation on our Eastern Shore and learning about organizations like Duck Unlimited and what they do for waterfowl efforts throughout our nation. "I was happy to run the 5K for such a good cause, I was glad I joined Easton High School's Cross Country Track Team this year, it made the run a little easier for me," said McKenna Brach, left, Each member received a year's subscription from Ducks Unlimited, a sports tee and a 2024 DU DASH medal displaying the Pintail Duck in flight.



Bryson Bell from the Midstate 4-H Club works on a woodworking toolbox that he designed and built from pallets and stained it. He displayed it at the Delaware State Fair. In addition to practicing his skills at home, Bell completes projects with his local club and helps others to build projects to enter into the state fair.



6-year old Cloverbud member of the Westville 4-H Club in Kent County, Del., Kainer Willey, said he loves taking care of his goats and being able to show them at the Delaware State Fair. Baby goats are his favorite.



4-H members showing senior Polish does at the 67th Annual Garrett County Fair in Mchenry, Md., on July 29, and the place they received are from left, Erica Mager-6th, Noah Whiteside-1st, Bristol Ketterman-4th, Maddox Gordon-2nd, and Derek Cosner-5th. The judge was Kim Cayton and at the score table are Brenda Skipper and Caroline Zimmerman.

Photo by Ava E. Cosner, Hopper's Club co-photographer.