

4-H NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2026

2320 3rd Avenue N, Billings MT 59101 406-256-2828

<https://www.montana.edu/extension/yellowstone/4h/index.html>

Facebook: Yellowstone County 4-H

HIGHLIGHTS FROM RONI BAKER

We have moved! Stop by our new office, located at 2320 3rd Avenue N. We are the white building on the southeast corner of 3rd Avenue N and N 24th Street. We have a parking lot with free parking!

We will be having an OPEN HOUSE on Monday, January 12, from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm at our new office. Please stop by for refreshments and get a tour of our new location.

The newsletter is filled with information you will need to know each month. Be sure to ask questions and learn about the activities and information listed. During the year if you change your address or establish a new email, please update your ZSuite record.

Read your newsletter thoroughly and if you find your initials and birthdate (ab/01/02/03) somewhere in the newsletter, call the Extension Office. The 4-H Council will send you a check for \$10!

The Beef tagging date for 2026 will be **SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, from 12:00 to 3:00 pm at PAYS**. All market beef for the 2026 MontanaFair are required to be tagged on this date. Animal Quality Assurance and Horse Helmet workshops will also be held. A full article can be found in this newsletter.

Roni Baker 4-H/Youth Agent

THE 2025-2026 4-H YEAR IS IN FULL SWING

Please take the opportunity to try something new when you read about it in the newsletter. We encourage you to **pay attention to registration deadlines** and to understand that sometimes classes have a limit on the number of participants. Sign up early!

Please contact the Extension Office for further information or visit our [Yellowstone County 4-H website](https://www.montana.edu/extension/yellowstone/4h/index.html) at <https://www.montana.edu/extension/yellowstone/4h/index.html> where you can find the newsletter and more information at the click of a mouse.

REMEMBER, if you email us and don't receive a reply saying, "Thank you", we have not received your email! Our firewall is rather stringent. You can also find reminders and photos on our Yellowstone County 4-H and the Yellowstone County Ambassador Facebook pages.

4-H FRUIT SALE INFORMATION

All 4-H Clubs are required to participate in the fruit sale. Each club needs to have at least one representative present at this meeting. You will receive your club order forms and instructions and a sample of the delicious fruit that we will be selling. We will meet Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 5:30 pm in the 4-H Building

FRUIT SALE POLICY

Members are expected to sell a minimum of 2 boxes of fruit or take part in the buyout program (talk to your club fruit sale representative).

4-H Council Policy:

"All 4-H members must participate in the Yellowstone County 4-H Council Fruit Sale and Family Fun Night fund raising events if the member wishes to participate in county sponsored events. (County sponsored events include Achievement Day, 4-H Camp, Citizenship Interviews and Trips, Congress, Showcase, Sewing Festival, Foods Festival, Livestock Judging events, leader training and any other event or activity funded by or through a committee or Council line-item budget.)"

ROCKING THE RECORD BOOKS WORKSHOP JANUARY 24

Want to learn how to set up your record book, what needs to be included, and how to take your record books to the Gold Seal level? Mark your calendars for Saturday, January 24, 10:00 am to 12 noon in the 4-H Building. Bring your record books, project books, and any questions you may have. Members, parents, and leaders are strongly encouraged to attend. There will be drawings for some cool 4-H prizes!

RECORD BOOK WORKSHOP HELPERS NEEDED

We are looking for parents and experienced members to come and help us run stations for this workshop on January 24, 2026, from 10 am-12 pm, at the 4-H Building. Please let us know by January 22, if you would like to help or just show up. Please contact Roni Baker if you would like to help or have questions.

4-H CLUB OFFICERS WORKSHOP JANUARY 27

Congratulations to all the new 2025-2026 club officers!

Please join the Yellowstone County Ambassadors to learn how to do your officer job well. We will have food, fun, and an engaging atmosphere. Watch your email for future information that will be send directly to officers. Save the date of Tuesday, January 27 at 6:00 pm in the 4-H Building.

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY: MONTHLY SERIES

For 4-H Members 4-H Age (age as of October 1, 2025) 12 and older: Join the Montana 4-H Leadership Academy online workshop series 6:00 pm on Sunday evenings. The Ambassador Officer Team will present a different workshop topic that they have found to be important as they have developed their own leadership abilities.

January 11: Planning and Running a Project

February 8: Having Growth Mindset

March 8: Motivation and Inspiring Peers

April 12: Decision Making

The leadership academy is for Montana 4-H members interested in exploring and developing their own leadership skills while serving their county 4-H program in new ways. The workshop content is considered beginner level for emerging leaders. Members with more leadership experience may find this to be a review and should consider mentoring younger members just starting out in leadership activities before or after these workshops.

Visit the [State 4-H website](https://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/programs_and_events/youth_leadership/academy.html) at

https://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/programs_and_events/youth_leadership/academy.html to register for the workshop series and receive the Zoom link.

2026 REC LAB IN COLUMBUS MARCH 27-29 – SAVE THE DATES!

This event is a 4-H member favorite: It provides an opportunity for youth and adults to enhance their leadership, communication, and team building skills in an action-packed and interactive setting.

Rec Lab programming provides participants with tips and tricks for being a better club, camp, and community leader. This event is ideal for younger senior members to attend as a first-time state event. It allows them to form relationships with 4-H peers from across the state, broaden their skills, and widen their network.

Youth participants must be 13+ as of October 1.

Registration will be open in ZSuite. Watch your email and the February newsletter. The cost will be around \$100 to \$125 per person. Yellowstone County 4-H council will contribute to the registration fee. We will set up rides and chaperones. Participants will have the opportunity to pick from a list of workshops during registration. Visit the [state 4-H website](https://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/programs_and_events/events/rec_lab/index.html) at https://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/programs_and_events/events/rec_lab/index.html

REC LAB WORKSHOP PROPOSALS NEEDED BY JANUARY 5

District 7 invites you to submit workshop proposals for the 2026 Montana 4-H Rec Lab, happening March 27–29 in Columbus, MT. Workshops will be held on Saturday, March 28.

This year's theme is "4-H Escape: Do You Have the Skills to Unlock Your Potential?"

Bring your creativity and skills to life with a workshop that challenges participants to grow in leadership, communication, and team-building — the core of Rec Lab's mission!

Workshop proposals will be submitted through [Google Forms](#) at

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfcMYQsAHodX-ry3QCH-U8g-71JWZSvfSVSW8BS0YjvLSOZIQ/viewform?usp=dialog>

Deadline to submit proposals is Monday, January 5, 2026

Both teens and adults (4-H volunteers, Extension professionals, community members & people from other organizations) are encouraged to submit workshop proposals. Please share with those who might be interested in presenting from your communities!

4-H BUILDING CALENDAR CAN BE VIEWED ONLINE

You can view the 4-H Building calendar on the [Yellowstone County 4-H website](#) at

https://www.montana.edu/extension/yellowstone/4h/newsletter_calendar_meetingnotes.html

***If you would like to use the 4-H Building for a 4-H club meeting, project meeting, workshop or some other 4-H related event this calendar will help you determine a date the building MAY be available. Dates are not guaranteed until you contact the Extension office with your request, and we confirm that it is available, and you have been added to the calendar. The 4-H Building may not be used for non-4-H events.

NO 4-H COUNCIL MEETING IN JANUARY

There will NOT be a meeting in January. We will meet again February 5, at 6:30 pm in the 4-H Building. Everyone is invited to attend to learn about how council operates and how you can make a difference in the program.

YOUTH ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE & ATTEND MEETINGS

Youth are invited to participate in all the county meetings and on all the committees. We want you to be involved in Sale Committee, Livestock Committee, Department N Committee, 4-H Council and all the event committees such as Fruit Sale and Family Fun Night. Come share your opinions and be part of the decision-making process in the county!

PEOPLE PARTNER GRANT DUE FEBRUARY 14

The People Partner grant program offers an opportunity for clubs and individuals to make a difference in the community with projects involving 4-H members in determining a need, completing a grant application, and implementing the project. Applications are available at the Extension Office or can be printed off the [state 4-H Foundation website](#) at <https://www.mt4hfoundation.org/grants.html>. Applications must be postmarked by February 14. Up to \$500 may be awarded to individual clubs by the Montana 4-H Foundation.

The state 4-H website has identified some additional resources for grants and scholarships.

4-H LICENSE PLATE

Remember when renewing or purchasing a license plate to consider the 4-H license plate available at the county Motor Vehicle Department. Proceeds go back to 4-H.

4-H RECORD SHEETS SHOULD BE STARTED

By now you should have completed your "Goals" for each of your project journals and on your "My 4-H Year" record. Below are some overall goals you should review now so your leader will be able to check "YES" on each when you turn your records in at the end of the year.

- Enroll in and complete at least one project.

- Set at least 3 goals to accomplish during the 4-H year.
- Complete the “My 4-H Year” journal form.
- Keep your journals up to date with the activities you do throughout the year.
- Participate in at least 3 activities such as judging, demonstrations, public speaking, tours, reports at club meetings, etc. and record them in “My 4-H Year”.
- List any awards and honors you receive.
- Complete the Projects and Financial Journal for each project.
- If you own an animal, keep records for it and complete the appropriate parts of the Animal Record. This will vary according to the animal you have.

4-H DEMONSTRATION TIPS

When designing and presenting your demonstrations this year, use the following tips to make your best better!

- Select a topic that you know well and find interesting.
- Develop one main idea or topic to share.
- Use an outline to help you organize the idea or topic into three to seven points or steps that can be explained and/or shown.
- Secure the material and the equipment needed and organize it to avoid clutter.
- Dress appropriately for the activity being demonstrated.
- Check your materials and equipment before you give the demonstration. Make words on posters large enough for all to read.
- Use a catchy introduction that will get the attention of the audience.
- Take your time and speak clearly, looking at your audience.
- Show how each step is done so everyone can see.
- Keep your materials orderly, and when you are finished with something, place it out of the way.
- Practice the demonstration with family or friends who will give suggestions for improvement.
- Smile and enjoy yourself, but avoid chewing gum, placing your hands in your pockets, or “fiddling” with equipment.
- Review your points or steps at the end, ask if there are questions, and thank the audience.

To learn more about how to create each type of demonstration visit the [Montana 4-H's Communications webpage](https://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/projects/4h_communication/) or https://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/projects/4h_communication/.

START APPLYING FOR UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

MSU-Bozeman Montana Premier Scholarship Program. Hundreds of academic scholarships will be available to new freshmen from Montana who demonstrate academic promise based on ACT and/or SAT scores and grade point average. Leadership experience, activities, honors, and financial need may also be considered. Students must apply for admission on the [Montana State University website](https://www.montana.edu/admissions/) at <https://www.montana.edu/admissions/> and complete the applications.

Applications for the **State 4-H Foundation scholarships** can be found on the [state 4-H website](https://www.mt4hfoundation.org/scholarships.html) at <https://www.mt4hfoundation.org/scholarships.html>. The site has detailed requirements and deadlines.

The **Yellowstone County Foundation** offers scholarships of varying amounts to graduating seniors/4-H Alumni. The scholarship application will be mailed directly to members and can be printed off the [Yellowstone County 4-H website](https://www.montana.edu/extension/yellowstone/4h/4-hopportunitiesandevents.html) at <https://www.montana.edu/extension/yellowstone/4h/4-hopportunitiesandevents.html>. These are due April 1.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT SCHOLARSHIPS

The Montana Association of Conservation Districts announces that two scholarships are available for high school seniors or students already in college. The 2026 application and instructions will be available on the [Conservation District website](https://macdnet.org/programs/scholarships/) or <https://macdnet.org/programs/scholarships/>.

MONTHLY CLUB MINUTES HIGHLIGHTS

The following clubs turned in club minutes by the newsletter deadline:

Lockwood Humble Bs: We held a pizza party and then cleaned the 4-H building.

Northern Lights: Club officers were voted on and club members planned a winter outdoor activity.

Project Rockin Wranglers: New club officers were announced, and year-end awards were distributed.

Shepherd Pioneers: Year-end pins were handed out to members. Record book sections for completion were discussed.

4-H SUPPORTERS

Many businesses and organizations in our community support 4-H. We list several each month. We encourage you to thank them and support them in return. If you would like to submit names for this article, please send them to Roni.

4-H Supporter	Mailing Address
Fauth Agency – KJ Fauth	623 Lake Elmo Drive, Billings MT 59105
Bobcat of Big Sky	2125 Old Hardin Road, Billings MT 59101
Albertsons	511 Central Avenue, Billings MT 59101
The Truck Shop	3145 N Frontage Lane, Billings MT 59101
Dick Anderson Construction	PO Box 31511, Billings MT 59107
87 Rentals	281 21 Mile Road, Shepherd MT 59079
Altana Credit Union	3212 Central Avenue, Billings MT 59102
Stinkblossom	1031 US Hwy 87 E, Billings MT 59101
K2 Civil	6513 Tradecenter Avenue, Billings MT 59101
Project Kids DayCare	2440 4 th Street, Worden MT 59088
Signal Peak Energy	100 Portal Drive, Roundup MT 59072

NO DEPARTMENT N (NON-ANIMAL PROJECTS) MEETING IN JANUARY

There will NOT be a Department N meeting in January. We will meet February 5, at 6:00 pm in the 4-H Building. All members and leaders enrolled in Department N (non-animal) projects are invited to attend.

JANUARY 10 CERAMICS WORKSHOP

The ceramics workshop will be held Saturday, January 10. Times are 10:00 am to 1:00 pm or 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Please call Sheri Anttila at 406-633-5531 to let her know if you have any questions, need directions to her home, and which class/time you will be attending. Mark your calendars for the February 7 workshop.

SHOOTING SPORTS LEADER MEETING JANUARY 15

Shooting sports leader meeting for ALL 4-H Shooting Sport leaders on Thursday, January 15, at 6:00 pm in the 4-H Building.

SHOOTING SPORTS INVITATIONAL ****SAVE THE DATE****

Yellowstone County Shooting Sports Invitational on February 21, 2026. Watch your email for instructions on how to register that will be emailed to all shooting sports members and leaders.

SHOOTING SPORTS LEADER TRAININGS FOR 2026

To be a 4-H Shooting Sports Certified Leader in the State of Montana, the following must be satisfied:

1. Be at least 21 years of age.
2. Be enrolled as a leader in their respective County. Passed a background check and successfully completed the Montana 4-H Volunteer Training Modules.
3. **All training attendees must complete the four National 4-H Shooting Sports modules in ZSuite to be certified at the end of the practicum day. The code for ZSuite will be shared with the leaders that sign up to take the trainings.**
4. Be trained and certified in any discipline(s) that they are teaching at the county level.
5. Participants must attend the entire training and successfully complete all aspects to receive their respective discipline certification.
6. Certification is good for seven (7) years. If the discipline is not taught in the first 2 years, the course must be retaken.

SHOPPING IN STYLE PROJECT

The Shopping in Style project is designed for youth who do not want to sew yet want to learn about clothing, style, what looks best on you and staying within a budget when purchasing items. This is the project to enroll in if youth want to participate in Showcase and at MontanaFair.

Showcase is a countywide event where 4-H members in Clothing & Textiles projects show items they have made or purchased in their project. Participants take part in a public fashion show where they are judged. There are also categories for quilt, display, duct tape, costume, and refashion/repurpose/redesign.

SHOWCASE & CONGRESS QUILT SHOW-PLAN NOW

It's time to begin planning your quilt for the Showcase Quilt Show that will be held April 4, 2026. Any 4-H member or relative of a 4-H member may enter the quilt show. You may enter a bed or lap quilt, wall hanging, or quilt block. If you need help getting started, or have a question about construction, patterns, choice of fabrics, binding, etcetera, contact your sewing or quilting leader or for more information call the Extension Office at 406-256-2828.

Senior 4-H members: There is a quilt show at Congress, held in Bozeman in July. You may enter your quilt in the Congress Quilt Show and attend the Congress Quilting Contest. Any size quilt will be accepted, as well as wall hangings and quilted garments. All work must be done by the 4-H member (no professional quilting) and awards will be presented. Score sheets are available for you to view from Roni. Our county may submit more than one entry, so encourage your friends to quilt too.

DEPARTMENT A (ANIMAL PROJECTS) MONTHLY MEETINGS

Small Animal Committee Meeting: January 28, at 6:00 pm at the 4-H Building

Sale Committee Meeting: 6:30 pm followed by Livestock Committee Meeting. We'll meet in the 4-H Building at MetraPark. Everyone (members, leaders, parents) enrolled in a Department A (animal) project is welcome to attend.

CAT COUNTY PROJECT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Saturday, January 17, from 11:00 to 1:00 pm at the 4-H Building. This meeting will cover Feed and Nutrition. The 2026 Cat Project meeting schedule has been posted in ZSuite under the member profile Dashboard. It can be downloaded under the member's Shared Files. We have a Facebook page for anyone that would like to join. "Yellowstone County Cat Project". Please send a request to join, if you are a parent- please note the child's name in request. Meeting updates, agendas, and other cat related tidbits will be posted there.

POCKET PET COUNTY PROJECT MEETING

The county Pocket Pet Meeting will be on Saturday January 17, from 1:00 to 2:00 pm at the 4-H Building. This meeting will cover the feeding and nutrition requirements of pocket pets. Hands on activity will also be planned. The 2026 Pocket Pet Project meeting schedule has been posted in ZSuite under the member profile Dashboard. It can be downloaded under the member's Shared Files.

POULTRY COUNTY PROJECT MEETING

On January 29, at 6:30 pm there will be a Poultry workshop in the 4-H Building. Please DO NOT bring your animals. 4-H Poultry Volunteer Jen Mignard will talk about poultry conditioning which helps optimize bird health, vitality and appearance through bird diet.

MARKET BEEF TAGGING FOR MONTANAFair: SUNDAY, JANUARY 5

The Beef tagging date for 2026 will be **SUNDAY, JANUARY 4**, from **12:00 to 3:00 pm** at PAYS.

All market beef you are planning to enter the MontanaFair must be tagged on this date. There are no exceptions.

Each exhibitor can tag three animals in each species. Exhibitors can enter all 3 in their MontanaFair entry, but at the fair they must decide which 2 animals they will be weighing and exhibiting. Each exhibitor at the MontanaFair can only sell one animal.

All exhibitors at the MontanaFair in Department A (livestock) are required to attend a MSU Extension Animal Quality Assurance Training prior to the MontanaFair entry deadline to be eligible to exhibit at the MontanaFair. Animal Quality Assurance Class will be from 1:00-2:30 pm and the Horse Helmet Class is from 3:00 am to 4:00 pm.

2025-2026 ANIMAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY & WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

All 4-H and FFA members exhibiting any animal in Department A (Junior Livestock) at MontanaFair are required to attend an MSU Extension **ANIMAL QUALITY ASSURANCE TRAINING (AQA)** (per state guidelines) provided by the 4-H Committee or an FFA Advisor/Agriculture Educator prior to the first MontanaFair entry deadline or exhibitors do not show. Yellowstone County has two 4-H age brackets for AQA training. Exhibitors must attend AQA as Beginners/Juniors (4-H age 8-13), and as a senior member (4-H age 14-19). This age is based on the exhibitors "4-H Age" – the age as of October 1 of the current 4-H year. Exhibitors must take Animal Quality Assurance the first year they reach each age

bracket or the first year they are exhibiting in an animal project. All classes will include the same teaching materials and use the same forms and paperwork. Class content is determined by a committee and updated every two years. A parent or legal guardian must also attend the AQA Training.

There will be hands-on, group activities. Please plan on arriving on time with a parent with both staying for the complete 1½ hours. If you and your parent are not in attendance for the complete training, you may be asked to attend another session. Plan on attending a session early in the year so conflicts do not occur in your family schedule. **More workshops will NOT be added after the June 3 class. It is the final opportunity for 2026.**

The sessions in January, March and May are in person trainings. For the virtual sessions, people will log into the Webex meeting (Webex link information will be sent out via email prior to each session) to learn the information then go to the online program, pay their own \$12 fee, and take the online class. A copy of the completion certificate must be provided to the Extension Office.

Sunday, January 4: 1:00-2:30 pm at PAYS (Public Auction Yards) (HARA/7/25/17)

Thursday, February 12: 6:00 pm Virtual training

Monday, March 30: 6:30 pm Virtual training

Friday, April 24: 6:00 pm at the 4-H Building

Saturday, May 2: 9:00-10:30 am at PAYS (Public Auction Yards)

Tuesday, June 2: 6:30 pm Virtual training

MSU EXTENSION 4-H HORSE HELMET POLICY & WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Participants in the 4-H Horse Project are required to attend a Horse Helmet Workshop once as a beginner/junior 4-H member (8-13) and again as a senior 4-H member (14 and up). This age is based on the exhibitors "4-H Age" – the age as of October 1 of the current 4-H year. Exhibitors must attend a Horse Helmet Workshop the first year they reach every age bracket or the first year they are exhibiting in an animal project. A parent or legal guardian must also attend the Horse Helmet Workshop.

After attending a 4-H Helmet Workshop, riders may choose whether they will wear a certified helmet. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the 4-H member to see that the headgear worn complies with such standards and is in good condition. The Montana 4-H Center for Youth Development encourages the use of ASTM certified/SEI approved safety helmets in all equine events. Protective headgear may be used in all classes and shall not be discriminated against. Helmet use is encouraged in all 4-H horse activities any time a 4-H member is around a horse. A certified equestrian helmet with safety harness fastened in place is required in over fence classes and gymkhana events, activities, and practice sessions. Gymkhana refers to horseback speed events (timed or un-timed) that do not use livestock. Events that usually fall in this category include, but are not limited to barrel racing, pole

bending, keyhole races, stake races, rescue races, pony express race, etc. Events that are not intended to be included in this policy are events such as calf roping, team roping, goat tying, and team penning that may be timed but use livestock. **More workshops will NOT be added after the May 2 class. It is the final opportunity for 2026.**

Sunday, January 4: 3:00-4:00 pm at PAYS (Public Auction Yards)

Wednesday, April 15: 7:00-8:00 pm at the 4-H Building

Saturday, May 2: 11:00 am-12:00 pm at PAYS (Public Auction Yards)

2026 MONTANA WINTER FAIR

The Montana Winter Fair will be held January 15-18, 2026, in Lewistown, MT. Information can be found online at the [Montana Winter Fair website](http://montanawinterfair.com/) at <http://montanawinterfair.com/>, by calling 406-538-2200 or emailing montanawinterfair@gmail.com.

2026 MONTANA STATE FAIR JUNIOR LIVESTOCK SHOW

Anyone wanting to show at the 2026 Montana State Fair in Great Falls, MT should visit the [Montana ExpoPark](https://tickets.goexpopark.com/) at <https://tickets.goexpopark.com/> or call 406-727-8900 for entry information.

JANUARY 2026 4-H CALENDAR



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 OFFICE CLOSED New Year's	2	3
4 12-3 pm Beef Tagging 1-2:30 pm Animal Quality Assurance 3-4 pm Horse Helmet <i>all at PAYS</i>	5	6 5:30 pm Fruit Sale Info. Meeting <i>4-H Building</i>	7	8	9	10
11 6:00 pm Leadership Academy <i>WebEx</i>	12 11-2 Extension Open House 2320 3rd Avenue N	13	14	15	16 Newsletter Articles Due Montana Winter Fair in Lewistown January 16-18 ←	17 11:00 pm Cat Workshop 1:00 Pocket Pets Workshop <i>4-H Building</i>
18 →	19 OFFICE CLOSED Martin Luther King Day	20	21	22	23	24 10 am Record Book Workshop <i>4-H Building</i>
25	26 Exchange	27 6:00 Club Officer Workshop <i>4-H Building</i>	28 6 pm Small Animal Comm. 6:30 pm Sale Committee followed by Livestock Committee <i>4-H Building</i>	29 6:30 Poultry Workshop <i>4-H Building</i>	30	31 AM Workshops