

DECEMBER 2025

SANDERS COUNTY DISPATCH

4-H NEWS

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY



December

2 Andrew Frank
7 Luke Dana
12 Alexis Russell
13 Sylvia Fairbank
18 Adeline Havens
21 Giada Viviano
21 Samantha Hofstetter
26 Joshua Ekberg
27 Riley Keefe

January

1 Kara Christensen
1 Annora Myers
2 Jeremiah Suess
6 Jasper Cross
7 Solveig Feiro
8 Colton Sauter
16 Alida Feiro
16 Ida Berger
16 Peyton Mcaferty
16 Clay Hill
16 Kiya Hjorth
18 Solon Finlay
23 Cooper Spurr
28 Matthew Thurston
30 Andrew Wrobleski
30 Scarlet Thornton

Take a peek at what's inside!

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Dates to Remember

Winter Fun Sledding Party

We are still planning to have our annual sledding party. With this warm weather it has been difficult to set a date. Once we start getting snow we will make sure to send out information letting all of our families know when the County-wide 4-H sledding party will be. It will be held at the Naegeli Ranch in Trout Creek!



Extension Website!

We have been continuing to update our website and a lot of very helpful information has been added!

Check it out at

montana.edu/extension/sanders/4h.html

Market Beef Tagging

Market beef tagging will take place on the following days:

**January 4th, 10:00 am - Stephens Ranch
93 Roosma Rd, Hot Springs**

**January 4th, 2:00 pm, Havens Arena,
Trout Ck.**

****Please note we will only be tagging on Sunday
this year and the location of the HS tagging has
changed.***

Beef project members must have their market beef tagged at one of the above locations. ***Please make sure your steers are halter broke.*** Contact the Extension Office with any concerns or questions at 827-6934.

Watch your email for forms

CLOVER BY 4-H

CLOVER is an online learning platform that empowers people to find their spark!

It creates impactful learning experiences in partnership with 100+ top-tier universities, featuring 190+ online interactivities for ages 5-18, interactive content, gamification and augmented reality.

For more information go to:

4-h.org/clover/about/

Special Notes

4-H Council Meetings

The 4-H Council meetings are scheduled for the first Tuesday of every other month February-December. They begin at 6:00 pm. The location of the meetings alternate between Thompson Falls & Linda Cook's home. As always, all leaders and senior members (ages 14 & older) are encouraged to attend.

Livestock Committee Meetings

The Livestock Committee meets frequently throughout the year. Meeting times will be listed on the dates to remember. Meetings begin at 6:30 pm at the 4-H Pavilion in Plains. As always, all livestock leaders and senior members (ages 14 & older) are encouraged to attend.

IMPORTANT CHANGES & REMINDERS

Generator policy during fair

Due to CO2 concerns at fair last year, only generators that are CO2 safe will be allowed in the 4-H camping area. If you can't plug in your camper and have a generator that you want to use that is not CO2 safe, you will be placed in the 4-H parking area across the road.

Dogs

Reminder: Dogs are not allowed on the fairgrounds and absolutely no dogs are allowed in the barns.

Multi-County Camp Discount & Congress

The 4-H council will no longer be able to offer a multi-county camp discount for communication days presenter's, or funds to help cover Congress costs.

They will continue to award the top 4 Junior presenter's at Communication Days (12 yrs old & younger) a scholarship to Multi-County camp for Demonstration & Illustrated Talk. They will also award the first place finishers in Favorite Foods and Stir-ups a camp scholarship. Members 13 years old and older (too old to attend Multi-County camp) within the top four will earn a trip to State 4-H Congress in Bozeman. The first place presenters for Video, Career Communications, Prepared Speech and Stir-Up's will also receive a scholarship to attend Congress. Council will still have Jake Legard funds available for the cost of Multi-County camp if it is needed.

More information can be found here:

montana.edu/extension/sanders/multicountycamp.html



There will be a swine project meeting Monday, Feb. 9th from 6:00 - 8:00 pm at the Extension Office Conference Room (1037 W. Main St, next to the Rex Theater) in Thompson Falls.

Resources can be found here:

montana.edu/extension/sanders/swineresources.html

Everyone is welcome! Please make sure to **RSVP** to Wendy Carr so we know how many supplies to bring. The meeting will also cover all you need to know to meet livestock quality assurance (LQA) requirements (***required for first year members and first year senior 4-H'ers age 14).***

State Award Applications

The Montana 4-H State Awards program is in place to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of 4-H members who have reached a standard of excellence in a project area. State Award winners have gone above and beyond regular project work with a focus on leadership, communication, and community service.

Application Deadline to apply for a state award is (postmarked) May 1. Please forward complete applications to:
Montana 4-H Center
Attn: State Award Application
210 Taylor Hall, PO Box 173580,
Bozeman, MT 59717 or
bschomer@montana.edu

State Award recipients are recognized during the Banquet at Montana 4-H Congress in July and are eligible to attend National 4-H Congress in November.

Applications and more information are at the following link:

https://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/programs_and_events/awards/state-awards.html

People Partner Grant

Application Deadline: February 14

Do you have an idea that could improve your community or help someone out? If so, consider applying for a People Partner Grant to help with the expense. Grants up to \$500 are available. If you have questions about People Partner Grants look online at: mt4hfoundation.org/grants.html or contact the Montana 4-H Foundation office at 406-994-5911 or contact the Extension Office at 406-827-6934.

2026 Programs

Parliamentary Procedure Competition

Each club officer will be receiving training materials via email soon, so watch for it! If we are able to get a team together and you are interested in contest prep sessions please let us know!

Cow Camp Beef Education

A full day of beef education has been scheduled for **Jan. 31st from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm** at the Fairgrounds Pavilion. Topics include Beef Quality Assurance, Record Keeping for your Herd, Advancing Livestock Production: Harnessing the use of Precision Technology and Artificial Intelligence, Managing Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle Throughout the Year, and Cattle First Aid and Emergency Preparedness.

Those needing to fulfill their Beef Quality Assurance, please plan to attend at least the morning session to obtain your BQA Certification.

[Click here to view the Cow Camp Agenda](#)

Leadership Academy Monthly Workshops

Members 12+, 4-H Age

January 11
February 8
March 8
April 12

All workshops are Sunday afternoons from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm

For more information please visit:

montana.edu/extension/4h/programs_and_events/youth_leadership/academy.html



REC LAB 2026 **DATE: MARCH 27-29** **LOCATION: COLUMBUS, MT**

Youth 13+ and adults can learn how to enhance their leadership, communication and team building skills.

Registration Fee: Approximately \$100

Registration includes lodging, meals, t-shirts, workshops, and exciting speakers.

More information can be found here:

montana.edu/extension/4h/programs_and_events/events/rec_lab/index.html

Watch your email!



REMINDER TO MEMBERS IN THE SEWING, FOOD/NUTRITION & WELDING PROJECTS

Sanders County 4-H is offering a sewing machine and microwave to an outstanding junior or senior member who apply during the Sanders County Fair.

Qualifications include:

Sewing Machine

- Enrolled in a Sewing/Quilting project.
- Enter a minimum of 4 exhibits in a Sewing project at fair or...
- Enter a minimum of 2 exhibits in a Quilting project at fair.
- Complete an interview for exhibits submitted.
- Provide an updated record book for judges at the fair to review for growth in the project.

Microwave

- Enrolled in a Food/Nutrition project.
- Enter a minimum of 6 exhibits in a Food/Nutrition project at fair.
- Complete an interview for exhibits submitted.
- Provide an updated record book for judges at the fair to review for growth in the project.

\$100 to go towards welding gear of your choice

- Enrolled in a Welding project at fair
- Enter a minimum of 2 exhibits in a Welding project
- Complete an interview for exhibits submitted at fair
- Provide updated record book project forms from the current and previous 4-H years for judges to review for growth in the project at fair.

Please let the Extension Staff know when you check in your Home Ec exhibits at the fair that you would wish to be considered for this award. Contact the Extension Office if you have further questions!



Communication Days

It is that time of year to start thinking about what you want to do for Communication Days

Several options are available for you to choose from to participate in and use your communication skills! Those include Demonstration, Illustrated Talk, Prepared Speech, Impromptu Speech, Video, Commercial, Career Communication, or Promotional Package.

Go to the following link for contest guidelines and information regarding the above options

https://www.montana.edu/extension/4h/documents/projects/4h_communications/Montana%204-H%20Clover%20Communications.pdf. Stir-Ups or Favorite Food Show are two more options you may choose from. (See below for brief guidelines on the Stir-Ups contest and Favorite Food Show). Six of the above options will be contest opportunities at State-H Congress for members 13 and older who score high at the county level. Those six are Demonstrations, Prepared Speech, Illustrated talk, Video, Career Communication and Stir-Ups.

Which one will YOU do?

Though we haven't yet celebrated the New Year, 4-H Communication Days are just around the corner! It is time to begin thinking about it, because **early preparation is very wise!** Early prep may allow you more practice time, possibly in front of your 4-H club and/or family. This is a great opportunity for experienced members to present for the new members, thus allowing the new members to get a better idea of how to do a presentation.

Demonstration DVD & Other Resources Available

For some, doing demonstrations can be an intimidating and confusing process. If you fit in this category, consider checking out a DVD showing six Sanders County finalists in previous years. It can be helpful to watch examples as you begin to put your topic together. Contact the Extension Office if you would like to check out this DVD to view at home or a club meeting. Also, if you go to the following link you can view several other demonstrations done in the past by 4-H members across the state including more Sanders County 4-H members.

(click on the Demonstration & Illustrated Talk icon).

montana.edu/extension/4h/projects/4h_communication/index.html

Stir-Up Contest

Participants will compete individually or in teams of two. Contestants prepare a dish utilizing five of the nine listed ingredients. Additionally, contestants may use pantry ingredients and spices. They must use at least one mystery ingredient and can use up to three. The dish should be visually appealing, nutritious and show creativity. Contestants should use effective work habits and sanitary food preparation practices. Following the preparation of the meal the contestant will present an oral presentation to judges. The oral presentation should address: selection of dish; preparation process; nutritional value of dish; potential alteration and overall learning.

For a complete contest description, contact the Extension Office.

Favorite Food Show

Participants in the Favorite Food Show will gain experience in planning, preparing, serving and presenting a nutritious food as part of a meal or snack. A display including correct table setting, recipe and menu posters, a centerpiece and decorations will accompany the participants chosen Favorite Food. Any 4-H member, including Cloverbuds can participate. Members may enter as an individual or a two-person team. Categories include appetizer, bread, salad, main dish, sandwich, fruit or vegetable side dish. All food categories will compete against one another. For a complete list of contest description, contact the Extension Office. This is not a State 4-H Congress contest option.

Pick the Day you will do your Communication Presentation.

Choose from two dates!

Day 1 is scheduled for **Saturday, March 7** in Thompson Falls beginning at 10:00 am.

Day 2 is scheduled for **Sunday, March 8** in Hot Springs beginning at 1:00 pm.

****If you plan to participate in stir-ups we will contact you with the date that was decided for the contest.**

If you find it impossible to participate on either of the dates offered contact the Extension Office. If a judge is available to view your presentation on an alternate date arrangements will be made to accommodate you so you may complete your presentation prior to finals day. Top presenters from these two events will qualify to participate on **Finals Communication Day, Sunday, March 15th in Plains**. During these events anyone is welcome and encouraged to watch the presentations being given by members. A full scholarship to 4-H camp will be awarded to the top four presenters in the Junior Division if they are 12 years old or younger, juniors who are 13 years old and place in the top four will be awarded a trip to State 4-H Congress in Bozeman in July. Top presenters in the Senior Division will also be awarded a trip to State 4-H Congress in Bozeman to compete in the state communication event.

Members must sign-up online for their presentation by February 6th at this link: <https://forms.gle/BpGxf4zCQJwuziXF9>

A schedule with the time you will do your presentation will be emailed to you and your club leader a week before the event. Contact your leader for your time if you do not email. If you have questions regarding these events we encourage you to talk to your club leaders or call the Extension Office.

Sanders County 4-H Livestock Committee Minutes

December 1, 2025

6:30 pm 4-H Pavilion, Plains

Present: Alan Hafner – Chair; Tara Brown – Vice Chair/Swine Superintendent; Terry Stephens– Council Treasurer/HSW Club Leader; Raelyn Cox – Goat and Cat Superintendent; Presley Cox – Goat Assistant Superintendent; Wendy Carr – Extension Agent/Secretary/Horse Superintendent; Juli Thurston – Sheep Superintendent; Coby Guenzler – Beef Superintendent; Carrie Guenzler; Courtney Frank (phone) – TCM Club Leader; Jennifer Avilla – SSS Club Leader; Matt Havens; Colton Stephens; Deriyan Sheehan

Meeting called to Order: 6:32 pm

Minutes from October Meeting:

Motion to accept minutes as submitted – Terry, Second – Carrie. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Balance \$6,576.70

Agenda Review: Add Tattooing to New Business

Old Business:

Fair Improvements Update:

- Doug/Whitney hope to do some updates in the Rabbit/Poultry Barn – on hold till talk with the county planner about possibility of knocking out the N wall.
- Outlet by announcer/clerk area in livestock arena. Juli will schedule with an electrician before next fair.
- Upgrade electrical in camping area. Juli submitted grant to AgWest. Grant Max amount could be up to \$5000, which will only pay for supplies and equipment. Committee reviewed Smith Electric's bid for \$29,558. Juli will check with Smith Electric to see if he would allow us to get people with Equipment to donate their time and equipment. Juli will look into other grants to help with the expense. Coby will fill out a grant form where he works.
- Window in storage room needs fixed – Wendy let Kristy know. Will correspond with Kristy further.
- Microphone/speaker system in 4-H Arena: Wendy contacted Josh Champney's and is scheduled to meet with him on December 5th to look at 4-H Horse Arena sound system. He mentioned wanting to donate a portable speaker system to 4-H through his business.

Fair Awards Update:

- Donations: \$10,351, Expenses: \$10,107.52, Balance: \$243.48 in the green
- As part of this report, Horse Donations: \$4,420, Expenses: \$3,787, Balance: \$633 in the green.
- Awards Committee: Joint Committee between Livestock and Council – Tara, Terry, Jen, Karen, Wendy, Jamie. Will decide on date to meet after New Year.

Livestock Minutes Continued.....

Livestock Policy Updates:

- Reviewed changes made. Changes in policy on stall fees, Maximum weight on steers, Breeding project clarification, and Meat turkey deadline have been added to Livestock Policy. Added changes to payments from Auction as well.
*Motion to accept Livestock Policies as changed: Carrie, Second: Matt. Motion carried.
- Vaccinations Update from State Vet. Make change to Brucellosis for Beef. Keep rest of Vaccination requirements/recommendations the same.

Fair Review/Suggested Changes:

- Round Robin Guidelines Packet – Raelyn, Terry, Tara, Courtney, Wendy set date to work on packet. Postpone setting a date till next meeting.
- Generator Policy – new point brought forward that moving the generators without CO2 safety is just moving the problem to the 4-H parking. Discussion that campers can be spread out more in the parking area and not be so close together. Hopefully it is a short-term solution until we get the electric completed. Send out new rules Generators, Lightning, Dog Policy in Dispatch several times to give generous warning.
- Move Sheep and/or Goat show back to Thursday? Postpone decision to be decided on by February.
- Awards before/after Auction – Motion to move awards directly after the auction and have all the kids from the specific species come in the arena so they aren't going back and forth, which will shorten the awards time – Terry, Second - Coby
- Lightning Policy – Put on barns during Fair and send out in Dispatch before Fair. Committee adopted changes to MHSA Lightning Policy to match Fair/4-H requirements.

2026 Livestock Judges Update:

- Chance Greene – accepted invitation to return as 2026 Livestock Judge
*Fitting Clinic: Sullivan Stock Show University, Montana Private Rep, or have Chance come in May or something during Fair? Chance gave Wendy contact of local rep at North West Feeds in Lolo, MT. Chance will get back to Wendy come Feb/March on potential clinic if he were to come, depending on his work schedule. Coby mentioned John Bauma would be willing to come. If Chance can't come, Coby can talk with John Bauma to see if he can do multi-species fitting clinics as well.

*Livestock Judging – Chance wanted me to ask thoughts on this – Livestock Committee decided it would be hard to fit this in.

- Dairy Judge? 9 Dairy Goats, 1 Dairy Cow

*Sandpoint judge could possibly come. Raelyn will wait to hear back from her for a confirmation if she can come or not. Would just have to donate her gas money and parking ticket. Ask Fair Board if they would be willing to donate her mileage and parking if she can come.

Livestock Minutes Continued.....

New Business:

- Superintendent's Guide: Alan made a Superintendent's guide for the new Beef Superintendent. If other Superintendents have a guide/timeline it would be great to have this in the 4-H office. Tara has one and will send it to Wendy.
- Project members for new 4-H year: 134 kids signed up for 4-H. Last year we had 158. Handed out Livestock members report to each livestock superintendent.
- Tattoo Discussion: Will continue tattooing at Tagging for each species.

Species Reports

- Beef: Tagging/Weigh-in Jan 4th, 10:00 in Hot Springs at Stephen's Ranch. Terry will send Wendy and Coby the address to send out to members and to put in the Dispatch. Sunday afternoon, we will weigh and tag one steer at 2:00. There is only one steer on the West end so there will not be a Tag/Weigh-in day on Saturday. Quality Assurance – Coby will check with CJ to see if Lonepine Rep is coming again to the feed store. Depending on what the rep is covering, this could possibly qualify as Quality Assurance. Wendy is also working on a Beef Education/Emergency Vet class for Producers and 4-H/FFA that could qualify as Quality Assurance.
- Horse: Horse had it's first leader's meeting. We will be restructuring a bit this year with the Leaders taking on being the lead role of each project area since Wendy will have more duties as the Livestock Agent. Shannon: Co-Superintendent and Colt to Maturity Leader, Wendy: Co-Superintendent and Ranch Horse Leader, Morgan – Western Horsemanship Leader at Plains and Computer/Paper work, Nancy – English Horsemanship, Hunter Hack, Madi – Western Horsemanship Leader at Haven's and Correspondence Coordinator, Kelsey – Showmanship Leader. Our first launch to the new year meeting is set for January 20th .
- Poultry: None
- Rabbit: None
- Sheep: Tagging and Weigh-in will be on June 7th. 12 Market Lambs and 6 Breeding Sheep have signed up. Sheep and Goat project meetings will still be held together this year. Juli will be sending out an email in the next few weeks welcoming everyone to the New Year and setting a date for the first meeting in February or March. Juli and Raelyn will be setting up a Quality Assurance as well.
- Goat: Tagging and Weigh-in will be on June 7th. Sheep and Goat project meetings will be held together this year. Numbers continue to be up for Goat and Raelyn is looking forward to a great year with great kids!
- Swine: Tagging and Weigh-in will be on June 7th. The Frank family and others will pitch in and help with the swine as Tara will be celebrating her wedding! Numbers for Swine members remains about the same as last year.

Announcements:

Next Meeting: February 23rd, 6:30 PM, 4-H Pavilion, Plains, MT

Sanders County 4-H Council Agenda
December 2, 2025 6:00pm Plains, Linda Cook's Home

Minutes of the October meeting were revised to include election of officers, including

President JoAnne Burk, Vice-President Jen Avilla, Treasurer Terry Stephens, Secretary Karen Dwyer. Agenda was revised to include Record Book/Award discussion.

Treasurer's report showed budget and expenditures. Will add balance info and profit/loss reports next.

Reports

- 4-H Dining Hall will be discussed at February meeting.
- Award donations, slightly lower than expenses. Horse awards donation report was presented.
- National 4-H Week, 4-H on the hill in Hot Springs is enlarged, pencils and suckers given at school. Noxon members talked to classes at school and brought rabbits to show. Hot Springs club also held a dance November 18, drawing 50 people and \$150 in donations.
- Achievement Day, positive feedback, setup was chairs and no tables, suggestions were to serve finger foods rather than only desserts, Ambassadors did a great job. Josh Champneys is working with Wendy to improve PA system. Leaders, remind adults to avoid profanity at 4-H events and Fair.
- Livestock Committee has made a few changes to the livestock policies. Suggestion: require members to sign a livestock policy copy. May change livestock sale at fair to be prior to the Awards presentations.
- Ambassadors went to Fall Leadership training, attended workshops and had fun. More members have joined from different communities. Held a dance after Thanksgiving, and a Christmas dance is planned using decorations left in place by the hospital's Christmas event. Ambassadors from each community are searching for community projects and the whole group will work together on chosen projects. Meetings are every 6 weeks. Suggestion: consider putting together a brief newsletter.
- Clubs' year plans, club officer lists, civil rights letters for all clubs have been submitted.
- Year end financial reports, reviewed by Joanne. Remember to have two signatures on all club checks written, need the same for reimbursement checks and debit card use, make sure expenses are kept in the year in which they have been spent, and write the 1% check after reports have been audited.
- Sledding Party will be coordinated by Brooke Eldridge (Thank you!)

Old Business By-Laws review, tabled until February meeting and new agent arrival.

New Business

- Banking with First Security Bank requires council check signature updates. Jen moved to add Wendy Carr, Terry Stephens, Ashley Haun, and Joanne Burk as current signatories for the Sanders County 4-H Council bank account(s), Karen seconded, motion carried. Agents cannot sign checks, but need to have access to the account. Signatories will be updated in February when the new agent is on staff.
- Council agreed the Extension office manager should order award pins in advance to have on hand because of short supply in the fall.
- Communication Days gifts for judges will be cookie mix jars made by members, led by Linda Cook. Lunch hosts in Thompson Falls are Thompson Falls Mountaineers, in Hot Springs are South Side Sparks. Preference is to hold Stir-Ups the same weekend.
- State scholarships are due by February 14th.
- Discussion was held regarding the importance of keeping record books up to date and complete for scholarship applications, to sell livestock, year end awards. Tabled until next meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Dwyer, Secretary

Those present: President Joanne Burk, Vice-President Jen Avilla, Treasurer Terry Stephens, Secretary Karen Dwyer, Linda Cook and Juli Thurston – South Side Sparks, Taylor Etienne – Noxon/Heron Explorers, Sara Dana – Trout Creek Mavericks, County Agent Wendy Carr.

Dates to Remember

Dec

- 2 Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m. - Linda Cook's Home, Plains
- 2 Club year program plan & club officer list due in Extension Office

Jan

- 4 Market Beef Tagging
- 26 Livestock Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 4-H Pavilion, Plains

Feb

- 3 Council meeting, 6:00 p.m. - Location TBD
- 14 State Scholarship applications due in State 4-H Office
- 14 People Partner Grant applications due in State 4-H Office
- TBA State 4-H Rec Lab registration due
- 23 Livestock Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 4-H Pavilion, Plains

March

- 7 Meat Raffle sales start
- 7-8 Communication Days
- TBA Stir-Ups
- 13 Sanders County Scholarship Applications Due
- 15 Communication Finals day
- TBA State 4-H Rec Lab
- 23 Livestock Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 4-H Pavilion, Plains

April

- 7 Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m. - Linda Cook's Home, Plains
- 27 Livestock

May

- 7 State Award applications due in State 4-H Office
- TBD Livestock Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 4-H Pavilion, Plains

June

- 2 Council meeting, 6:00 p.m. - Minnie's Cafe, Thompson Falls
- 7 Sheep/Goat/Swine Tagging, Sanders County Fairgrounds, Plains
- 15 Montana State 4-H Congress registration deadline
- 16-19 Multi-County 4-H Camp
- 22 Livestock Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 4-H Pavilion, Plains

July

- 1 Project Add/Drop deadline
- 5-7 Pre-Congress - Bozeman
- 7-10 Montana State 4-H Congress - Bozeman
- 27 Livestock Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m., 4-H Pavilion, Plains

Aug

- 4 Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m. - Linda Cook's Home, Plains