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Hallettsville, TX 77964  
361-798-2221

<https://lavaca.agrilife.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/LavacaCounty4H>

## Lavaca County 4-H News

Wednesday, September 25, 2025



### BBQ Tickets – We Still Have Tickets That Need to be Sold



As of Wednesday evening, there are still over 500 tickets that need to be sold for the annual BBQ out of the 1200. Please do your part to sell tickets. The funds raised from our annual BBQ benefit all of the members in the county by supporting our project efforts, leadership activities, scholarship activities, and everything else we do on the county level.

Mark your calendar for Saturday morning October 4 to help peel potatoes and October 5 for the BBQ itself. **Call the office to sign up for a shift.**

Each club will need to provide **120 bags of two count cookies**. Cookies **MUST** be **homemade** and **at least three inches in diameter**. Please bring them to the hall by 10:15 that morning. **Please do not leave them at our office – we cannot store food.**

### Radio PSA Recordings

Limited to the first 15 to sign up, call the office at 361-798-2221 to get to record a public service radio announcement promoting 4-H week. Those who are signed up will meet at Texas Thunder Radio in Shiner on Tuesday, September 30 at 4:15. There are still several spots left.



### National 4-H Week Proclamation

Nathan Henke and Ryan Janak represented Lavaca County 4-H at the County Commissioner's Court meeting on Tuesday, September 23. At the meeting, the commissioner's declared the week of October 5-11 as National 4-H Week in Lavaca County. That afternoon, members gathered for a signing picture with Judge Mudd. Pictured are: Samuel, Elijah, and Juliana Henke, Ellasyn Klekar, Ryan Janak, Ashlyn and Tanner Pustka, Austin Kedziora, and Olivia and Tate Gonzales.



# Beyond Ready

## 2025 National 4-H Week Proclamation

WHEREAS, this year's National 4-H Week theme, "Beyond Ready," reminds us that 4-H is building a ready generation in a world of change and equips young people with skills for the future while meeting them where they are today;

WHEREAS, 4-H is America's largest youth development organization, supporting six million youth across the country; and reaching over 1000 youth in Lavaca County.

WHEREAS, 4-H programs are delivered by Texas AgriLife Extension Service as part of the Texas A&M University System and the Cooperative Extension System – a community of more than 100 public land-grant colleges and universities across the Nation – that provides experiences for young people to learn by doing;

WHEREAS, 4-H is in every city and county in the United States and helps 6 million youth become engaged, successful and independent; and

WHEREAS, 4-H connects young people and adults to their communities, preparing them for work and life through experiential and inquiry-based learning while providing emerging research for positive youth development; and

WHEREAS, expanding from its strong agricultural roots, 4-H helps young people explore the world around them and grow into productive adults; and

WHEREAS, supporting future leaders in science, agriculture and community leadership is an important imperative for U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture 4-H program; and the opportunity for youth in Lavaca County to gain skills from educational opportunities related to agriculture, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, leadership, and STEM are all expressed as a need by community leaders locally.

NOW, THEREFORE, The Lavaca County Commissioners Court, do hereby proclaim October 5 –11, 2025 as NATIONAL 4-H WEEK throughout Lavaca County, and encourage all our citizens to recognize 4-H for the significant impact it has made and continues to make by empowering youth with the skills they need to lead for a lifetime.



County Judge



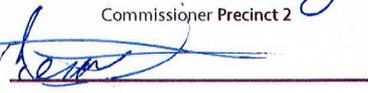
Commissioner Precinct 1



Commissioner Precinct 2



Commissioner Precinct 3



Commissioner Precinct 4

*September 23, 2025*

Date

### Do you have a 4-H project?

#### 4-H project:

- Have six new learning experiences each year (each at least thirty minutes long). Learning experiences can be hands on experiences like building pens, learning to trim hooves, or selecting fabrics. They can also be tours, interviews, shadowing opportunities, or reading books or watching videos on the subject.
- Complete leadership and community service related to the project.
- Show your project. You can do this by entering a contest, talking to your club about your project, making signs, posters or finding other ways to tell others about your project.

Explore 4-H projects here: <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/>

## National 4-H Week

To learn more go to: <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/events/national-4-h-week/>

## Let's Go Green

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Director, Dr. Rick Avery, has challenged counties to paint the Nation Green on October 6. Help Lavaca County 4-H Stand Out. Check out the details of the challenge here: <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/events/gogreen/>

## One Day 4-H

Texas 4-H Sets aside a day of community service each year. This year One Day 4-H is on October 11. Clubs are encouraged to do One Day 4-H Activities. If your club is going to be doing something big please let Natalie know asap. The state program is looking for clubs to feature in marketing efforts.

Anyone completing One Day 4-H projects should report their efforts on the state website here:

<https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/events/oneday/>



**Fun Fair**  
Sunday, October 19  
Hallettsville Youth Center

**Entry Forms, Rules, and Details are housed  
on the county website at**

**<https://lavaca.agrilife.org/event/lavaca-county-4-h-fun-fair-2/>**

4-H is Family! Fun Fair is a day where we invite the families in Lavaca County to come learn about 4-H. It is an opportunity to bring members from all of the clubs together for a day focused on project activities and fun.

**We need your help! (Enrolled Adults and Youth Members)**

**Sign up here:**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZWwZZpADP7mCZY9\\_IcCsQI2g39dhKcxajrovoAASteMa19A/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=113160902448211784469](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZWwZZpADP7mCZY9_IcCsQI2g39dhKcxajrovoAASteMa19A/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=113160902448211784469)

### **Time Schedule/Tasks**

12:15 – 12:45 Set Up

- Tables for Project Booths
- Chili Cook Off teams will be told to bring their own tables
- Panels for petting zoo
- Bake Show and Hand Craft Tables
- Registration Table/ t-shirt sales
- Awards Table

12:45 Chili Cook Off Teams Arrive

1:00

- Chili Cook Off begins (1:15)
- Petting Zoo Animals Arrive/Set Up
- Project Booths set up

2:00 Doors Open

- Entries for everything except Chili Cookoff will be accepted until accepted until 2:30
- Pets entered in parade arrive – Parade at 2:45

3:00 Talent Showcase performances

3:30 Judge Chili

3:45 – 4:15ish Awards and Recognition All Events

4:15-4:45 Clean Up

## **Livestock Validations and Orders**

**Friday, October 3, 2025**

Hallettsville Junior Livestock Show Broiler Orders are due.  
Order forms and entry cards are available in the office

**October 9, 2025**

HISD Ag Pavilion 4-6 pm  
Major show lamb and goat validation  
Major show heifer validation  
HJLS lamb and goat validation  
HJLS halter heifers

**Wednesday, October 22, 2025**

Shiner Junior Livestock Show Rabbit Validation  
6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
Ward Pavilion, Green Dickson Park

**October 31, 2025**

Fort Worth stock show entries are due in the office.  
Entry forms are available at <https://www.fwssr.com/p/livestock-shows/entry>

**November 11, 2025 Expo Center 4-6 pm**

Major show swine validation  
HJLS swine validation  
HJLS halter heifers

**November 13, 2025**

Expo Center 4-5:30 pm  
Major show swine validation  
last chance to validate HJLS halter heifers  
HJLS swine validation

*Hallettsville Junior Livestock Show  
Halter heifers can be validated at any HJLS validation  
October 9, November 11, or November 13*

# Opportunities You Don't Want to Miss !



The poster for the SPARK! Light Up Luau event features a vibrant design with wavy blue and green patterns at the top. The title "SPARK!" is in large white letters, and "Light Up Luau" is in pink script. Below the title are two circular images: one showing three young women smiling and another showing people playing a game on a tennis court. A QR code with the text "SCAN ME" and a curved arrow is positioned to the right of the images. At the bottom of the poster are the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension logo and a stylized palm tree with a pink flamingo.

- Includes 4-H exploration, dancing, camp activities, and FUN!
- Hosted by Texas 4-H Council
- Camp for Junior & Intermediate 4-H Members
- November 7-9, 2025
- Held at Texas 4-H Center in Brownwood
- \$175 per participant
- Registration opened September 1st on the Texas 4-H Center website

## Spark!

Spark is a weekend Junior Leadership Lab hosted by the Texas 4-H State 4-H Council and held at the Texas 4-H Center at Lake Brownwood.

The '25-'26 Texas 4-H Council will host "Light Up Luau" November 7-9, 2025. Registration is \$175/participant and closes on Monday, October 26, 2025! So don't delay. Get registered today!!!!

**Lavaca County 4-H Council will reimburse you ½ the fee with the correct paperwork submitted after attending, see the reimbursement policy.**

We are also in need of Chaperones for the event. Cost to chaperone is \$0. You will be housed in the dorm with the youth.

Click here for more information and for the registration link <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/events/spark/> To register visit <https://texas4hcenter.tamu.edu/services/youth-camps-and-retreats/>

## District Crossroads

November 6-8, 2025

Sam Houston State University

<https://d114-h.tamu.edu/events-and-contests/crossroads/>

Crossroads is a three day/two night **career development** and youth leadership program to **involve 8th - 12th grade** youth in various projects that will expose them to various career and higher education opportunities. Event Details In 2025, District 11 4-H Crossroads will be held at Sam Houston State University. Host Hotel: Best Western Premier in Bryan College Station Tx 1920 Austin's Colony PKWY, Bryan, Tx 77802 Event Fee Registration will be from September 28, 2025 to October 9, 2025. **The cost for Crossroads is \$200.00 for 4-H members and \$200.00 for adult leaders and County Extension Agents.** A late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed from October 10, 2025 – October 16, 2025, for youth participants. Late registrants may not receive a t-shirt. No refunds will be given! **Lavaca county will reimburse ½ youth and adult chaperones the full registration with the correct reimbursement forms submitted.**

# Record Books

## **There have been changes made to the 4-H Record Book. This was just released this morning:**

The 2025-2026 Texas 4-H Record Book Family Guide is now available. You will notice a few changes to the record book format for this coming year. Recordkeeping is one of the most valuable life skills taught in the Texas 4-H program. Members are encouraged to keep project records throughout the year and review them annually by completing a Texas 4-H Record Book. The primary purpose of a Record Book is to help youth learn how to set goals, work toward them, reflect on their progress, and then set new and higher goals for the future. A secondary benefit is preparing young people for real-world applications such as academic scholarships, college admissions, and even job opportunities. This secondary benefit is the reason for the changes you will see in the new format.

### **Notable Changes:**

- Replaced the 4-H Story with Narratives:
  - About Me Narrative (All Ages)
  - College & Career Exploration Narrative (Intermediate & Senior Only)
  - Essay Prompt Narrative which changes annually (Senior Only)
- Added “My Year in Photos” section
  - This page is separate from the written narratives and forms.
- Section I – Projects
  - All project information will be noted in this section (page limits have increased slightly)
  - Encouraged to include at least 4 projects with their main project (to reflect the record book category they are competing in) being the first entry
  - However, when judging, one should note QUALITY of the project experience vs QUANTITY
    - A young person with 3 active projects may have a lot more of true project experience than those with 6 projects
- Removed Section IV – Other 4-H Projects (added into Section I)
- Forms can reflect all years in 4-H, not just current and previous 3 years
  - This was a change because a 4-H member for example may have won a Major Livestock Show in elementary school and that is still considered one of their highest achievements even in High School
  - This also mirrors the requirements of the Texas 4-H Opportunity Scholarship which allows all years of 4-H involvement
- Section V - Non 4-H Activities should still focus on more recent years since is to demonstrate your involvement outside of 4-H in more real-time
- Removed Animal Agriculture Category and replaced with Open/Self-Directed
- All record books should be typed. Handwritten books should not be submitted. We understand it may be harder for younger kids to type; therefore, an adult can take their written presentation and type into the format. This is a move towards the potential future of the submissions being in an online format only.
- DISCONTINUED ZSuites. We are exploring alternative online platforms for the future years.

**The family guide, forms and other resources  
are available at <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/recordbooks/>**

**Additionally, the record book corner will return to this newsletter in  
October providing section by section tips.  
Also watch for Natalie to schedule a training this fall.**

## **Consumer Decision Making**

2025 Guadalupe County 4-H Consumer Decision Making Contest to be held Friday, October 24, 2025 at the Country Church in Marion, Tx. The deadline to register is October 20. Cost is \$40 per team. If you are interested in taking a team, please contact [Natalie.kneseke@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Natalie.kneseke@ag.tamu.edu) before the deadline. Materials for CDM can be found at <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/consumer-education/>

## **Citizenship Project Opportunity**

**Design Contest to Determine the  
New 2025-2026 “I Voted” and “Future Voter” Stickers for  
Lavaca County**

The Lavaca County Elections Department announces the second, bi-annual “I Voted” and “Future Voter” sticker design contest. The contest is open to all Lavaca County students PreK-12, enrolled in a Public, Private, or Homeschool setting. The winning designs will be used as the official “I Voted” and “Future Voter” sticker in the 2026-2027 Election cycle.

**The deadline to submit a design is Friday, October 31, 2025 by 5:00 PM.**

“The Lavaca County Elections Department is excited to engage students in the electoral process by offering an opportunity to design a limited-edition sticker for Lavaca County voters. We look forward to seeing the creativity and talent Lavaca County students have to offer,” said Elections Administrator Tenia Hudson.

Once all designs are received, a panel of judges will submit anonymous votes to determine the winning design. Judging will be based on theme, uniqueness of the design and artistry. The design should be non-partisan. Party affiliated designs, including mascots, will be disqualified.

Winners will be notified by the Lavaca Elections Department on or before Monday, November 10th. Winners will be announced at the November 10th Commissioners’ Court meeting. The winning designs will be displayed during early voting at the Annex.

Participants must agree to the contest’s official rules and submit their design by completing an “I Voted” and “Future Voter” Sticker Design Entry Form. **All Submissions must be received by 5:00 PM on Friday, October 31, 2025.** More information is available on the Elections Department website at <https://www.co.lavaca.tx.us/page/lavaca.Elections>.

## **Lavaca County Elections’ Sticker Contest**

**Info**



### **Brazos Valley Fair and Rodeo**

October 10-12 and October 17-19

<https://www.brazosvalleyfair.com>

Brazos County Expo Complex

5827 Leonard Road

Bryan, TX 77807

Contests Event Information: <https://www.brazosvalleyfair.com/events/contests>

Please see the individual contest page for contest rules/guidelines and entry deadlines.

Livestock Event Information: <https://www.brazosvalleyfair.com/events/livestock-events>

[\*\*2025 Exhibitor Handbook\*\*](#)

#### **Entry deadlines:**

- a. Entries open July 1 and must be submitted online by 10 p.m. on October 1, 2025.
- b. Late Entries will be accepted in accordance with the following guidelines:  
Late entries will be accepted online from October 2-15, 2025, at \$150 per entry.  
All entries will close at midnight on October 15, 2025.

All entries will include four (4) wristbands for admission into the show. If you need additional wristbands, you can purchase them when you submit entries at <https://showman.app>.

## Club Meeting Information

- Hallettsville Town Rounders 4-H Club Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month at 5:00 p.m. Lillie Johnson Appelt Youth Center – Hallettsville CONTACT: Sheila Henke – 979-578-1585 Chris Henke – 979-578-1760
- Hope 4-H Club Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month at 4:00 p.m. Hope Community Center CONTACT: Amy Jalufka – 361-772-0142 Lacy Mata – 361-648-5992 Erin Marshall – 830-857-5881
- Green Leaves 4-H Club Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Lillie Johnson Appelt Youth Center – Hallettsville CONTACT: Karen Janak – 361-798-6898
- Lavaca River Oaks 4-H Club Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Lillie Johnson Appelt Youth Center – Hallettsville CONTACT: Clayton Wimberly – 361-293-8417
- Lucky H 4-H Club Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Hall of Fame Room at the K.C. Hall – Hallettsville CONTACT: Brooke Meinkowsky – 361-772-4206
- Moulton 4-H Club Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 3:45 p.m. Zion Lutheran Church CONTACT: Claudia Gonzales – 979-777-5740 Robin Stewart – 618-340-5821
- Shiner 4-H club Meets 2<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Fire Station Meeting Room CONTACT: Lauren Bowman – 361-246-8015
- Half Moon 4-H Club Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month at 6:00 p.m. United Lutheran Church of Shiner CONTACT: Stacy Miller – 512-413-8370 Jennifer Garcia – 512-878-7274
- Vysehrad 4-H Club Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month at 5:00 p.m. St. Mary's Catholic Church Pavilion CONTACT: Sara Lynn Opela – 361-772-0722
- Sweet Home 4-H Club Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Sweet Home Hall CONTACT: Christy Brosch – 361-772-7166
- Shooting Sports Project Group Meeting times vary Appelt's Hill Gun Club CONTACT: Phil Guenther – 979-562-2124

**Having a club meeting, project group, or activity?** Please designate one person, adult or youth over the age of 13, to complete the survey using the QR code each time you have a meeting. This is quick and can be done before you ever leave the meeting. **This helps us tell our story to those who help fund 4-H.**



County Council  
Monday, November 3  
7:00 p.m.  
Location TBA

County Food Show/Food Challenge  
Sunday, November 2, 2025  
Entry Form will be in the next newsletter  
and due by  
October 22, 2025.

Rules can be found on the district website:  
<https://d114-h.tamu.edu/events-and-contests/food-show-and-food-challenge/>

## Project Help and the People in the Office

Please help us in welcoming Lauren Loos to the County Extension Office. Lauren is training to be the officer manager when Jennifer Steffek retires at the end of the year.

Jennifer Steffek has been the office manager for 25 years. She knows the ins and outs of everything. Do not hesitate to ask her your questions.

Natalie Knesek is the County Extension Agent-Family and Community Health and 4-H Coordinator for Lavaca County. She oversees the family and consumer sciences related activities, approves 4-H enrollments and registrations, oversees management of clubs and volunteers, and shares project responsibilities for STEM and Leadership/Citizenship with Shannon DeForest.

Shannon DeForest is the County Extension Agent -Ag and Natural Resources and oversees the projects related to both agriculture and natural resources including Shooting Sports.

Please do not hesitate to ask for help with your projects. If you go somewhere or do something 4-H related that does not require registration through 4-H online we often do not hear about it. Please be sure to tell us where you are going and what you are doing and let us know how we can support you.

### Some Basic Information for our New Members

Lavaca County 4-H is part of District 11 4-H. There are 12 districts in Texas 4-H.

District 11 4-H includes:

Austin, Washington, Fayette, Wharton, Jackson, Lavaca, DeWitt, Karnes, Bee, Refugio, Goliad, San Patricio, Nueces, Aransas, Colorado, Victoria, Calhoun, and Matagorda Counties.

In 4-H we have three age divisions:

Junior 3rd-5th grade (and at least 8 years of age)

Intermediate 6th-8th grade

High School 9th-12th grade (until 19 years of age)

We have educational opportunities for Clover Kids as well. Clover Kids are in K-2.

**Natalie and Shannon have adjunct faculty agreements with all of the schools in Lavaca County enabling our youth to participate in events in accordance with UIL as extracurricular activities. In order to receive an excused absence you must have pre-approval and must meet your school's guidelines and have their approval. This process begins with your request in our office.**

There are LOTS of opportunities that do not get included in this newsletter. Make sure you are **also reading the weekly email from Texas 4-H and following Texas 4-H on social media so you do not miss out. There is just more than we can possibly keep** up with and share. If you participate in something, please send us a picture or two and let us know what you learned and what you did so we can spotlight you in this newsletter or on our Facebook.

### How to say the 4-H Motto and Pledge

**Always begin with the motto** by saying  
“In support of the 4-H club motto, ‘To make the best better’  
I pledge my **HEAD** to clearer thinking,  
My **HEART** to greater  
loyalty, My **HANDS** to  
larger service, and  
My **HEALTH** to better living,  
For my club, my community, my country, and my world.”



### The 4-H Prayer

“Help Me, O’ Lord, to live so that the world may be a little better because thou didst make me. Amen.”

### Reimbursement Policy

Our county council has funds designated to reimburse youth and adult chaperones who participate in events representing Lavaca County in District and State 4-H contests and leadership workshops. The policy and form to submit for reimbursement requests is available on our county website:

<https://lavaca.agrilife.org/files/2024/01/Lavaca-County-4-H- Reimbursement-Policy-and-Forms.pdf>

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