Berrien County 4-H Spotlight

Upcoming MSU Extension Office Closures

The Berrien County MSU Extension Office will be closed on the following days. Please arrange for any pickup or dop offs prior to these dates.

Appointment ONLY – Fridays December 15 December 24 – January 5 January 19



Volume 27 Issue 7
December 2025 – January 2026

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CONTACT US

Extension Office
1737 Hillandale Road
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. – Noon 1:00 p.m. – 5-:00 p.m.

Phone: 269-927-5674

Fax: 269-944-4128

Email: msue.berrien@county.msu.edu

Website: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/county/ berrien/berrien county 4 h



Club Bank Statement Deadline



This is a friendly reminder that the deadline to submit Club Bank Statements for December 31 statements are due on January 10, 2026. All Clubs must submit their bank statement or be subject to an audit. Statements can be:

- Mailed to 1737 Hillandale Road, Benton Harbor, MI 49022
- Dropped off at the afterhours drop mailbox out front
- Faxed to 269-944-4128

Please note, clubs that already have their statements mailed directly to the Berrien County MSU Extension Office on monthly/bi-monthly basis may disregard.

4-H Yearly Enrollment – Now Open!

4-H Online is now open for 4-H new year enrollments! Login today to submit your annual enrollment.



2025 - 2026 deadlines are as follows:

- January 1 Returning Member Re-enrollment deadline
- June 1 New Member deadline

Paper accommodations available upon request to the Berrien County MSU Extension Office at 269-927-5674 or can be found online at:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/berrien/berrien_county_4_h/enrollment

Enrollment forms must be on file by the deadline dates listed above to be eligible for project complete, awards, scholarships, etc.

4-H Enrollment Swag Drawing

The first 4-H enrollment drawing for 4-H swag has been completed. Winners were selected at random and are listed below. Winners will be notified for prize distribution.

- 1. Caitlin D. Four Flags
- 2. James C. Outsiders
- 3. Penelope P. Blue Ribbon Bandits
- 4. Ellis V. South Lakers
- 5. Colin D. Four Flags

- 6. Matthew W. South Lakers
- 7. Riley C. Outsiders
- 8. Alexander M. Countrysiders
- 9. Kaytlyn J. Blue Ribbon Bandits
- 10. Natalie S. Outsiders

- 11. Hattie R. Galien Chanters
- 12. Presle D. Town and Country
- 13. Moria L. Straight Shooters
- 14. Avery P. Countrysiders
- 15. Dawson B. Outsiders

If you have not registered for the 2025 – 2026 program year, do so by January 1, 2026 to be entered in our last and final door prize enrollment drawing for the year! Registration can be done through 4-H Online or via paper for both new and returning.







Michigan 4-H License Plate – Now Available



Michigan drivers have a new way to show their 4-H pride while supporting 4-H youth development programming: through the purchase of the newly released Michigan 4-H license plate. Available at the Michigan Secretary of State, the plate prominently displays the signature 4-H clover and part of the proceeds from every sale and renewal will go to support Michigan 4-H youth.

Like other special cause fundraising license plates in the state, the Michigan 4-H license plate will cost \$35, with \$25 of the purchase fee benefiting Michigan 4-H Youth Development. A \$10 fee will also be charged to benefit Michigan 4-H when the plate is renewed. License plates may be ordered by visiting Michigan.gov/sos, by mailing in a form or scheduling a visit to any Secretary of State office. The plate will be delivered by mail in two to three weeks.

Candy Bar Fundraiser



The Annual Fall Fundraiser is in full swing. Thank you to all the clubs that have participated in selling World's Finest Chocolate Candy Bars. Reminder to clubs that sold World's Finest Chocolate Candy Bars, that the deadline for ALL money to be turned into by December 4.

Checks can be either mailed to 1737 Hillandale Road, Benton Harbor, MI 49022; dropped off during office hours or through the after-hours mailbox.

A Club's portion of the candy bars profits cannot be distributed until all money owed by the club is submitted. Checks should be made payable to: Berrien County 4-H Leaders Association, Inc.

For questions, issues or concerns related to the candy bar sale, please contact the Berrien County MSU Extension office at 269-927-5674.

County Curriculum Order

Taking new projects? Need a Member Record Book? Leveling Up in your project? Need a new project book? Don't waste time, reach out to your local 4-H Project Leader on what resource books you need as we look towards kicking off the new 4-H year!

This year's countywide curriculum order is scheduled to be placed on January 1. Club Coordinator & Project Leaders can submit their requests for member & leader resources by contacting the Berrien County MSU Extension Office.

When requesting, please include Club Name, Resource Name (s), & # needed.









4-H Recognition Celebration Results

The Berrien County 4-H Youth Program proudly presented the 2025 Berrien County 4-H Member & Leader Recognition on Sunday, November 9, 2025, at Hidden Pointe in Benton Harbor, MI. We would like to make everyone aware of the top awards given out. The program and awards were sponsored by the Berrien County 4-H Leaders Association, Inc. and the Berrien County 4-H Foundation, Inc.

All-Achievement Award

The All-Achievement Award recognizes member's leadership and experience within a project area that they have completed for at least four years. Youth are only able to receive one All Achievement in a project in their 4-H career.

Horse and Pony Project – Emma Z. – River Valley Wranglers Horse and Pony Project – Derrick F. – River Valley Wranglers Gardening & Horticulture Project – Brayden L. – Galien Chanters Poultry Project – Emma Z. – River Valley Wranglers PEP Project – Brayden L. – We Can Ride 4-H Club

4-H Club Award

The 4-H Club award recognizes a club's accomplishments as submitted and documented by the youth members. Recognition is given to three (3) clubs based on member counts as verified by the MSU Extension Office. Size breakdown: Small (0-14), Medium (15-29), and Large (30 or more).

Large Group Category – Four Flags 4-H Club Medium Group Category – Galien Chanters 4-H Club

Michigan 4-H Dog Patch Program

The Dog Patch Program is designed to recognize the personal achievements of individuals participation in the 4-H Dog Program. The program has been in existence since 1987 and provides youth with goals to work towards in this project area

Dog Project Patch – Micah F. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Maizie M. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Maizie M. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Lilliana C. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Lilliana C. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Robert P. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Dylan C. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Madeline P. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Dylan C. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Katherine D. – Best Friends
Dog Project Patch – Harly F. – Best Friends
Cloverbud Year 1 Patch – Harly F. – Best Friends

Leo Stanley Outstanding 4-H'er Award

The Leo Stanley Outstanding 4-H'er Award is the highest county honor a 4-H'er can receive and is sponsored by the Southwest Exchange Club of Michigan. Selection is made encompassing a member's whole 4-H career. A maximum of two youth can receive this honor each year.

Brayden L. of the We Can Ride 4-H Club, Teen Service 4-H Club & Galien Chanters 4-H Club

Mariah Award

Leader – Connie Peterson – Best Friends 4-H Club Youth – Ava C. – Best Friends 4-H Club

Outstanding 4-H Leader Award

Carly Case – We Can Ride 4-H Club Todd Case – We Can Ride 4-H Club







4-H Recognition Celebration Results

Senior Awards

4-H Senior Awards were presented to Berrien County 4-H members who have been a member for five or more years and have plans to graduate from high school in the current 4-H year. Please note, cords will not be replaced if lost. 4-H Families are asked to request permission from their designated school in advance if there are any restrictions when it comes to wearing cords during graduation. If school restrictions do apply, we ask that all families respect school policy accordingly. 2024 4-H Senior Award Recipients are as follows:

Jennifer P – Blue Ribbon Bandits 4-H Club Kayleigh L. – Blue Ribbon Bandits 4-H Club Lucy M. – Blue Ribbon Bandits 4-H Club Zachary S. – Blue Ribbon Bandits 4-H Club Robert C. – Galien Chanters Riley K – Tumbleweeds 4-H Club Isabel H. – Redbud Country Goat 4-H Club Kami Y – South Lakers 4-H Club Kendra K – High Spirits 4-H Club Brayden L – Galien Chanters Clara S. – We Can Ride Devon S. – On the Rail Matthew W. – South Lakers Taylor T – Outsiders Denielle S. – Galien Chanters Adam B – We Can Ride

County Project Pins

The County Project Medals recognizes members within a project area that have completed for at least three years. Youth are only able to receive one project medal in a project area in their 4-H career.

Gardening & Horticulture – Devin L. – Galien Chanters
Dogs – Micah F. – Best Friends
Cake Decorating – Jordan D. – Countrysiders
Cake Decorating – Brady P. – Backyard Renegades
Photography – Devin L. – Galien Chanters
Poultry – Gemma R. – Four Flags 4-H Club
Visual Arts – Lincoln S. – Blue Ribbon Bandits
Clothing & Textiles – Lucie C. – Galien Chanters

Horse and Pony – Derrick F. – River Valley Wranglers
Gardening & Horticulture – Madelyn H. – Galien Chanters
Cake Decorating – Esme S. – On the Rail
Leadership – Brayden L – Galien Chanters
Poultry – Brooklyn K. – Blue Ribbon Bandits
Poultry – Lincoln S. – Blue Ribbon Bandits
Visual Arts – Brayden L. – Galien Chanters

Teen Leader Pins

4-H Teen Leader Awards are presented to youth who have successfully completed a Teen Leader project during the current 4-H year.

Horse and Pony – Brayden L. – We Can Ride
Horse and Pony – Kyle S. – We Can Ride
Horse and Pony – Clara S. – We Can Ride
Horse and Pony – Esme S. – On the Rail
Leadership – Maizie M. – Best Friends & Galien Chanters
Leadership – Brooke S. – Galien Chanters
Poultry – Madelyn H. – Galien Chanters
Rabbits – Lucie C. – Galien Chanters
Project Leader – Kayleigh L. – Blue Ribbon Bandits

Horse and Pony – Brooklyn W. – Fuzzy Friends

Horse and Pony – Jemma J. – We Can Ride
Horse and Pony – Makayla S. – We Can Ride
Horse and Pony – Aubrey H. – We Can Ride
Horse and Pony – Lanie K. – We Can Ride
Leadership – Gemma R. – Four Flags
Leadership – Lauren L. – High Spirits
Clothing & Textiles – Kyle S. – Galien Chanters
Poultry – Brooke S. – Galien Chanters
Food & Nutrition – Kyle S. – Galien Chanters
Project Leader – Lincoln S. – Blue Ribbon Bandits

Clover Years of Service

10 Years – Connie Peterson – Best Friends 4-H Club 25 Years – Pam LaPorte – Tumbleweeds 4-H Club 55 Years – Suzette Hendershott – On the Rail 4-H Club 30 Years - Linda Shannon-Challiet - Best Friends 4-H Club 40 Years - Sue Glossinger - Rainbow Tracks 4-H Club







Recognition Celebration



Award packets have been distributed to members, families and leaders. Any awards not picked up at the annual 4-H Recognition Celebration have been mailed to Club Coordinators.

For any updates or missing awards, please reach out to the Berrien County MSU Extension office for corrected nominations if applicable.

4-H Capital Experience – Save the Date

Youth in 9th grade through age 19 are invited to attend the 4-H Capitol Experience. You do not need to be a member of 4-H to attend the event, but all participants will be asked to enroll in 4-H Online upon completing their event registration.

Youth registrants will select an issue group according to their interests, which will be led by a teen facilitator. Issue groups will provide a space for youth to meet peers from across the state while talking about their ideas and what they learned. Youth will:



- · Meet elected officials
- · Hear from experts in policy representing a broad range of careers
- Hear from young people who have made a difference in their communities
- Discuss hot topics important to youth.

The 2026 registration fees will be \$365.00 and include hotel accommodations at the Okemos Conference Center. Please contact your local 4-H Program Coordinator or local 4-H office to inquire about local funding opportunities.

What is the Berrien County 4-H Foundation

What is the Berrien County 4-H Foundation, Inc.?

We are a 501(c)3 corporation organized to promote and advance 4-H activities in Berrien County.

Our Mission: Berrien County 4-H Foundation Inc. supports 4-H youth through dedicated and sustained program funding.

Our Vision: To grow, to support, and to mentor our future leaders by promoting the 4-H's (head, heart, hands, health) for all Berrien County Youth.



We have been carrying out this mission and vision since 1968 and love to support the 4-H youth in Berrien County! Would you like to help? Tax deductible donations can be sent to:

Berrien County 4-H Foundation 1737 Hillandale Rd Benton Harbor MI 49022-9630





STATE NEWS AND EVENTS



4-H Day at the Tigers



Join Michigan 4-H and Michigan State University Extension for a fun day at Comerica Park to watch the Detroit Tigers take on the Texas Rangers on Sunday, May 3, 2026 at 1:10 PM. Michigan 4-H will be honored as the Group Charity of the Game. To celebrate, 4-H youth, volunteers, staff, and their families will enjoy a discounted ticket to the game. A portion of every ticket sold on this link will be donated back to Michigan 4-H.

Make sure to wear your favorite 4-H gear and support 4-H while enjoying a fun day with the 4-H community. New this year, Michigan 4-H guests will receive:

- An optional dual-branded Michigan 4-H and Detroit Tigers item. Items will be redeemed on gameday.
- An exclusive pregame on-field opportunity.

Timing and logistics of this opportunity will be released within a month of the game date. Only tickets purchased through the Michigan 4-H link are eligible for these exclusive opportunities.

For more information go to: https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/michigan-4-h-day-with-the-detroit-tigers

Michigan 4-H State Awards

Michigan 4-H true leaders ages 11 and older have an opportunity to be recognized for the great work they do in 4-H and develop their career skills by completing a state award application. A Michigan 4-H State Award is the highest honor bestowed on a Michigan 4-H member and provides an opportunity to receive recognition for their engagement in rich learning experiences that result in outstanding knowledge and life skill development. State award applications are divided into four categories: Mark of Excellence essay contest (10 - 11 years), junior state award (12-15 years), senior state award (16-19 years) and group awards (13-19 years). Each application and selection process varies, dependent on the age of the 4-H member.

Additional details about the Michigan 4-H State Award process can be found at: https://www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_scholarships_and_recognition_program/4-h-awards-and-recognition-program/youth-recognition/

4-H Leader Workshop January 24, 2025



Discover the art of yarn on canvas and learn fun techniques to add texture and expression to your projects. This hands-on workshop is perfect for leaders looking to bring fresh ideas back to their members. Come ready to create, connect, and share—plus, bring your favorite snacks for a relaxed and inspiring experience!

4-H Leader Workshop – Fiber Fusion

Join us for our first workshop of our 4-H Leader train the trainer workshop series! Our 4-H Leader workshops are designed for 4-H silver and gold leader to learn new skills in a variety of project areas to take back to their clubs. Starting on January 24 at 10:00 AM at the Berrien County MSU Extension office is our Fiber Fusion workshop!

This workshop is free and only for 4-H adult leaders' silver and gold levels.

Register through 4-H Online. Registration is limited to 24 leaders on a first come, first serve basis until full! Registration will close once max has been reached.





STATE NEWS AND EVENTS



Mandatory reporting guidelines for Michigan 4-H volunteers

MSU Extension has updated its mandatory <u>reporting guidelines</u> (
<u>civil_rights_compliance</u>) 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 <u>DHS-3200</u> (available at <u>www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/abuse-neglect/childrens/mandated-reporters</u>) 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.
- 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/.

Mickman Brothers: Decorate your home with beautiful greenery and purpose: 15% of the proceeds from each wreath or evergreen purchased at 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.

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 <u>georgiaboot.com</u>.

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.

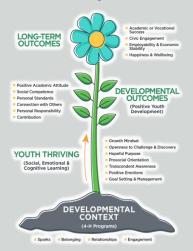




STATE NEWS AND EVENTS



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

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/

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

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

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. Preregister by December 15.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-holidays-workshop-christmas









4-H Mark of Excellence

Michigan 4-H State Awards Program

Grab your pen! Spark your imagination!

Dive into the world of 4-H! Twist and turn your way through your 4-H memories, as you capture your adventure and discoveries!



Submissions may be posted on the Michigan 4-H section of the MSU Extension website and promoted digitally in newsletters and social media.

Deadlines:

- Submit to your local 4-H
 Office by May 1, 2026 for
 judging.
- Selected winners will be notified by May 15, 2026 of their achievement from their local 4-H Office

Questions:

 Contact your local County 4-H Office

Eligibility:

- Be a current 4-H member between the ages of 10 and 11 as of January 1, 2026. Enrollment in previous years not required.
- Individuals may only be selected for this award once.
- Each county can select up to two (2) winners to receive the Mark of Excellence Award each year.

Submission Details:

- Contestants are asked to create either a video or a journal reflection focusing around the theme of "4-H Beyond Ready"
- Entries should be legible, readable or easily viewable.
- Video submissions must be no more than 2 minutes in length. Videos should be in mp4 format or provide a YouTube Channel link.
- Journal reflections must be 500 words or less and can be hand-written or typed.
- Submission can be either video OR a journal reflection.
- Must include first name and county.

Award:

Selected winners will receive a certificate and medal.

Learn more at:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_scholarships_and_recognition_program/4-h-awards-and-recognition-program/youth-recognition

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4-H EXPLORATION DAYS



Join 1,000 youth from across Michigan on MSU's campus to explore YOUR future! Live like a college student and learn about future careers at 4-H Exploration Days. This three-day pre-college program is designed to help you explore careers, build skills and envision your future. Choose from more than 100 fun learning sessions on a variety of topics that are led by MSU faculty, 4-H staff and volunteers, and other experts! You'll stay in and eat at MSU residence halls, attend sessions in buildings throughout campus, and of course have fun at free-time activities across the university!







June 24 – 26, 2026 Michigan State University

A county delegation orientation is schedule for:

When: May 19, 2026 6:30 pm—7:30 pm Where: Virtual via Zoom

Zoom details will be sent once registered for the event. Orientation will cover what to pack, emergency procedures, expectations, free time activities, and more!

Questions:

Kelly Stelter
4-H Program Coordinator
grandtke@msu.edu, 269-927-5674 ext. 4015

What does 4-H Exploration Days cost?

The cost for the 2024 event is \$220, which includes two nights' lodging in a residence hall, meals, learning sessions, an event T-shirt and free-time activities. Berrien County 4-H Members are eligible for scholarships to go towards the event costs in the amount of \$170.00 equaling a camp fee of \$50.00 due at time of registration.

Who should attend?

All young people ages 12 to 19 are invited to join the fun! You don't need to be a 4-H member to attend. Adults who would like to serve as event chaperones should contact their county 4-H program coordinator.

How do I register?

The 2025 event registration website (https://bit.ly/2GRhuwv) will provide updated information in the spring. You can also contact your county 4-H program coordinator in your local MSU Extension office for details. Registration will open in March 2026. You'll want to register early – sessions fill up fast and are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis!





Berrien County MSU Extension 1737 Hillandale Road Benton Harbor, MI 49022





Facebook – "Berrien County 4-H Youth Development"
Instagram - @realberriencounty4-H

