



# Letter 5: 4-H Activities



## Letter 5: 4-H Activities

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**Dear Leader,**

Now that you have had several project meetings and the members are excited about their 4-H project work, you'd probably like to know about many 4-H activities available to your members.

**Club, Area and Countywide Activities**

**Club Level**

In addition to regular meetings, field trips and special activity days some clubs also plan social events such as potluck dinners, picnics, trail rides and campouts. Each event affords members a chance to serve on the planning committee and develop important life skills. It also is an opportunity for members and their families to get to know others in the club. Your local group or county 4-H newsletter will give you the information regarding upcoming activities – read it carefully and share it with the 4-H members in your project or group. One 4-H goal is to help youth become caring and engaged citizens of their communities. Therefore every club is encouraged to work on a community service project of its choosing. Some clubs share something related to their project area with older people or shut-ins. Some

clubs work on environmental projects like cleaning up a playground or park, building and maintaining nature paths or hosting and teaching special events for young children. The thing that is discouraged is just giving money. Organizing, planning and implementing a benefit to raise funds for a cause is acceptable. The bottom line is that the members decide collectively what they want to do, develop a plan to carry it out and do so. As the 4-H members in your group grow and mature they decide on a long-term project that can be developed or repeated over several years. Communication with your Community Club Leader and/or Club President will help in identifying upcoming club events.

**Area Level**

San Diego County 4-H Clubs are divided up into areas.

There are usually several clubs in one area. Areas are determined by geographical location or business and travel patterns. The clubs in an area or several areas collectively work together to carry out judging days, educational field days, presentation days and any other educational activity they decide will meet the needs of the majority of youth in their area(s).

**Club Officer**

**Area 1**

Bonsall  
Fallbrook

**Area 2**

Escondido  
Homesteaders  
Pauma Valley  
Valley Center  
Valley Center Country

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**Area 3**

Olivenhain  
Rancho Poway  
San Dieguito

**Area 4**

Poway  
Ramona Piasanos  
Ramona Rancheros  
Ramona Stars  
Ramona Valley  
Ramona Wranglers  
Santa Ysabel/ Julian  
Warner Springs

**Area 5**

Alpine Amigos  
Japatul  
Mountain Empire

**Area 6**

Golden Clovers  
Sagebrush

**Area 7**

Jamul Chaparros  
North Park

**County Level**

During the 4-H year, the county has many activities in which you and the 4-H members are encouraged to participate. These events are planned and implemented by members and leaders with an interest in the event. It's helpful to know what these are at the beginning of the year so you can plan accordingly.

- Workshops – These can be scheduled in various project areas. Sometimes these are also offered in neighboring counties or on a regional or statewide basis. Watch the county newsletter for details. In the fall there is a county leader and youth officer leadership workshop

held usually at the end of September or early October. There is also a small animal learning day and a fashion and design day for non-animal projects usually held in the spring.

- Junior Leadership Camp – This is an event hosted by teens for junior high school members which is held in November. The program offers teens an opportunity to pass on their skills and knowledge to younger 4-H members.
- Presentations- These are short informative talks, demonstrations, public speaking or skits given by individual 4-H members (or a team of two members) on any topic they choose. They can be given first to a member's own club, at public gatherings and events and at area, county and sectional 4-H Presentation days. The younger 4-H members are when they start learning to give presentations or speak in front of a group, the easier it is for them to enjoy doing it.
- Record Book Evaluation – Each 4-H member should be encouraged to keep records of their 4-H experience and project. The county holds an event where members turn in their records for evaluation. The record books must first be turned in by the member to the Community Club that the member is a part. Then each club submits all of the record books for their club as a group. If you have an opportunity, sign up as a evaluator for the event. It

can give you more insight into how members can complete their record book.

**4-H Member Divisions**

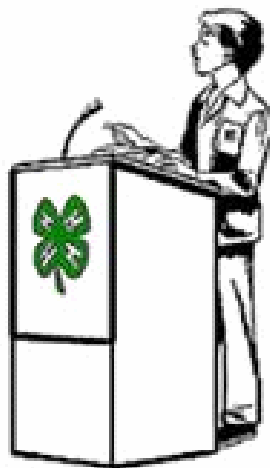
To design 4-H experiences based on the developmental levels of youth, 4-H events for members are commonly divided into divisions. The divisions are based on age as of January 1st:

- Primary – Youth who are 5 to 8 years of age.
- Junior – Youth who are 9 and 10 years of age.
- Intermediate – Youth who are 11 to 13 years of age.
- Senior – Youth who are 14 years of age and over.

**County and Local Fairs**

The purpose of 4-H members exhibiting their project work at county and local fairs is to give them an opportunity to display their competency in what he or she has learned in their project area during the year. The three fairs in San Diego are separate entities from the 4-H Youth Development Program. Exhibiting at a fair is a privilege not a right of being a 4-H member. Be sure your members and their families understand the rules of the fair at which they wish to exhibit. Copies of the most recent fair books will assist in determining the schedule and the requirements for the exhibit classes. As soon as new fair books are available, make sure you get a copy.

Continued on Page 3



“During the 4-H year, the county has many activities in which you and the 4-H members are encouraged to participate.:



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“The two most notable events are the *California Focus* and *State Leadership Conference*.”

Also make sure that your members get the necessary entry forms for fair exhibits and know how to fill them out correctly. Ribbon awards are usually given at fairs in 4-H contests. In most judging used for exhibits and contests, the exhibitors are judged against a predetermined skill level and standard. This is known as Danish system judging. Each exhibit receives a blue, red or white ribbon based on the following criteria:

- Blue Ribbon: excellent, within the ability of most contestants
- Red Ribbon: good quality, some room for improvement
- White Ribbon: acceptable, but shows need for considerable improvement.

Each fair or show may have their own standard for each placing.

American system of judging is where members are ranked in order of the highest performing member first and so forth down the line.

The judging for both systems is usually done by an individual selected by that particular fair. It is best for the member that the fair is not the only form of recognition or acknowledgment they receive for being in the project or 4-H Club.

### Activities Beyond the County Level

There are several 4-H activities that occur outside the county that 4-H members in your groups can participate in.

- Sectional - There is a sectional level of activities that include camps, presentation days and field days. These are held in a variety of locations in the counties surrounding San Diego as well as in San Diego County. Youth from neighboring counties come together to participate in workshops, competitive events and positive social events like conferences and camps. The county newsletter usually makes announcements about these activities.
- State - There are several statewide 4-H activities that members can participate in with youth from throughout California. The two most notable events are the *California Focus* and *State Leadership Conference*.

*California Focus* is a unique 4-H Citizenship educational experience that combines hands-on participation in workshops, debates, and simulations with outstanding speakers and visits to historical, cultural, and governmental sites. California's capital city, Sacramento, becomes a "living classroom" for this five-day, action packed adventure. *As a citizen of "Sierra Cascade"* you will register to vote, conduct a political campaign, elect constitutional offices, analyze the needs and issues of your district, and enact legislation with the goal of securing the governor's signature to make your bill a law. *Legislative appointments* at the Capitol will allow delegates to meet face-to-face with their senators and assembly person to discuss current issues, learn

how proposals are funded, and advocate for issues critical to them and their fellow constituents. An overview of the executive branch is presented by the governor's staff. A court clerk guides delegates through the judicial process while delegates sit in the chambers of the state supreme court.

*State Leadership Conference* is usually held at the end of summer for youth enrolled in high school. The purpose of State Leadership conference is to provide advanced leadership training for youth, provide an opportunity for statewide networking and idea sharing and visit and live on University of California campuses. Workshops, assemblies and social events as well as campus tours are highlights of this program.

- National - The National 4-H Conference Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland is the site of several 4-H activities and conferences. The programs offered include *Washington Focus*.

*Washington Focus* is a program combines visits to historical and cultural attractions with participation in educational workshops and simulations involving citizenship and leadership. During the members' stay they will have an opportunity to meet face-to-face with legislators, discuss contemporary issues and learn how proposals are funded and public policy is administered. In the process they will share concerns, ideas and information with peers from across the country.



**Prepare, Participate & Reflect.**

It is important with any 4-H activity that you prepare members for the activity so they get the most out of their participation. At the very least members need to know what the event or activity will require in terms of resources (money, supplies, equipment, etc.) from them, what is the goal(s) or agenda of the event, and what is the expectation of the members when they return from the event to share their experiences with those who did not go.

It is also important that you instill in the members the importance of them participating fully in all of the activity or event to the extent they are capable of doing so, to behave according to the 4-H Code of Conduct, be considerate of other participants and be attentive to directions of the activity's organizers.

Reflection time needs to be a part of members' participation in any activity whether it is integrated into the activity itself or you engage in reflection with the participating members after the activity is over. Reflection allows members to talk about the experience. They can share reactions and observations. It helps validate what they felt about their experience. As a leader you can facilitate the reflection process so members discuss more than what they experienced. You can help them find general trends or common truths in the experience. You can also help them make a connection to "real life" principles, how what they learned can be applied to the future, and how more effective behaviors can be developed from what they learned.

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**How can I use the information in this letter?**

**1. New activities to plan into our club program:**

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**2. Other People who could help us and how they might help:**

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**3. Questions to ask U.C. Cooperative Extension staff and other leaders.**

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## Reference Materials

### Letter 5: 4-H Activities

*Fair Entry Book*

*4-H Fair Entry Information Booklet*

*4-H Record Forms*

## Good luck!

