

ISSUE NO. 46 | MAY

WEST PLAINS EXTENSION DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

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SAFE KIDS
SCOTT COUNTY

Safe Kids Day!

Saturday
May 3rd, 2025
@ Palmer Park

SAFETY INFO! **FUN ACTIVITIES!**

Our Mission:
Helping give all children the chance to grow up to be whatever they can imagine.

After Go Far Race
9:30-11:30am

Free Bike Helmets! **Free Breakfast!** **Free Bike Rodeo! Prizes!**

Registration 620-872-5774

OFFICE HOURS:
MONDAY - FRIDAY | 8 AM - 5 PM
FINNEY COUNTY OFFICE:
620-272-3670
SCOTT COUNTY OFFICE:
620-872-2930
OFFICE PROFESSIONALS:
COZETTA O'DEA & JESSICA LOPEZ



JANET HARKNESS
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CAROL ANN CROUCH

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WWW.WESTPLAINS.K-STATE.EDU

| @WESTPLAINSKSRE



UPCOMING DISTRICT EVENTS

SPRING
2025

Print or screenshot this page to keep up to date with all of our upcoming activities!
(* indicates a pre-registration is required.)

May

- 5/1 - 4-H & FFA Small Livestock Tagging, 6-8pm Wm Carpenter 4-H Building Parking Lot
- 5/1 - 4-H Enrollment & Project Selection Deadline for County & State Participation
- 5/1 - 4-H & FFA Beef Tag In, Finney County Fair Grounds 9-11a.m.
- 5/1 - Camp Wild Adventure Registration Due
- 5/4 - 4-H & FFA Small Livestock Tagging, 6-8pm WM Carpenter 4-H Building parking lot
- 5/6 - 4-H Horst Safety Watch Party, 6:30 pm Finney County 4-H Building RSVP to jessicalopez1@ksu.edu
- 5/22 - 4-H Food Safety Mtg 12-1 & 5-6pm , Scott City Extension Office
- 5/27 - Tractor Safety Class at Scott City. Registration due May 21.

June

- June 9-10 Camp Lakeside
- June 11-13 Camp Wild Adventure



GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MEAT JUDGING TEAM
est. 1987

MEAT JUDGING CAMP

AUGUST 7-8
9 AM - 5 PM
GCCC Meat Lab (John Collins Vocational Bldg)

Register by Aug. 4th
Register with Sklyer Glenn
sklyer.glenn@gcccks.edu
620-290-7068

\$100
PER PERSON

Age Groups
Beginner: 8 - 10 year olds
(or less than a year of judging experience)
Experienced: 11 - 18 year olds
(or more than a year of judging experience)

*Housing not provided
Lunch provided both days*

Join us for the
“A Better You”
class!

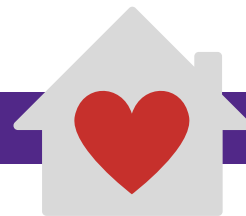
Tuesday's & Thursdays

5:15-6 PM

**Finney County
Extension Office**



K-State Research and Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact West Plains Extension two weeks prior to the start of the event at 620-272-3670/620-872-2930. Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information, will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

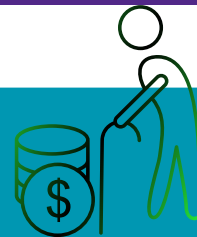


FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

Nearing retirement? K-State aging expert suggests making a plan ahead of time

Martinez said retirees often experience life-after-work in stages

By Pat Melgares, K-State Research and Extension news service



MANHATTAN, Kan. – Among the terms many associate with retirement – freedom, independence, flexibility and relaxation among them – there is at least one more. Anxiety.

“I think the dream is always to have an opportunity to get to that final stage where we’ve had a long career, but we’re ready to retire,” said Erin Martinez, an extension specialist on aging and adult development in Kansas State University’s Department of Applied Human Sciences.

“But there’s also some apprehension that goes along with the excitement of reaching retirement age.”

Retirement may follow in stages, said Martinez. The first is a “honeymoon phase” in which the retiree has a newfound freedom that includes getting involved with things they previously didn’t have time for, either as a volunteer or part-time work.

But the joy of taking part in new activities may last only for so long.

“There’s definitely a wall that some people may hit after they have accomplished their bucket list,” Martinez said. “They might feel bored, perhaps have a lack of a sense of purpose, and just miss that overall stimulation they once had in the workplace, or from having checked off items from the bucket list.”

According to Martinez, it leads to a new stage: Reorientation.

“During this time, retirees reassess retirement and begin to engage in new things that will reinvigorate their sense of purpose,” she said. “At this point, they may develop a more realistic plan for their retirement years; it’s a time when they move beyond the honeymoon phase and approach reality.”

“Some of the new reality,” she said, “includes living a healthier lifestyle, as well as thinking about what the future holds and how to prepare for that. There are a lot of thoughts and processes that can go into that, including deciding how one enjoys spending their time and how not to stretch themselves too thin.”

Martinez urges those nearing the end of their full-time working years to think about what they want to do in retirement beforehand.

“You know, at first, having extra time at home may be great, but eventually you might experience boredom or you might be a little lonely, not really knowing what to do,” she said. “It can be a difficult time. But the earlier we start thinking about what that time is going to be like and what our goals are going to be in retirement, the better we will adjust to that.”

She said volunteering for local activities is a popular choice.

“Volunteering locally is an amazing thing to do,” Martinez said. “Research shows that the majority of volunteers are older adults. If you’re nervous about volunteering, and whether you’re going to know anybody...rest assured that some of the people you’re going to volunteering alongside will be in similar stages of life.”

“What I encourage older adults to do is to think about the major issues in your community, decide where you can make the biggest difference, and engage in those things to help other people.”

More information on issues related to aging is available from local extension offices in Kansas.

If outdoor time means picnic time, Kansas State University food scientist Karen Blakeslee said food safety’s four principles – Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill – are still in play.

“Wash your hands, separate food items, (and) keep raw meats away from ready-to-eat foods,” said Blakeslee, who is also coordinator of K-State’s Rapid Response Center for food science. “When preparing food, make sure you’re keeping knives and cutting boards separate so you’re not causing any cross contamination issues.”

Blakeslee also reminds consumers to pack their food thermometer to assure meats and other foods are cooked properly. Hamburgers steaks, roasts and chops should be cooked to an internal temperature of 145 degrees Fahrenheit; ground meat (such as beef, pork and lamb) to 160F; and all poultry to 165F.

“Don’t rely on color to determine if a food is cooked properly,” she said. “K-State meat scientists have done a lot of research over the years that shows that a food may look pink, but is done, and vice versa: a meat may look brown inside but may not be cooked to the proper temperature.”

Cold foods should be kept at 40F or colder, Blakeslee said.

“One suggestion I would give is to have a couple of ice chests,” she said. “One is for beverages, because that is the one that is opened most often. The other one can contain all of the food that you may pack, including raw meat of any sort, like hamburgers. Pack raw meats separately to prevent cross contamination.”

Blakeslee said ice should surround the food. Pack ice on the bottom of the cooler – underneath food – then pack ice over the side and top of food, as well.

More tips from Blakeslee:

- Bring a plastic tablecloth. “Picnic tables are in public places that are used by everybody. Plus, there are critters that run around and crawl on those tables.”
- Bring wash rags and extra water. Keeping hands clean during outdoor gatherings can be a challenge. Blakeslee suggests packing wet wash rags with soap on them in plastic bags, disposable hand wipes, or extra water and hand soap. “Hand sanitizer is okay, but it really doesn’t work well unless your hands are clean first,” she said. “They’re good in a pinch, but even better after you’ve washed your hands.”
- Share the responsibility for bringing food. Potlucks are fine, but often people bring many of the same foods. “Assign different foods to different people,” Blakeslee said. “Some people can bring a salad, others can bring a dessert and so on. This helps reduce the stress on everyone.”

Blakeslee publishes a monthly newsletter called You Asked It! that provides numerous tips on being safe and healthy. More information is also available from local extension offices in Kansas.

-Carol Ann





Know Your Numbers, Protect Your Heart

May is National Blood Pressure Month, a time to raise awareness about the importance of maintaining healthy blood pressure and preventing hypertension. Many people are unaware they have high blood pressure, which is why it's often called the "silent killer." Hypertension typically has no noticeable symptoms, yet it significantly increases the risk of serious health problems, including heart disease, stroke, kidney damage, and more.

According to America's Health Rankings, 34.7% of Kansas adults have been told by a health professional that they have high blood pressure—slightly above the national average of 34.0%.

Understanding your blood pressure readings is essential for early detection and proper management. When blood pressure is measured, the top number (systolic pressure) indicates the pressure in your arteries when the heart beats, while the bottom number (diastolic pressure) reflects the pressure between heartbeats. A normal blood pressure reading is less than 120/80 mmHg.

Since high blood pressure often shows no symptoms, the only way to know if you're at risk is to check regularly. Home monitors or routine doctor visits make it easy to keep track.

Hypertension is a disease that can be managed with lifestyle change. Those include


Eat heart-healthy: Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and reduce sodium.

Be active: Aim for at least 30 minutes of movement most days of the week.

Manage stress: Try mindfulness, journaling, or regular relaxation time.

Avoid tobacco and limit alcohol.

Stay on top of checkups: Monitor your blood pressure and follow up with your doctor.

This month, take a few minutes to check your numbers—it could save your life 

Celebrate May Day – A Joyful Welcome to Spring!

May 1st marks May Day, a traditional celebration of spring, renewal, and community. Rooted in ancient festivals from Europe, May Day is known for its colorful customs—like dancing around the maypole, weaving flower crowns, and sharing May baskets filled with flowers and treats.

Historically, May Day honored the return of warmer weather and the blooming of new life. In some places, it was also seen as a day of fertility and good fortune. Today, while less common in the U.S., many communities still celebrate May Day with school programs, garden parties, and acts of kindness—like secretly leaving flowers on a neighbor's doorstep.

Whether you're planting a garden, making a paper flower craft, or just enjoying the sunshine, May Day is a great reminder to pause and appreciate the beauty of spring.

Try this May Basket idea

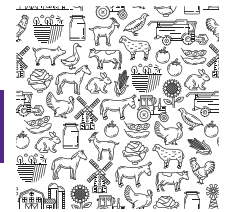
Supplies:

- Colorful scrapbook or construction paper (for the cone)
- Ribbon or string (for the handle)
- Fresh flowers, wildflowers, or paper flowers
- Small treats (wrapped candy, mints, or chocolates)
- Tape or glue
- A cheerful note or tag ("Happy May Day!" or "Just Because")

Instructions:

1. **Make the Cone:** Roll a square piece of paper into a cone shape and secure with tape or glue. Trim the top edge if needed to even it out.
2. **Add a Handle:** Punch two holes near the top and tie a ribbon or string to make a handle—or tape a looped ribbon to the inside.
3. **Fill with Cheer:** Tuck in a small bouquet of fresh or faux flowers, and add a few wrapped treats for a sweet surprise.
4. **Attach a Note:** Include a simple message like "Happy May Day!" or "Wishing you a beautiful spring!"
5. **Secret Delivery:** Hang it on a neighbor's doorknob or surprise a friend—ring the bell and dash away for a fun, old-fashioned May Day tradition!





Gardening for Butterflies



Attracting butterflies to the garden through plant selection has grown in popularity, said Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini. Knowing what species of plants butterflies prefer can help gardeners with their selections, she said.

"Butterflies are crucial for pollination and are a delight to host in the garden," Domenghini said, noting that the North American Butterfly Association has resources for gardeners wanting to certify their landscape as a butterfly habitat.

Certification includes planting at least three different caterpillar food plants; at least three different native butterfly nectar sources; and not using insecticides or pesticides.

The Monarch Watch organization also has a process to register a garden as a Monarch Waystation. Domenghini said there are more than 46,000 Monarch Waystations in the world, which meet the following features:

- Receives at least six hours of sunlight each day.
- Contains at least 10 milkweed plants, preferably with two more species.
- Contains nectar plants, including annuals, biennials and perennials.

Annual Plants that Attract Butterflies

- Ageratum.
- Cosmos.
- French marigold.
- Petunia.
- Verbena.
- Zinnia.



Perennials

Early Blooming

- Allium
- Chives
- Forget-me-not
- Lilac



Mid-Season Blooming

- Bee Balm
- Butterfly bush.
- Black-eyed Susan.
- Buttonbush.
- Butterfly weed.
- Daisy.
- Daylily.
- Gaillardia
- Lavender.
- Lily.
- Mint.
- Phlox.
- Privet.
- Sunflower.
- Veronica.



Late-Season Blooming

- Aster.
- Glossy.
- Abelia.
- Sedum.



Spring Field Day

Registration: 3:30 pm

Tours of wheat, canola and annual forage variety plots

Meal after the tours



AgManager
.info

Winning the Game

Grain Marketing Webinars

A monthly webinar series that helps Kansas farmers develop effective 2025 grain marketing plans for Kansas crops. Register by scanning the QR Code.





Countdown to County Fair

4-H events and fairs are often used to provide youth with opportunities to have their work judged against a set of standards. The evaluation of an exhibit should be a positive and motivating part of the 4-H experience. To plan, practice, and present a finished product is to "learn by doing." The exhibit is not an end in itself, nor does it illustrate all the learning that has taken place during the 4-H year.

Consultative judging brings 4-H members and judges together to evaluate project exhibits. It provides a unique opportunity for young people to learn from the experiences and knowledge of a judge. Consultative judging involves one-to-one communication in which the judge and 4-H member talk directly with each other. As such, parents/guardians should not communicate for the young person unless special accommodations are necessary and arranged ahead of time.

An important goal of 4-H is to teach skills to young people that they can use now, as a youth, and in later life. Standards of excellence help 4-H'ers evaluate the skills they are learning. Standards of excellence can be useful for products (skirts, cookies, tomatoes, livestock, etc.) and skills (speaking, decision making, etc.).

The Danish System

The Danish system of judging is a method of evaluation where an exhibit or process is evaluated against a set of standards, and recognition is awarded on the degree to which the standard has been met by each 4-H member. The standards of excellence are often printed on a judge's scorecard, and allows for the exhibit to be judged on one's own merit, and not in comparison with others in the class.

The following ribbons apply:

WHITE: Fair, denotes much improvement needed. Fails to meet minimum standards.

RED: Good, some improvements needed. Meets minimum standards.

BLUE: Excellent, minor improvements needed. Exceeds minimum standards.

PURPLE: Superior, outstanding on all standards.

Congratulations to the West Plains 4-H Livestock Judging Teams! Members competed at the Way Out West Contest in Leoti. Coach Forgy and the kids had a great day!



Scott County Kansas 4-H had another great weekend of shooting matches in Thomas Co! Large group of 4-H'ers! Congratulations to the following members:

BB - 4th Team
Isaiah - 4th Individual
Bryn - 18th Individual
Daniel - 28th Individual
Alex - 30th Individual
Kashen - 40th Individual
Trace - 46th Individual
Gage - 48th Individual
Landon - 51st Individual
Elana - 52nd Individual

4-H Shooting Sports Spring Fair Shoot. Great job everyone!

Members competing:

Kennan M
Grady V
Maya V
Brayson M
Kinley U
Kamryn M
Madelyn W
Macy H

Results:

Air Rifle:

1st & Champion: Bryce K
2nd & Res Champion: Tayler K

Air Pistol:

1st & Champion: Hunter W
2nd & Res Champion: Isaiah R

BB, 8 yrs old:

1st & Champion: Graham U
2nd & Res Champion: Ellie V

3rd: Garrett W

4th: Lincoln D

BB, 9 yrs old:

1st & Champion: Gage C
2nd & Res Champion: Landon C

3rd: James B

BB, Intermediate 1:

1st & Champion: Daniel B
2nd & Res Champion: Rylee Z

3rd: Kashen P

4th: Trace J

BB, Intermediate 2:

1st & Champion: Bryn C
2nd & Res Champion: Alex V

3rd: Josie B

4th: Statler K

BB, 15 yrs old:

1st & Champion: Isaiah R

Congratulations



*Renewal Scholarship
Winner
Emma Lighner*



*Mary Jo Williams Scholarship
Winner
Kayla George*

CLUB REPORTS:

FINNEY COUNTY 4-H HAPPY HUSTLERS

April Showers Bring...New Friends

By: Hailey Unruh

On March 6th, the Happy Hustlers held their annual Exchange Meeting. This year they shared time with the Sherlock Strivers 4-H Club.

The shared meeting got kicked off with fun games. Both clubs participated in an Ice Breaker game, in which they held hands and tried to get a hula-hoop around the circle without touching it with their hands. The second game was played by being in teams of three, and trying to get a gummy worm to go through the hole in a lifesaver gummy, using only paperclips. The last game was held outside. This game was a relay, in which teams had to run as fast as they can and try to grab colored eggs. The first team to go through all their players first wins.

After games and treats, which were water, sodas, cookies, and mini cupcakes, the clubs held their meeting together. They began by saying the pledges together, then went on to do roll call.

They then held their separate meetings, and went on with their usual routine. They all concluded their meetings, knowing that they got to share a time of fun with another club. What a wonderful way to kick off the month of April. April showers bring what? New friends.

FINNEY COUNTY 4-H Beacon Boosters

The Beacon Boosters 4-H club meeting was held on January 20, 2025. There were eight members, and seven adults present. The club decided that the Valentines crafts would be delivered to the Garden Valley Retirement Home. For the next meeting each member was reminded to bring ideas on how to decorate the club banner for the 2025 fair. Taylor presented a project talk on how to make yarn hearts. The club made yarn hearts to disperse at the retirement home. The next meeting will be held on February 17, 2025.

The Beacon Boosters 4-H club meeting was held on February 17, 2025. There were six members, and seven adults present. The club discussed the ideas and decided on how to decorate the club banner using the 2025 fair theme of "Deep Roots and Dusty Boots". A scholarship parent committee was established. The next meeting will be held on March 2, 2025, with the Finney Flyers.

The Beacon Boosters 4-H club meeting was held together with the Finney Flyers on March 2, 2025. The meeting was called to order by both presidents. There were seven members, and four adults present. As a fun way to end the club exchange both 4-H clubs enjoyed bowling. The next meeting will be held on April 21, 2025.

The reporter's report was submitted to the Garden City Telegram, Finney County Extension Office, and the Beacon Booster's Facebook page.

Respectfully submitted,

Paislea Cogan, Reporter

FINNEY COUNTY 4-H Wide Awake

We had parents night this meeting. It was a lot of fun to join Betsy in singing the itsy-bitsy spider in Spanish for our song. Our members also got told all of the dates for YQCA training that was over spring break. We also enjoyed listening to members give some awesome project talks. Lastly we ended with a hula hoop game lead by Jill!

Submitted by Macy Hands

FINNEY COUNTY 4-H Finney Flyers

The February meeting of the Finney Flyers 4-H club was held on February 2 at the 4-H building. The club welcomed new members Kynlie, Baylie, Tymberlie and Coltyr. We are excited that they chose to join Finney Flyers. Addisyn gave a report on delivering the hats and mittens to the Family Crisis Center. The club decided to do a club share meeting with Beacon Boosters next month at the bowling alley.

KJ gave a talk on "How to read Ear Notches". The March meeting will be March 2 at the Hard Rock Lanes with Beacon Boosters.



The March meeting of the Finney Flyers 4-H club was held on Sunday, March 2, 2025 at the Hard Rock Lanes in Garden City. The meeting was called to order with the Beacon Boosters 4-H club. The club then separated to hold their own business. 14 members answered roll call for Finney Flyers. Leader Kim announced rock Springs Summer Camp registration is open.

Abi gave a talk on Shopping in style. She is going to share her video with the club at a later date. Recreation was bowling with all club members and the members from Beacon Boosters. The April meeting will be April 6, 2025 at the 4-H building.

The April meeting of the Finney Flyers 4-H club was held on Sunday, April 6, 2025, at the 4-H building. The meeting was called to order by President Aleah. Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H pledge was led by Madelyn. 14 members answered roll call. Leader Kim discussed the fair sale requirements and talked about 4-H camp registration.

Abi shared her video that she made on Shopping in Style. Kason gave a talk on his swine project. The club sang Happy Birthday to everyone who had April birthdays. A game of "Red light Green light" was enjoyed by all members.

Next month's meeting will be May 4 at 4:00 pm at the 4-H building.

KJ
Reporter
Finney Flyers

CLUB REPORTS:

4-H & FFA HORSE SAFETY WATCH PARTY

MAY 6
6:30PM
4-H BUILDING, SMALL SIDE
FINNEY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

2025
SCOTT COUNTY FREE FAIR
July 19-26
Fair Book Available @ www.scottcofreefair.com

Saturday, July 19 – Family Day
~Sidewalk Chalk Drawing begins~
9:00 a.m. Turtle Races
9:30 a.m. Kids Day/Ping Pong Ball Drop
11:30 a.m. Kids Pedal Tractor Pull
11:30am-1:30pm ~Scott County Arts Council
Craft Day~ Exhibit ~~8:00~~
11-?? p.m. Touch A Truck
7:30 p.m. KPRA Rodeo, Grandstand Arena
Performance by: American Freedom Riders

Sunday, July 20
10 a.m. Prairie Land Church
Fair grounds awning pavilion
Fellowship lunch to follow

Monday, July 21
9:00 am. 4-H Consultation Judging:
Foods, Clothing Construction, Visual Arts,
Space Tech, Entomology, Photography,
Electricity, Geology, Woodworking
Wm. Carpenter 4-H Building
10:00 am- 3:00 pm 4-H Bake Sale
Wm Carpenter 4-H Building
5-8:00 p.m. Check in/Weigh in all
4-H & OC livestock:

Tuesday, July 22
7:30-10:00 a.m. Enter exhibits
10:00 a.m. Judging of exhibits

Wednesday, July 23
8:30-10:00 a.m. Flower Show Entries
8:30 a.m. Poultry Show
9:30 a.m. Rabbit Show
11a.m. - 9:30 p.m. Exhibit Buildings Hours
10:30 a.m. Sheep Show
4:00 p.m. Beef Show
5:30-8:00 p.m. Face Painting
7:00 p.m. Figure 8 Race, Grandstand

Thursday, July 24
8:00 a.m. Swine Show
11 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. Exhibit Buildings Hours
3:00 p.m. Goat Show
5:30-8:00 p.m. Face Painting
6:00 p.m. Free Beefiesta BBQ
6:00 p.m. American AgCredit
Watermelon Feed
6:00p.m. Entertainment - Awning
6:30 p.m. Grand Drive – Livestock Awards

Friday, July 25
11 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Exhibit Buildings Hours
9:00 a.m. Round Robin Showmanship
5:30-8:00 p.m. Face Painting
6:00 p.m. 4-H Auction:
Livestock & Champion Foods
8:00 p.m. Ranch Rodeo - Grandstand

Saturday, July 26
7:30-10 a.m. Pancake on a Stick – City Park
10:00 a.m. Parade, Main Street
12 noon - 1:00 Tasting Booths – City Park
12-4 p.m. Exhibit Buildings Hours –
following parade
3-4:00 p.m. Release All Exhibits, tear down
5:30-8:00 p.m. Face Painting
6:30 p.m. Scott County Barrel Race,
Followed by Scott Co Roping
9-12:00 p.m. Fair Dance–Awning

Schedule Subject to Change



cool careers
Student Edition

1 Want to know how to get started with our NEW Cool Careers contest?

2 You, or a group up to four 4-H members, select a job or profession within one of your 4-H projects you want to learn more about.

3 Identify someone in that profession you would like to interview and get the ball rolling!

Plan your interview questions & storyboard

Interview your professional & video/film

Edit video segments & add music & graphics

Use technology you already have access to: phone, tablet, video camera or laptop!

For video examples, graphics, music content and registration form visit www.kansas4-H.org