

# Paulding County 4-H Handbook

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION



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Greetings 4-H Families!

We are excited to welcome you to the largest youth organization in the United States of America, Ohio, and Paulding County! Being a 4-H member entitles you to experiences that cannot be found anywhere else. From learning intricate details about a project, to being a 4-H Camper or Counselor, to being a part of a committee putting together a club booth, to state and national programs and events, 4-H has something for everyone. I encourage everyone to look at all the possible opportunities that await our 4-H members and strive to “Make the Best Better”.

This handbook has been prepared to assist you and your family in all aspects of 4-H and project work. You can access this handbook online or by utilizing the Paulding County 4-H app. Paulding County 4-H strives to offer programs and activities that help promote project-specific knowledge and life skills. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to our office, we are here to assist you and your family in having a positive 4-H experience.

Yours in 4-H,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Schweinsberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Schweinsberg  
Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development  
OSU Extension, Paulding County

**Ohio State University Extension, Paulding County**

503 Fairground Drive  
Paulding, OH 45879

419-399-8225

**paulding.osu.edu**  
**u.osu.edu/paulding4h**

Office Hours

Monday thru Friday 8:00 am-4:30 pm

**OSU Extension – Paulding County Staff****Michael Schweinsberg**

Extension Educator, 4-H Youth  
Development

[Schweinsberg.5@osu.edu](mailto:Schweinsberg.5@osu.edu)

**Sarah Noggle**

Extension Educator, Agriculture  
and Natural Resources

[Noggle.17@osu.edu](mailto:Noggle.17@osu.edu)

**Emma Horstman**

Extension Educator, Family and  
Consumer Sciences

[Horstman.124@osu.edu](mailto:Horstman.124@osu.edu)

**Sara Zimmerman**

Program Coordinator, 4-H Youth  
Development

[Zimmerman.948@osu.edu](mailto:Zimmerman.948@osu.edu)

**TyAnna Miles**

Office Associate, 4-H and Family  
and Consumer Sciences

[Miles.397@osu.edu](mailto:Miles.397@osu.edu)

**Katie Jackson**

Office Associate, Agriculture and  
Natural Resources

[Jackson.2533@osu.edu](mailto:Jackson.2533@osu.edu)

**Erika Johanns**

Program Coordinator, Snap-ED

[Johanns.14@osu.edu](mailto:Johanns.14@osu.edu)

**Rachel Cochran**

Water Quality Extension Associate

[Cochran.474@osu.edu](mailto:Cochran.474@osu.edu)

## 4-H is an OSU Extension Program

Ohio 4-H is an educational program provided by Ohio State University Extension. Each county's program is provided through a partnership between OSU Extension and local county commissioners. In Paulding County, we offer 4-H Youth Development, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Family and Consumer Sciences programming. The staff from all areas work together as a team to deliver quality educational programming.



### What is 4-H?

4-H is a non-formal educational youth development program offered to individuals ages 5 to 19. No matter what projects you select or how you participate, all 4-H programs focus on active involvement and quality experiences that stimulate lifelong learning of values and skills.

#### 4-H'ers are...

**4X** more likely to give back to their communities

**2X** more likely to make healthier choices

**2X** more likely to participate in STEM activities



#### 4-H'ers participate in



**5M**  
ANNUALLY  
SCIENCE  
PROJECTS



**2.5M**  
ANNUALLY  
HEALTHY LIVING  
PROJECTS



**2.5M**  
ANNUALLY  
CITIZENSHIP  
PROJECTS

## The 4 H's

### ***“Head” to clearer thinking***



4-H allows youth the opportunity to learn new things through projects and programs while being actively engaged in their learning. One of the main goals of 4-H is to have youth develop life skills that help them succeed. Some of these life skills include leadership, responsibility, dedication, communication, and self-confidence.

### ***“Heart” to greater loyalty***



Youth are taught to be reliable and loyal in their heart and understand what it means to take responsibility for their projects and to follow through. 4-H gives youth positive relationships with adults and peers through leaders and teens. Youth are shown why it is important to care for others as well as everything else they do in life.

### ***“Hands” for larger service***



4-H'ers are busy with their hands all year long learning new things and caring for their projects with hands-on experiences. Members also use their hands to give back to the community. Part of 4-H is teaching youth the importance of serving the community, country, and world.

### ***“Health” to better living***



Knowing how to cook and grow food, and appreciate art allows 4-H'ers to gain an understanding of how the world works and how to live healthily. Projects such as photography, canning, arts and crafts, sewing, collections, and cooking help youth realize what it takes to have a healthy lifestyle and how to spend their leisure time. 4-H also strives to make sure youth are physically and emotionally safe.

## What does 4-H teach?

4-H offers more than 200 projects. Topics of these projects include: About 4-H, Animal Sciences, Clothing and Textile Sciences, Communication and Public Speaking, Creative and Leisure Arts, Food and Nutrition, Healthy Living, Home Living, Leadership and Citizenship, Money Management, Natural Resources, STEM, Self-Determined, and Workforce Preparation. To view a list of all current projects Ohio 4-H has to offer, you can visit <https://ohio4h.org/books-and-resources/family-guide> or <https://ohio4h.org/books-and-resources/project-central>. We have a copy of every project book Ohio 4-H has to offer in our office. If you would like to browse the books in-person before choosing the right project for you, please give us a call or stop by and see us!



## How do I get involved?

Paulding County 4-H offers involvement in community clubs, SPIN Clubs, and camps. We often find ourselves informing youth and parents to get as involved as you wish. Just like with sports and anything else in life, you get out of the program what you put into it. On top of our local 4-H programming opportunities, we offer our youth experiences at the state, national, and international levels.

## How do we communicate?

We work hard in the county office to provide our members, families, and volunteers with the most up-to-date communication and information. Please be sure to check out the following means of communication and determine which avenue works best for your family! Please note, that with the mail system delays and cost increases, we are primarily digital with all our program information.

- **Paulding County Clover Connection**

<https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h>

Our 4-H blog is updated weekly with 4-H related information and is used as our 4-H Newsletter. If you are a blog subscriber, every Friday around 4 p.m., you will receive an e-mail for the week's updates to check out. Anyone can subscribe! Visit the site and in the lower right-hand corner, click the SUBSCRIBE button and enter a valid e-mail address.

- **Paulding County OSU Extension Site**

<https://paulding.osu.edu>

Our county 4-H site is great for finding 4-H program-related documents. While we keep this site fairly updated, some information is more compatible with the blog site, so don't be surprised if you are redirected!

- **4-H Online**

<https://oh.4honline.com>

While we keep our blog site updated for information to be readily available, we do have specific information that is geared toward specific audiences. When this happens, we will post it on the blog site but will also send out an e-mail via the 4-H Online system. You should always receive a text whenever an e-mail is sent out from 4-H Online. Please do not think that it is spam, it is likely information that directly pertains to you!

- **Paulding County 4-H Facebook**

<https://facebook.com/paulding4H>

This is a place to quickly find program and event information that pertains to Paulding County 4-H. If you are a Facebook user, you should **LIKE** and **FOLLOW** our Facebook Page.

- **4-H App**

The Paulding County Extension Office has an app that we have done our best to design to be a one-stop shop to quickly find information you may need or want from all our program offerings. Downloading the app will give you access to all our information at the touch of a button. To download the app, visit your app store and search for Paulding County 4-H.



## Calendar of Events

Paulding County 4-H creates a calendar of events for each 4-H year. This calendar can be found on the Clover Connection website. While we try our best to plan, we do add additional opportunities and events to our calendar. We encourage members and families to check out the calendar as well as watch for postings on the Clover Connection which will announce upcoming events.

If you are a member completing a livestock project, we also have a calendar for important dates sorted by species. These dates are critical to our livestock projects and members must review these dates to know when animals must be born, in possession, and when tagging takes place. The livestock calendar can also be found on the Clover Connection website.

**General 4-H Calendar** → <https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/4-h-club-resources/>

**Livestock Calendar** → <https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/paulding-county-fair/livestock/>

## Who is eligible to join 4-H?

Ohio 4-H membership is based on a child's age AND their grade as of January 1 of the calendar year. A youth's 4-H eligibility ends December 31 of the year he or she turns 19.

## What are the programs 4-H offers?

### **Cloverbuds**

Eligibility for the Cloverbud program begins when a youth turns 5 years old AND is in Kindergarten. This program is a non-competitive, activity-based program designed to have fun, interactive experiences. Cloverbud activities occur during club meetings but do not have any “take-home” projects. In this program, 4-H Volunteers lead activities during club activities that explore topics such as health, earth, the environment, plants, animals, and more.

### **Community Club Program**

Eligibility for the Community Club program begins when a youth member turns 8 years old AND in the third grade of the program year, or 9 years old regardless of grade level. Youth participating in the Community Club program are eligible to complete any of the Ohio 4-H projects listed in the Ohio 4-H Family Guide. This program is a competitive, project-oriented program designed to teach life skills through projects the member takes. Joining 4-H is a privilege and responsibility for individuals and is subject to the Ohio 4-H Code of Conduct and applicable policies of The Ohio State University.

### **SPIN Clubs**

Special Interest 4-H Clubs, commonly known as SPIN Clubs, are short-term clubs that focus on specific topics or projects. Most SPIN clubs pop-up throughout the year based on the interest of volunteers, youth, or a combination of both. We do offer scheduled SPIN Club programs, such as the Green Thumb program, which has a set schedule each summer.

## Choosing a Club

Paulding County 4-H is home to 15 4-H Clubs. These clubs meet monthly for 1.5 to 2 hours. We have clubs that meet in Antwerp, Cecil, Grover Hill, Paulding, and Oakwood. Clubs meet at various dates and times which makes it very helpful for families to find a club that meets family schedules. To view a list of the 4-H clubs in Paulding County, visit our Clover Connection under the ‘Join 4-H’ tab. If you have any questions about choosing a club, contact the Paulding County Extension Office.

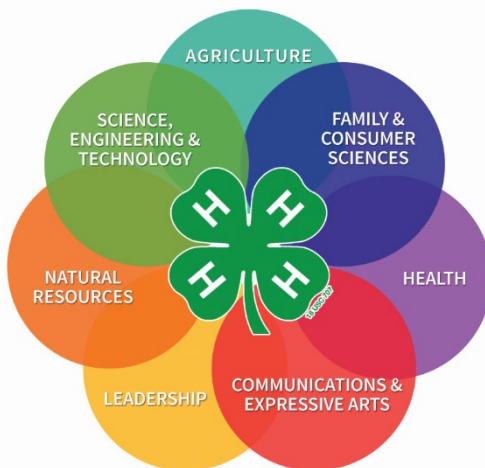
<b>5H 4-H Saddle Club</b> - Oakwood	<b>Blue Ribbon Workers</b> - Paulding; 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday @ 1pm
<b>Brown Betty &amp; Buster Browns</b> - Oakwood; 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday @ 4pm	<b>Buckeye Bullseyes</b> - Paulding
<b>Campground Kids</b> - Paulding; 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday @ 2pm	<b>Country Clickers</b> - Cecil; Sunday
<b>Countryside Kids</b> - Paulding	<b>Doc-D-Doe</b> - Antwerp
<b>Flatrock Jr. Farmers</b> - Paulding	<b>Happy Bunch</b> - Paulding
<b>Junior Leaders</b> - Paulding	<b>Leaders of Tomorrow</b> - Paulding; 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday @ 7pm
<b>Livewires</b> - Grover Hill; Sunday @ 2pm	<b>Modern Miss &amp; Mister</b> - Antwerp; 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday @ 3pm
<b>Paws on the Walls</b> - Paulding; Sunday @ 3:30 pm	

## When do I need to enroll?

The enrollment deadline for 4-H in Paulding County is the first Friday in January. All enrollment is completed by the member’s family in 4-H Online. We highly encourage families to enroll as soon as possible after November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year to aid in communication efforts. Office Associate, TyAnna Miles, manages the 4-H Online system and will be happy to help you with any computer or account-related questions.

## Choosing Projects

Choosing the perfect project can seem like a daunting task for our members, especially when we offer over 220 of them. To help with the project selection process, members and their families have a couple of different options to explore all that is offered. The Paulding County Extension Office houses a copy of all project books that are currently offered through Ohio 4-H. Youth may stop by the office during normal business hours to look through project books. Members may also view the Ohio 4-H Family Guide which lists each project with a description. The Ohio 4-H Family Guide can be viewed by visiting <https://ohio4h.org/familyguide>. A third available option, and very helpful, is Project Central. Project Central is a searchable database of all the current 4-H projects offered. Project reviews left by 4-H members can be found and members can view a selection of project book pages to gauge interest. To view Project Central, visit <https://ohio4h.org/books-and-resources/project-central>.



## Ordering Project Books

Starting this 4-H year, OSU Extension Publications will no longer be offering free shipping. To help our members and their families, we will be ordering project books through our office. We will only be placing orders a couple times a month to help keep shipping cost down for our office as well. If you order your books through our office by Friday, January 31st, 2025, you will receive free shipping. We will still order project books after January 31st, but shipping will be charged to your order (shipping charges will be divided amongst those in the same order).

<https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/4-h-club-resources/>

## When do I have to have projects selected?

Project selection must be completed when the family completes the 4-H Online enrollment. The 4-H Online database requires a project to be selected to submit enrollment. All 4-H projects must be declared by the enrollment deadline. Youth may pick projects to work on for the following year as soon as our county fair is complete, unless they are competing at the State Fair for that project, which would push the start date of working on the project to after the State Fair.

## Are we able to drop projects?

Dropping a 4-H project can be done. We mostly see projects being dropped due to time constraints or a project being too difficult for a member. A member can drop a project at any time by contacting the Extension Office and informing them of the decision.

While there is no specific deadline to drop a project, we do ask for the member or their family to notify us as soon as a decision is made. This is because we start planning our project judging at the end of March each year and our planning is based on the number of projects being completed.

### **How much does it cost to be in 4-H?**

Thanks to the support of Paulding County with our levy, there is no cost to join 4-H. Most of our clubs do have membership dues that are paid to the club. These dues ensure the club has the funding it needs to purchase supplies for club activities, booth and parade decorations, and other expenses that may occur.

While 4-H membership in Paulding County does not have a cost, completing projects and participating in activities and programs do. Members are required to purchase the project books needed for their project which are typically \$10 each but can be higher based on the project. There is also the cost of materials needed to complete the project. We have 4-H projects that will have only the cost of the book to projects that can cost thousands of dollars.

### **4-H Member Expectations**

Being a 4-H member is a privilege and responsibility for individuals and is subject to the Ohio 4-H Code of Conduct and applicable policies of The Ohio State University. Becoming a part of Paulding County 4-H is a privilege, not a right.

- Members are required to enroll in an approved, chartered 4-H Community Club and select at least one 4-H project from the Ohio 4-H Family Guide.

- Members must attend **AT LEAST 50%** of scheduled club meetings with a minimum meeting attendance of four club meetings.
  - Paulding County 4-H fully supports the decision of the community club should they choose to enforce consequences for poor participation and attendance.
- Members may enroll in more than one club, provided they select at least one project within each club. It is the member's responsibility to complete their projects and keep track of deadlines associated with them – 4-H volunteers are here to assist in communicating deadlines and additional information.
- Members are expected to participate in as many club meetings and activities as possible. This demonstrates a commitment to the club and the 4-H Program overall.
- 4-H'ers are required to complete one demonstration within their club. Demonstration topics should be based on the project the member is taking.
  - First-year project members are the exception – first-year members may complete a demonstration on a topic of their choice.
  - Demonstrations should consist of “how to” dialogue and be presented in a logical yet entertaining manner.
- Community Service Projects – All members of the club need to be involved in completing at least one community service project. These projects are an important part of promoting citizenship and community contributions.



## Membership Across County Lines

Youth members are expected to affiliate with the 4-H Program in their county of residence. Exceptions are available and interested parties **MUST** contact the 4-H Extension Educator for more information.

- The Across County Line membership is for age-eligible 4-H Members who reside in a neighboring county. Please review this policy if you wish to join Paulding County 4-H but reside in a neighboring county.
- 4-H membership in TWO counties simultaneously is **NOT** permitted.
- In situations where the county of residence does not have a 4-H program, youth may **NOT** join another county.

## Individual Community Club Rules

Clubs are required to adopt a constitution which is provided as a template by Ohio 4-H.

Clubs may also adopt individual rules by creating by-laws to attach to their constitution, provided those rules are not in conflict with state guidelines.

Some examples of rules adopted by individual clubs are:

- Club dues policies
- Maximum number of members
- Types of projects permitted
- Attendance policies
- Fulfillment of officer/member responsibilities. Clubs are not permitted to vote on accepting or not accepting members into their club. This is a clear violation of Ohio and National 4-H Council policy.

Clubs are required to open and maintain a bank account for purposes of financial transactions of its members and/or club.



Examples: fees paid to the club for membership dues, expenses incurred for club meetings, special club events, etc.

To remain in good standing, clubs must meet the following expectations each year:

- Ensure that all members meet the membership enrollment deadline, which is the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday in January of each year.
- Plan and hold a minimum of 8 meetings.
- Provide members with a written schedule for meetings.
- Elect an officer team which must consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Clubs should consider electing other officers, including News Reporter, Safety, Health, Recreation, and Community Service.
- Complete at least one Community Service Project as a club.
- Complete IRS and Ohio 4-H required financial reporting:
  - File year-end financial report with OSU Extension by January 31st annually.
  - 990N ePostcard filing with the IRS will be completed by the 4-H Extension Educator or designee by the May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

## Dual Membership in 4-H and FFA

Ohio 4-H members are sometimes also FFA members, often within the same county and sometimes in an adjacent county. These members especially need to keep in mind the 4-H policy about 4-H projects being separate from school projects. To keep work in both organizations clearly separate, 4-H members are advised to take

different species or non-livestock projects in the two organizations or, at a minimum, take market animals in one and breeding animals in the other. The idea is to refrain from exhibiting the same project more than once a year.

- Allowable examples include but are not limited to:
  - Breeding Gilt (4-H) and Market Hog (FFA)
  - Market Steer (4-H) and Market Hog (FFA)
  - Welding Doorstop (4-H) and Welding Boot Scraper (FFA)
- Examples of projects that are not able to be taken together include but are not limited to:
  - Market Lamb (4-H) and Market Lamb (FFA)
  - Welding Doorstop (4-H) and Welding Doorstop (FFA)

## **4-H Still Project Judging and Evaluations**

4-H members are expected to complete their 4-H project by participating in our 4-H project judging, which takes place during the week of the Paulding County Fair. This evaluation is an interview-style judging that is designed to be a positive experience that teaches youth valuable interview skills and provides a closure for the project. All still projects are evaluated for project completion which is outlined in the front of each project book as well as the project completion guidelines which are available in early spring of each year.

Members will meet with a judge for approximately 10 minutes to complete an interview. This interview assesses the knowledge gained from the project as well as any product that may have been produced while completing the project.

For project judging, members should bring items indicated in the Project Descriptions listed in the Project Completion Guide. Members may be asked to discuss project work, talk about their item(s) brought to judging and answer questions regarding their project.

### **Still Project Judging Schedule and Results →**

<https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/paulding-county-fair/still-project-judging/>

## **4-H Livestock Judging and Evaluations**

4-H members completing Livestock projects must keep in mind that there are required deadlines specific to each species. These deadlines as well as rules pertaining to each species can be found in the Livestock Department Guidelines that are posted on the Clover Connection under [Paulding County Fair → Livestock](#). Members will find that each species has its own document to read, understand, and follow.

### **Livestock Department Guidelines →**

<https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/paulding-county-fair/livestock/>

### **Livestock Show Results →**

<https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/paulding-county-fair/livestock-show-results/>

Livestock members are required to complete Quality Assurance Training each year. This training is put on by OSU Extension and is available multiple times beginning in January of each year. It is very important to think about Spring schedules when planning to complete Quality Assurance and it is recommended to complete the training as soon as possible. The Ohio Department of Agriculture has set a rule that Quality Assurance training must be completed prior to the 45-day mark before the start of a county fair. Failure to complete this training by the 45-day deadline will mean that the animal will not be eligible to be shown or sold at the county fair.

### **Quality Assurance Information and Registration →**

<https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/quality-assurance/>



Livestock project members are also required to complete a Skillathon each year. Skillathon is the equivalent of the Still Project Judging for our still project members. For Skillathon, members will be required to:

- Turn in their completed project book by the deadline announced

- Attend Skillathon in-person and participate in an interview over their project knowledge
- Complete an evaluation of knowledge of the following topics. Please note that only 3 of these topics will be evaluated in any given year.
  - Parts of the animal
  - Breeds of the species
  - Medication Labels
  - Medication Inserts
  - Breed Traits
  - Equipment used for raising the species
  - Meat Cuts
  - Conformation and/or Posture
  - Terminology
  - Disqualifications and Faults

Skillathon is held on the last Wednesday of May every year.

### **Skillathon Information and Study Guides →**

<https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/skillathon/>

## **So, What is Required of YOU?**

- ✓ A display or poster is required for MOST projects
- ✓ A completed project book
- ✓ Dress to impress for your interview

### **Project Completion Guidelines →**

<https://u.osu.edu/paulding4h/paulding-county-fair/project-guidelines/>

## What is the difference in a display vs. poster???

A “display” refers to a way to exhibit what you’ve made. In Woodworking projects, it’s something you have built. In Clothing projects, it’s the constructed piece of clothing/outfit. In a Photography or Art project, it is a portfolio of your images/artwork. Feel free to reach out to the Extension Office if it is unclear what is expected of your project’s display.

A poster is for other projects where you may not necessarily make anything. Think about what your favorite part of the project was, what was most interesting about your project, what should someone know about the project, etc. This is your chance to be creative and shine!

## Selections for the Ohio State Fair

Representing Paulding County 4-H at the Ohio State Fair is an honor and privilege. Youths are selected based on their project interview that is conducted during the Paulding County Fair. Most projects offered through 4-H are eligible for the Ohio State Fair, but some are not. The Ohio 4-H Family Guide indicates which projects are eligible for participation at the Ohio State Fair.

Youth who have been selected to represent Paulding County at the Ohio State Fair will be announced during our Still Project Judging Award Ceremony which is held after each day of judging.

Families will then have the opportunity to discuss if they will be making the trip to the Ohio State Fair and will inform the Extension Office of their decision. Youth who elect to participate will be given a packet with specific

information as well as a pass for entry to the Ohio State Fair.

## **How do I complete my project to prepare for County Project Judging?**

4-H project books outline what is needed to complete the project in the front of the project book. It is important to review the first couple of pages to ensure you know what the expectations are for completing the project. Please note that what is written in the front of the book are minimum requirements. Youth may complete more than the minimum stated. Completing more than the minimum stated will increase your chances of being selected to go to the Ohio State Fair as well as increase your chances of winning awards at both the Paulding County and Ohio State Fairs.

Youth and project helpers may also refer to the Project Completion Guidelines which are released in late winter/early spring.

## **How do I exhibit my project at the Paulding County Fair?**

The Paulding County Fair is an opportunity to showcase your project and the efforts you have made for the year. It is a requirement that all projects be displayed for the fair. Each club is given a booth in the Extension Hall and all 4-H members must have their projects on display or represented.

For all still projects, this means your project **MUST** be in the booth before the start of the fair. Livestock youth should have some representation of their projects in the booth as well.

This not only shows the great work of all our 4-H members but also meets the expectations of the community who want to see the work that our amazing youth accomplish.

## **4-H Online and Fair Entry..What is the Difference?**

Over the course of the year, you will hear from multiple people and read multiple posts about both 4-H Online and Fair Entry. Families can find themselves being very confused as we go through the year, especially when these databases are only used a couple of times each year for the typical 4-H family. Below is a quick explanation of each of the databases, what they are used for, and the timeline of when they are used.

### **4-H Online**

4-H Online is the online database that Ohio 4-H uses to manage the 4-H program and is where 4-H families go to enroll in 4-H for the year. This is also where youth will declare their 4-H projects for the year. 4-H Online opens November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for 4-H enrollment. All members must be enrolled by the first Friday in January to participate at the Paulding County Fair and be eligible for awards and other 4-H member opportunities.

### **Fair Entry**

Fair Entry is the online database that the Paulding County Junior Fairboard uses to manage the Paulding County Junior Fair. This database is used in April and May to register for classes at the Paulding County Fair. Information specific to Fair Entry is sent out when it is time to start the registration process for the fair.



## Interested in becoming a volunteer?

All our clubs are led by 4-H volunteers who give selflessly of themselves to our 4-H program and the youth who participate. They willingly share knowledge, experiences, and skills with the youth in their clubs to “make the best better”. Volunteers are required to complete an application, interview, background check, and yearly training to become and maintain their volunteer status. Paulding County 4-H is ALWAYS looking for volunteers to help our youth. Volunteer opportunities, such as being a club advisor, project helper, or SPIN Club advisor are available. If you are an adult who is looking for a way to make an impact on youth that will last a lifetime, contact the Extension Office to learn how to get started.



## 4-H Camp

Some would say that the highlight of 4-H in Paulding County is 4-H Camp. Paulding County 4-H camps at 4-H Camp Palmer every year. The dates for 4-H Camp are always July 9-13 no matter what days of the week this falls on. 4-H Camp Palmer is in Fulton County next to Harrison Lake State Park. Campers stay in cabins where they each have their own bunk and area for their personal belongings. Each cabin has well-trained camp counselors to guide campers during their time at camp. Campers are served three meals a day and an evening snack.

4-H Camp is for campers who have completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through the completion of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Each year, camp counselors from Paulding County choose and develop a theme for the Paulding County 4-H Camp. Activities revolve around the theme as well as optional sessions that include swimming, line dancing, team building, crafts, canoeing, archery, nature hikes, and the high ropes course.

4-H members are encouraged to invite their friends to attend camp, even if they are not current 4-H members. Friends may request to be in the same cabin when registering. Information about registering for 4-H Camp, as well as the potential to receive partial camperships to help cover the registration cost, is released in late winter/early spring.



Notes