



DECEMBER 2025

# 4-H Family News

Calhoun County



## Welcome to the 2025 – 26 Program Year!

It's hard to think about it being a new program year already, especially with the colder temperatures and snow on the ground, but we are already a couple of months into the 25-26 program year.

I'd like to take this time to welcome our new-to-our-county members who have transferred from Eaton County. We are glad to have you here!

As a reminder – there is a LOT of information that comes out at times – I try to send as much as I can out via 4-H Online, but I know that can be overwhelming. Make sure to follow our Facebook page - **Calhoun County MSU Extension/4-H** for upcoming events, scholarship information and other news from around Extension!

**As a reminder – the Extension Office will be closed December 25, 2025 – January 2, 2026. I will not be working during this time, as it is an official University holiday.**

**The office will also be closed on January 19, 2026 in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**



## CONTACT US

Cressie Vargo

4-H Program Coordinator

315 W. Green Street

Marshall, MI 49068

## PHONE & EMAIL:

((269) 781-0785

vargocre@msu.edu

## WEBSITE:

[https://www.canr.msu.edu/calhoun/cal\\_houn\\_county\\_4\\_h](https://www.canr.msu.edu/calhoun/cal_houn_county_4_h)

Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Quentin Tyler, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.



# STATEWIDE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## 4-H Thriving Model of Positive Youth Development



Have you ever been to a club meeting that starts with a roll call question? Building a sense of belonging in the 4-H community is one of four core concepts of the 4-H Thriving Model that any 4-H program can intentionally do.

We strive to build this welcoming feeling and offer kindness to help develop a sense of belonging throughout project meetings, club meetings, workshops and events offered. What better way to build a community than to find similarities among the membership?

Some of the questions are simple, some are silly, and some can get more involved depending on the purpose of the meeting. Regardless, it's a great way to get to know everyone. Contact your local 4-H staff for more information.

### November 28 – December 14: Fall TSC Paper Clover Campaign

*Local Tractor Supply Co.*

Support 4-H by purchasing a \$1 paper clover at your local Tractor Supply Co. (TSC) store! Seventy-percent of funds raised stay in the local community where the paper clover was purchased.

[www.canr.msu.edu/events/tractor-supply-co-paper-clover-campaign](http://www.canr.msu.edu/events/tractor-supply-co-paper-clover-campaign)

### December 2: Giving Tuesday

*Online*

Join the #GivingTuesday movement — a global day of giving and a chance to celebrate the opportunities that makes 4-H so extraordinary. 4-H'ers are leading the way in a world full of change and together, we can build a generation ready for anything. We have set a goal to raise \$5,000 to grow 4-H county endowments in a 24-hour period.

[mi4hfdtn.org/giving-tuesday/](http://mi4hfdtn.org/giving-tuesday/)

### December 9: 4-H Wild Spartans

*Online*

Join 4-H staff to take a look into life working with fisheries and wildlife! This month's session is "Adventures in Wildlife Medicine: From the Field to the Clinic." Meet Avery Tilley, a veterinary student at the University of Georgia. Learn about his work, and the education and career path he followed to get there. Open to youth ages 12-19.

[www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-wild-spartans-december](http://www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-wild-spartans-december)

### December 13: 4-H Holidays Around the World Workshop – Hanukkah

*Jefferson-Barns Community Vitality Center, Westland*

Learn, create and celebrate the Festival of Lights! Open to all youth in grades 3–8, this hands-on workshop includes storytelling, candle-making, snacks, games and festive music. Pre-register by December 8.!

[www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-holidays-workshop-hanukkah](http://www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-holidays-workshop-hanukkah)

### December 20: 4-H Holidays Around the World Workshop – Christmas in Norway

*Jefferson-Barns Community Vitality Center, Westland*

Celebrate Norwegian Christmas traditions! Open to youth in grades 3–8, this hands-on workshop includes gnome-making, butter-churning and festive cookie decorating. Pre-register by December 15.

[www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-holidays-workshop-christmas](http://www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-holidays-workshop-christmas)





# STATEWIDE 4-H NEWS

## Mandatory reporting guidelines for Michigan 4-H volunteers

MSU Extension has updated its mandatory [reporting guidelines](http://www.canr.msu.edu/od/civil_rights_diversity_multiculturalism/civil_rights_compliance) ([www.canr.msu.edu/od/civil\\_rights\\_diversity\\_multiculturalism/civil\\_rights\\_compliance](http://www.canr.msu.edu/od/civil_rights_diversity_multiculturalism/civil_rights_compliance)) to align with MSU's policy (UW-02-01). All volunteers are required to report incidents of child abuse, neglect, or misconduct promptly. Reports should be made to MSU's Office for Civil Rights (MSU OCR) and, when applicable, to Children's Protective Services (CPS)/Department of Health and Human Services. In short, volunteers should:

1. In emergencies: Call 911 immediately.
2. Child abuse/neglect: Call CPS at 855-444-3911 and file [DHS-3200](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/abuse-neglect/childrens/mandated-reporters) (available at [www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/abuse-neglect/childrens/mandated-reporters](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/abuse-neglect/childrens/mandated-reporters)) within 72 hours.
3. All other incidents: Report to MSU OCR via online form at <https://msu.guardianconduct.com/incident-reporting/>; phone at (517) 353-3922 between the hours of 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00-5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; by mail at 408 W. Circle Dr., Suite 105, Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824; or by email at [ocr.isr@msu.edu](mailto:ocr.isr@msu.edu).
4. Please notify your local MSU Extension staff after submitting a report.

## Shop with purpose: 4-H gifts that give back

'Tis the season to spread joy and support 4-H youth while doing it! Consider the following options in your holiday shopping to make the holidays merry, bright and meaningful!

**Michigan Shop 4-H Store:** Buy your favorite Michigan 4-H apparel, drinkware, and essentials at the SHOP 4-H Online Store! Offered in collaboration with National 4-H Council, the Michigan 4-H store offers Michigan 4-H branded apparel and other gifts for your favorite 4-H'er, volunteer, alumni, professional or fan! A percentage of all proceeds will be donated to Michigan 4-H. Visit <https://bit.ly/30pdNJw>.



**My Pottery Place:** Get crafty with 4-H pottery! From mugs to ornaments, you can paint your own masterpiece while supporting youth programs—5% of every 4-H licensed pottery purchase goes to 4-H. Learn more at [mypotteryplace.com/product-category/all-products/4-h/](http://mypotteryplace.com/product-category/all-products/4-h/).

**Mickman Brothers:** Decorate your home with beautiful greenery and purpose: 15% of the proceeds from each wreath or evergreen purchased at [4hwreaths.com](http://4hwreaths.com) will benefit 4-H.

**Twisted X:** Step into the season with style! The Twisted X 4-H Collection has shoes for the whole family and 6% of each pair sold supports 4-H! Learn more at [twistedx.com/pages/4h-collection](http://twistedx.com/pages/4h-collection).

**Georgia Boot:** Built for hard work and big dreams, Georgia Boot is a proud supporter of 4-H. Consider giving their boots, which are ready for any adventure, especially a 4-H project! Shop at [georgiaboot.com](http://georgiaboot.com).

## Michigan 4-H Dog Showmanship Manual updated

The Michigan 4-H Dog Showmanship Manual has been updated! A major update to the previous version, this guide provides the basic information needed to compete successfully in 4-H dog showmanship classes. Be sure to check out the resources section of the manual for additional useful books, websites and videos.

View the updated manual at [www.canr.msu.edu/resources/michigan-4-h-dog-showmanship-manual](http://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/michigan-4-h-dog-showmanship-manual).





## 2026 Calendar of Statewide Animal Science Events

### 4-H Animal Science Staff

**Autumn Converse**

4-H Livestock and Veterinary  
Science Educator  
[conver20@msu.edu](mailto:conver20@msu.edu)

**David Lindsay**

4-H Equine Educator  
[lindsa75@msu.edu](mailto:lindsa75@msu.edu)

**Kendra Van Order**

4-H Dairy Educator  
[vanorde4@msu.edu](mailto:vanorde4@msu.edu)

**Jermo Reese**

4-H Animal Science Program  
Instructor  
[reesejer@msu.edu](mailto:reesejer@msu.edu)

**Jacob Stieg**

4-H Poultry Point of Contact  
[stieg@msu.edu](mailto:stieg@msu.edu)

**Kat VanDouser**

4-H Dog Point of Contact  
[krollkat@msu.edu](mailto:krollkat@msu.edu)

**Glenda Weiss**

4-H Rabbit & Cavy Point of Contact  
[weissgle@msu.edu](mailto:weissgle@msu.edu)

<b>January 24</b>	4-H State Rabbit Show
<b>Feb. 27- March 1</b>	4-H Dairy Conference
<b>March 7</b>	4-H Spring Livestock Workshop
<b>March 14</b>	4-H Horse Communications Contest
<b>March 21-22</b>	Norma Agnew 4-H Hairy Horse Show
<b>March 21</b>	4-H Rabbit and Cavy Workshop
<b>March 22</b>	4-H Rabbit and Cavy Quiz Bowl
<b>April 11</b>	4-H & FFA Horse Judging State Contest
<b>April 12</b>	4-H Hippology State Contest
<b>May 6</b>	4-H & FFA Meats Judging State Contest
<b>June 10-11</b>	Michigan Youth Livestock Judging Camp
<b>June 27</b>	4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl
<b>July 1</b>	4-H & FFA Livestock Judging State Contest
<b>July 6-7 &amp; 8-9</b>	4-H Animal and Veterinary Science Camp
<b>July 13-16</b>	4-H Youth Dairy Days
<b>August 13-16</b>	4-H State Horse Show
<b>September 19</b>	4-H State Dog Show



**Scan me** for more  
information about these  
programs!

Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Quentin Tyler, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.



# 2025 Awards Banquet

## Legend of 4-H



This year's Legend of 4-H Winners were Chris & Todd Landis, who were both nominated by Beth Letts.

The "Legend of 4-H Award" recognizes Calhoun County 4-H Leaders who have made a significant long-term contribution of unselfish dedication & service to Calhoun County 4-H.

To be nominated, leaders must have been a 4-H Leader for at least 10 years.

Chris also received her 30-year Volunteer Award, and Todd is just behind her with 29 years of service! Thank you both for your dedication to Calhoun County youth!

## Friend of 4-H Award

The Friend of 4-H Award is given annually to recognize businesses or individuals who make a significant contribution in time, talents, money, material or general good will in support of Calhoun County 4-H.

This year's recipient is the Battle Creek Police Officers Association. They were nominated by Heidi Strunk for their ongoing support of 4-H, specifically the Mini Whinnies club.

Accepting the award on behalf of the Association was Ryan Strunk, pictured here with 4-H Council President Ryder Strunk.





# 2025 Awards Banquet

## TSC Poster Contest Winners



This year during Fair Week the 4-H Council sponsored a 4-H / TSC Poster Contest. Entries were available to individuals AND clubs. Posters were displayed in the Boys & Girls barn and voting was available to anyone who passed through the barn. We also had several volunteer judges who reviewed the posters and scored them based upon how they followed the criteria set forth by the Council Committee.

This was a fun event with several entries! 4-H Council is looking to do this again next year – so if you have suggestions – please contact a Council Member.

## Silver Buckle Award

The Silver Buckle award is given by Club Administrative Leaders to recognize members who are “cooperative, dependable & demonstrate good sportsmanship”. This year’s recipients were:

Ava Brodock – Rising Stars

Jayna Zenker – Rising Stars

Victoria Murphy – Companion Dog Club

Congratulations, ladies, on all your accomplishments in 4-H!





# 2025 Awards Banquet

## 2025 Senior Award Winners



Senior awards are self-nominated. Members fill out an application packet that includes what categories they are nominating themselves for (can be up to 3), and they answer a few questions about their experience with those categories. Applicants also can self-nominate for the I Dare You Award.

The "I Dare You" Award is one of the highest honors a Calhoun County 4-H Member can receive in their 4-H career. This award recognizes 4-H Members for outstanding contributions to their club and 4-H. Nominees must demonstrate character, integrity, dependability, initiative, and "emerging leadership" skills. Recipients must be high school juniors or seniors and be registered in Calhoun County 4-H and may not have previously received this award.

### This year's Senior Award Recipients were:

Jayna Zenker – Horse, Sheep, Dairy

Ava Brodock – Horse, Hobbies & Collections, Public Speaking

Saleen Pierce – Horse, Community Service, Veterinary Science Camp

Ryder Strunk – Personal Development, Visual Arts, Leadership

\*\*\*\*\*

Saleen Pierce was the 2025 "I Dare You Award" Recipient.

## 2025-2026 4-H Council Members Needed!

Youth and adult Council Members work together to advise and assist 4-H staff in implementing the Calhoun County 4-H Program and in developing leadership skills for 4-H members and leaders. The 4-H Council also participates in community activities such as the Relay for Life.

The Council works very hard but always finds room to have a lot of fun as well. All Council officer positions are held by 4-H Members, except the Treasurer. Meetings are generally from 7:00 - 8:30 pm the first Thursday of each month.

### The following openings are currently available:

**Young** – Must be at least 10 but less than 12 years of age by January 1, 2026. These positions are non-voting but a great leadership opportunity! **There are 5 openings for this age group.**

**Junior Members** – Aged 12 – 15 by January 1. These positions vote but do not hold office. **There are 3 openings in this age group.**

**Senior Members** – Aged 15 – 19 by January 1. These positions vote and hold office (other than treasurer). **There are 8 openings in this age group!**

**Adult Members** – **MUST** be an approved Gold Level Volunteer to be eligible. **There are currently 2 openings.**

Contact Cressie Vargo at [vargocre@msu.edu](mailto:vargocre@msu.edu) for more information! All members **MUST** be enrolled for the current program year to be eligible.



Calhoun County 4-H  
315 W. Green Street  
Marshall, MI 49068

MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY | Extension



# 4-H Family News

Calhoun County



**Beyond  
Ready**