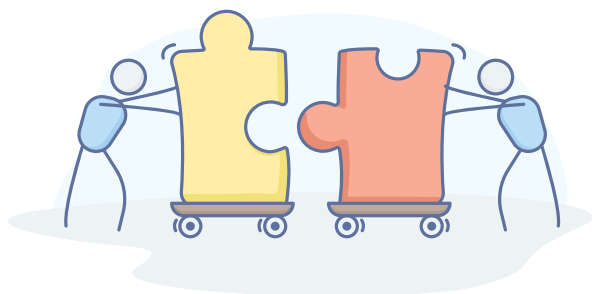




Congratulations!

You Are Reporter of Your 4-H Club

Congratulations! You have been elected to lead your club! This comes with great responsibilities to not only represent your club, but also your county and the entire 4-H Youth Development program in Michigan. Every successful 4-H club has a good team of officers. A good officer displays teamwork and cooperation among members through leadership and organization. Each officer is a piece of the puzzle and has an important role to play for the overall success of the club. This guide will help you in your role and responsibility as reporter.





Checklist for Reporters

Responsibilities of the reporter always

- Represent the club proudly.
- Regularly attend events and meetings.
- Lead by example; be positive.
- Work cooperatively with all officers and leaders for the success of the club.
- Keep an updated list of newspapers, radio stations and social media outlets to send your articles to.
- Tell the 4-H news in an accurate and interesting way.
- Promote 4-H through avenues the club identifies (newspaper, social media, emails and other methods).
- Keep past published and unpublished articles as part of the club's history.

Responsibilities prior to the meeting or event

- Notify the leader(s) and president several days before the meeting if you will be absent.

Responsibilities during the meeting or event

- Take accurate notes at each club meeting or event in order to write accurate posts or articles later.

Responsibilities after the meeting or event

- Consult with the club secretary for meeting information.
- Write a news article promptly after each event.
- Send the news article to the newspapers, radio stations, other media and 4-H office.
- Include photos with articles whenever possible, after obtaining permission of those in the photos when applicable.

Choosing Media Outlets

When sharing information, consider what media outlet is the most beneficial.

Articles:

- Local or county newspaper
- Local TV stations
- Local radio stations
- State 4-H newsletter
- 4-H office

Club updates, meeting information, activities or workshops:

- Appropriate social media pages
- 4-H office

Basic Rules of Social Media

Social media is a tool that people can use to communicate and share information with club members and others.

- Use social media outlets that are current.
- Use social media tools that works best for your club and community.
- Remember that all posts are permanent, even when you have deleted them.
- Keep information current and up to date, and post regularly.
- Use proper grammar and spelling; proof your content before submitting.
- Make sure you have permission to post pictures of individuals. All photos should be appropriate for audiences of all ages. Photos you choose to share online paint a picture for others.
- Engage other officers and leaders to post and review postings.
- Establish guidelines with leaders, officers and club members on appropriate information to share on social media.



How to Write a Good News Article

1. Choose a title (headline) that captures what the article is about as well as one that captures the reader's eye.
2. At the top of the article, in the upper left corner, write the name of the club, then below that, your name, the 4-H office you hold (reporter), your email address and phone number, and "For Immediate Release." Then type the title (headline) of the article.
3. Be sure to type your article and double-space it.
4. Write your articles in the third person.
5. The first paragraph of the article is the most important. It sums up the rest of the article.
6. The first paragraph tells *who, what, when, where, why* and sometimes *how*. Decide which point (who, what, when, where, why or how) is most important, and start the paragraph with that point. You may find it helpful to use a reporter template such as the one given. Part of the reporter template – the table for taking notes and prioritizing your points – is given with notes as an example.
7. After the first paragraph, tell more about each of the points throughout the article.
8. Use simple language in brief sentences and short paragraphs. Include only those details that are necessary to the article.
9. Use first and last names and add in locations if known, such as Janelle Stewart of Adrian and Roxanne Turner of Marlette. Be absolutely certain all names are spelled correctly.
10. Be accurate.
11. Include good quality photos whenever possible and add photo captions, being sure to give photo credit when appropriate.
12. Do not include your personal opinions.
13. After the article is typed, immediately take it to the newspaper editor or radio station news director, or send it by mail or email.

Sample Table for News Article (With Notes as Examples)*

Priority	Points
2	Who: Helping Hands 4-H Club
3	What: World Food Prize Michigan Youth Institute
1	When: May 10, 20XX
4	Where: Michigan State University
6	Why: Attended the event to learn more about it and to develop our own service project. Also to get quotes as to why participants do the program. "I got to know some really cool people."
5	How: Participants chose a developing country and an issue within that country. Each researched, wrote a research paper and attended Michigan Youth Institute to present the paper.

*Note: The above notes in the table are not complete. They are designed to show you how a reporter could use the template by inserting notes into the sections who, what, when, where, why and how, and then prioritizing them (by assigning a number) before writing the article.



Sample News Article

Helping Hands 4-H Club, Clover County
Written By: Grace Schmidt, Club Reporter
Email: helpinghands@4hmail.com
Phone: 517-555-4263
For Immediate Release

4-H members learn about food security

On May 10, 20_, members of the Helping Hands 4-H Club attended the World Food Prize Michigan Youth Institute held on the campus of Michigan State University (MSU). Months earlier, the four club members were challenged to choose a developing country and a topic or issue within that country. After extensive research, the students drafted a research paper about how that issue relates to food security within their chosen country. They then attended the Michigan Youth Institute, a program led by MSU Extension, where they presented their research in a roundtable discussion with peers and local food experts. Following the presentations, the students chose from various tour opportunities around campus. 4-H member Josie Smith attended a tour of the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine, where she learned about the eradication of diseases in animals around the world. 4-H member Danika Jones had the opportunity to tour the MSU Organic Farm. Throughout the event, participants were scored on their interest, presentation skills and willingness to participate. The participants reported that the event was fun, educational and a great way to make connections in food security around the state.

“I got to know some really cool people, and the event made me want to pursue a career in global food security,” said 4-H member Hunter Johnson. He added that he “enjoyed the experience and is looking forward to getting more involved in food security on the local scale.”

The club members will be running a countywide food drive to benefit the local food pantry. Overall, participants greatly valued and enjoyed the experience.



Reporter Template

Club Name:
 Author's Name: Author's Title: Reporter
 Email:
 Phone:
 For Immediate Release

Title (Headline) of Article:

Table for News Article

(Place the information in the boxes from your notes in the appropriate spot. Prioritize the points by assigning them a number in order of importance.)

Priority	Points
	Who:
	What:
	When:
	Where:
	Why:
	How:



Congratulations! You Are Reporter of Your 4-H Club (4H 1472) is a revision of *So You Are Reporter of Your Club...* (4H1472), which was adapted with permission from materials originally developed by University of Illinois Extension, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and from Iowa State University Cooperative Extension Service. It has been published separately and as part of *Helping You Help Officers and Committees* (4H1467) by Michigan State University Extension, 2007.

This 2019 revision was written by Michigan State University Extension Educators Janelle Stewart, Roxanne Turner and Christine Heverly, and 4-H member Grace Schmidt. It was reviewed by Ashley Frye, MSU Extension 4-H Program Coordinator, and Jan Brinn, MSU Extension Educator.