

WEST PLAINS EXTENSION DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

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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



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TORI MOCK
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UPCOMING DISTRICT EVENTS

WINTER
2024

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

DECEMBER

- 12/23 : Scott Co 4-H 4-H Christmas Party, leave Extension Office 10:15, return 2pm. Free for members who completed 2023-24 record books and new members. All others \$10.

Kids Entrepreneurial Craft Fair



Sunday,
December 8th

William Carpenter Building
3-5 pm

Handmade Items for sale

Enjoy some cider, cocoa, and
cookies while you shop!

Youth Vendors Wanted!

To sell your own items,
contact Piper 620-214-0600

Join us for the
“A Better You”
class!

Tuesday's & Thursdays

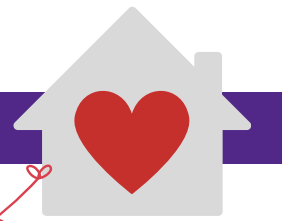
5:15-6 PM

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.

*Cover Headshot Photo Credit: AnneMarie Photography

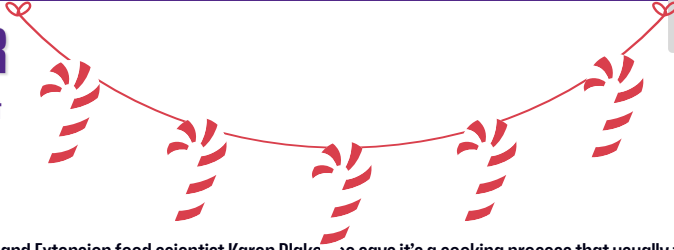


FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

If K-State food scientist says holiday candy can be a science experiment

Temperature, moisture are two keys in making candy, Blakeslee says

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



MANHATTAN, Kan. – When it comes to making holiday candy, K-State Research and Extension food scientist Karen Blakeslee says it's a cooking process that usually turns into a science experiment. "Really, any kind of baking – whether we're talking about making candy or something else – it really is a science, and that's one of the reasons why we encourage people to follow directions and use trusted recipes," Blakeslee said.

Blakeslee said there are two types of candies: Crystalline and non-crystalline. Fudge and fondant are examples of crystalline, while lollipops, taffy and caramels are examples of non-crystalline. "Crystalline candies have tiny crystals in them," Blakeslee said. "The trick in making successful crystalline candy is how small or big those little crystals are." "I've heard people say, 'My fudge is green.' Well, that's because the crystals just didn't get dissolved, or you didn't stir it fast enough or at the right temperature. So there's a lot of factors that go into what size those little crystals are. If you want nice, smooth fudge, the smaller the crystals, the better."

Non-crystalline candy relies heavily on temperature and moisture. "If it's a humid day, or it's raining outside, that's probably not the best day to make (non-crystalline) candy," Blakeslee said. "As you're cooking, that candy mixture can pull in moisture from the air, and then it's harder to get it out."

To achieve the correct temperature, Blakeslee says:

- Use clean utensils. "It's better to use a wood spoon as opposed to a metal spoon, because metal holds a lot of heat that can affect how your candy turns out."
- Use a heavy, stainless steel pan, rather than an aluminum pan, because it conducts heat more evenly.
- If the recipe calls for bringing the candy mixture to a boil, bring it to that point slowly. "Be patient," Blakeslee says.



"Probably the most critical thing in making any kind of candy is making sure you've got a good candy thermometer, whether it's one that has a bulb on it, or an instant read thermometer," Blakeslee said.

More holiday candy tips:

Don't substitute ingredients "If the recipe calls for cream, you don't want to use whole milk," Blakeslee said. "That's just not going to work because the candy really needs fat. This is one time when it's not a good idea to substitute ingredients because it will affect the outcome of the product." Don't double the batch Make one recipe at a time. "If you double the batch, it could affect how it heats up and the ability to cook the product properly," Blakeslee said. "And it will probably fail." Follow cooking steps in the proper order

Don't just dump everything in a pan and think that it's going to turn out: "It's probably not going to turn out very well," Blakeslee said.

She adds: "Now some people may like grainy fudge, and if that's you, then so be it. Some people like it smooth and some people like it with chocolate nuts."

Allow extra ingredients to cool at room temperature before adding to candy

If adding nuts, peppermint candy or chocolate chips, let them cool at room temperature before adding them to a mixture, "because sometimes that temperature change can affect your candy mixture," Blakeslee said.

Also, "be careful with such things as divinity (candy), which takes a little finesse to make because you're working with raw egg whites." Blakeslee said it can get tricky based on how slowly or quickly you pour the beaten egg whites into the candy mixture. "It can turn out really beautiful or it can be dried up and seized," she said. "It takes some practice."

Peanut brittle: A Holiday favorite

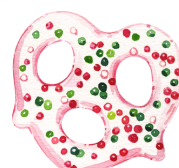
Peanut brittle is known for its airy texture, a result of using baking soda in the recipe. "You'll see recipes that say to add a real small amount of baking soda, and when you put that in there, you'll see that brittle mixture foam up," Blakeslee said. "That's when you spread it out on your pan and let it cool." For a hard, crunchy texture, leave the baking soda out of the peanut brittle recipe. Storing holiday candy Once done, candy should be stored in an airtight container at room temperature. "Freezing is not really an option," Blakeslee said. "It can work for some things, but for others – such as divinity – freezing is probably not a good option." Some candies should be wrapped individually in plastic wrap or wax paper, such as caramels. "That helps prevent moisture absorbing back into the candy," Blakeslee said.

Blakeslee recently spoke at length on tips for successfully making holiday candy on the weekly radio program, [Sound Living](#), produced by K-State Research and Extension.

More food safety tips are available online from K-State's [Rapid Response Center for Food Science](#). Blakeslee publishes a monthly newsletter, called [You Asked It!](#), with timely tips for safe food in and out of the home.

More information is also available at [local extension offices in Kansas](#).

-Carol Ann





Simpler, Happier Holidays

The holiday season is meant to be a time of joy, and celebration, but often, it is overshadowed by stress and overscheduling. Make these pledges for a simpler, healthier holiday season:

1. I pledge to set boundaries: Say “no” to activities or obligations that don’t align with your values or energy. Simplify plans for gifts, baking, and entertaining to have more fun.
2. I pledge to create a budget and stick to it: Set realistic spending limit for gifts, food, decorations and travel. The holidays will be happier if you don’t break your budget.
3. I pledge to not overeat: During the holiday season it is easy to indulged in all the festive foods. Listen to your body, make balanced choices, stay hydrated, and keep active during the holiday season. Following these tips can keep you feeling energetic and avoid unwanted weight gain.
4. I pledge to practice Gratitude: Focus on the blessings of the season, big and small. From a warm cup of tea to laughter with family. Cherish the simple joys that make this time special.

Tips for Freezing Pie Posted on November 21, 2024 by Karen Blakeslee

Save some meal prep time this holiday season by freezing pie ahead of the holiday meal. There are options to make baking easier. Here are many tips from Penn State University Extension. Freezing Pie Dough

- Pie dough can be rolled into circles and frozen flat on lined cardboard separated with pieces of freezer paper or foil.
- To freeze unbaked dough in pie pans, stack pie pans with two layers of freezer paper between them and place all in a freezer bag.
 - Prick pastry that will be baked unfilled. Pricking a frozen pastry will cause it to break.
 - Do not prick pastry that will be filled before baking.
- To use frozen sheets of dough, thaw in the refrigerator before shaping to the pan.
- Pastry shaped in pans before freezing does not need to be thawed before baking.

Freezing Shaped Pie Filling

- Freezing a pie in a pie pan takes lots of space and ties up the use of that pan.
- Freeze the pre-measured fruit filling for one pie in a large freezer bag or foil-lined pan.
- Before adding the cooled filling, plastic wrap can be placed over the foil in the pie pan to avoid filling sticking to the foil.
 - Dot with butter and sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg if desired.
 - If freezing the filling in a freezer bag, squeeze out the air, then seal.
 - Place the bag into the pie pan, shaping it to fit the pan, and freeze until solid.
- When the filling is frozen, remove it from the pan. This way, you can continue to use the pie pan and yet have everything mixed ahead to put into fresh pie dough.
- When you are ready to use the pie, unwrap and place the frozen filling in an unbaked pie shell, top, and bake. Allow an extra 20–25 minutes of baking time.

Freezing Prepared Pie

- Unbaked pies have a fresher fruit flavor than ones baked before freezing.
- Freeze the filling and crust separately to prevent fruit juice from penetrating and softening the lower crust during freezing.
 - It is easier to freeze pies before wrapping, whether baked or unbaked. Wrap them after they are frozen solid.
 - Do not cut vents in the top crust of an unbaked pie before freezing.
 - Cut vent holes in the upper crust just before baking.

Baking Frozen Pie

- Bake frozen pies in the lower third of a preheated oven for 25 minutes at 425°F and then reduce the heat to 350°F and raise the pie to the center of the oven to finish baking.
 - Some people prefer baking at 450°F for 15 to 20 minutes and then reducing heat to 375°F for 20 to 30 minutes or until the top crust is brown.
 - Placing the pie on a cookie sheet or pie drip pan helps catch juices that might overflow.
- A baked pie that has been frozen can be served without reheating; thaw it in its wrapping in the refrigerator. Posted in December 2024 Tagged Food Preparation, Freezing, Pie

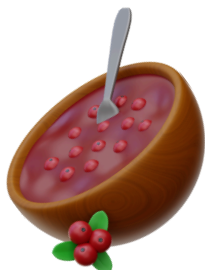
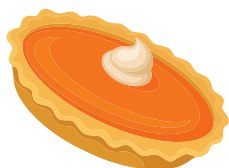
Fresh Cranberry Salsa

Ingredients

- 1 bag Tortilla chips
- 12 oz. fresh cranberries rinsed and drained
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2 jalapenos ribs and seeds removed, minced
- 1/4 cup cilantro finely chopped
- 1/4 cup green onions finely sliced
- 1 T orange juice
- 1 T lime juice

Directions

1. Wash hands
2. Add cranberries to your food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Do not puree you want to have small pieces of cranberry.
3. Place the chopped cranberries in a bowl and add the sugar, stirring to combine.
4. Add jalapenos, cilantro, green onions, orange juice, and lime juice. Stir to combine.
5. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator for a least 30 minutes to let the flavors combine.
6. Serve with Tortilla chips





Local Agri-Look | Lauren Litton

Women in Ag Series

Join us in January and February for a four-part succession planning workshop series! Each session is held in person, as well as fully online. There will be a live streamed keynote presenter and a hands-on activity after.



The four sessions will focus on the following topics:

- Motivation for Succession Planning
- Communicating about Estate & Transition Planning
- Financial Aspects of Estate & Transfer Plans
- Legal: Putting Your Plan in Place

When: January 21st, January 28th, February 4th and February 11th
5pm-8pm

Where: William Carpenter 4-H Building
Scott City
Dinner Provided

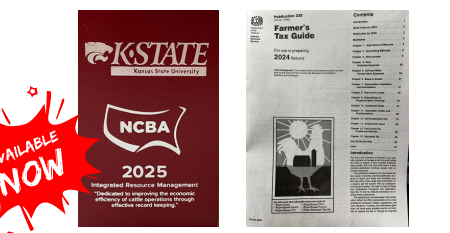


Participants should plan to attend each session. All are welcome to attend this series!

To register scan the QR Code or go to agmanager.info/events. Registration costs cover meal and workbook for the sessions.

Register before January 12th: In-Person: \$60
Virtual: \$75

Register Jan. 12th or Later: In-Person: \$75 (Workbook not guaranteed)
Virtual: \$75



IRM Redbooks Available at both offices for \$10.

2024 Farmer's Tax Guide

Hay Inventory Calculators

AGMANAGER.INFO/HAY-INVENTORY-CALCULATOR

There are three hay inventory calculators provided by K-State's Ag Econ department. There is a basic calculator and an advanced calculator. The basic calculator is provided as a spreadsheet and a web-based tool. The advanced calculator is provided as a spreadsheet only.

WHAT IT DOES

- ✓ Estimated hay needs
- ✓ Estimated hay inventory
- ✓ Estimated hay cost (advanced)
- ✓ Estimated hay value (advanced)
- ✓ Help you plan hay harvest, purchases, etc.

Specialized Tools

Adaptive Solutions

Personalizable Tools

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This material is based upon work supported by USDA/NIFA under Award Number 2021-70007-34684.
USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture | KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY



Gardening Series

Looking into 2025, we will be partnering with Garden City Recreation for a series over container gardening. For more information please watch West Plains Extension Facebook page and the Garden City Parks and Recreation Facebook Page. A look into what will be offered:

- January 16th- Activity Tasters @ Hidden Trail Brewery
 - Herbs
- February 27th @ Finney County Fairgrounds Grandstand Meeting Room
 - Seed Starting for May 1st Session
- March 27th @ Finney County Fairgrounds Grandstand Meeting Room
 - Vegetable Gardening, planting, harvesting and storing (Lettuce, Peas, Carrots)
- April 10th @ Finney County Fairgrounds Grandstand Meeting Room
 - Vegetable gardening, planting, harvesting and storing (Green Onion, Broccoli, Okra)
- May 1st @ Finney County Fairgrounds Grandstand Meeting Room
 - Vegetable gardening, planting, harvesting and storing (Tomatoes, Peppers, Cucumbers)
- July 10th @ Finney County Fairgrounds Grandstand Meeting Room
 - Gardening Maintenance and Pest Management



2024 Finney County 4-H Achievement Award Ceremony
November 10, 2024
4-H Building

Membership Pin - 1

Beacon Boosters	Brock Cogan
Finney Flyers	Archer Elam
Happy Hustlers	Cole Hensley Josiah Horton
Sherlock Strivers	McCoy Tuttle
Wide Awake	Brynlee Weilert Tryan Pitts Jaxson Pitts Cassidy Waggoner Faith Frick

Bronze Pin - 2

Beacon Boosters	Paislea Cogan
Finney Flyers	KJ Plunkett
Happy Hustlers	Audrey Bryant
Kourageous Kids	Madyn Boyd Eleanor Cooper
Wide Awake	Colton Fryman Weston Fryman Lainey Hands

Clover Pin - 3

Beacon Boosters	Taylor Knoll Jake Knoll Adam Knoll Kasen Robinson Brayden Robinson
Happy Hustlers	Lane Hensley
Kourageous Kids	Theodore Cooper
Wide Awake	Hudson Fryman

Emerald Pin - 4

Happy Hustlers	Paxton Alexander Kinley Unruh
Wide Awake	Harper Sowers

Silver Pin - 5

Kourageous Kids	Dorthea Cooper
Wide Awake	Harvick Sowers Madelyn Waggoner Gentry Hands

Silver Guard Pin - 6

Happy Hustlers	Kealie Bryant Hailey Unruh
Wide Awake	Jaylee Speer Reyce Frick

Leadership Pin - 7

Kourageous Kids	Braedon Boyd
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Gold Pin - 8

Sherlock Strivers	Abigail Elam
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Gold Guard Pin - 9

Sherlock Strivers	Kayla George
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10 Year Pin

Happy Hustlers	Grady Gleason
Finney Flyers	Kason Ramsey
Kourageous Kids	Annalise York
Sherlock Strivers	Dylan Burch Halle Jones

POINT OF ORDER!
Monthly Series

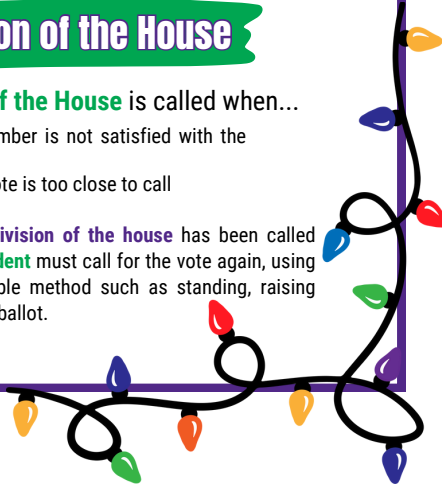
POINTS TO PRACTICE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Division of the House

A **Division of the House** is called when...

- ✿ a member is not satisfied with the vote
- ✿ the vote is too close to call

Once a **division of the house** has been called the **president** must call for the vote again, using a countable method such as standing, raising hands or ballot.





PROJECT AWARDS



Shopping in Style

Audrey Bryant
Champion: Abigail Elam



Photography

Jaxson Pitts
Reyce Frick
Faith Frick
Weston Fryman
Colton Fryman
Champion: Hudson Fryman

Communications

Audrey Bryant
Champion: Kealie Bryant

Citizenship

Champion: Kayla George

Leadership

Hailey Unruh
Champion: Kealie Bryant

Self-Determined

Champion: Kealie Bryant

Interior Design & Architecture

Champion: Jaylee Speer

Performing Arts

Paxton Alexander
Champion: Kealie Bryant

Meat Goats

Faith Frick
Reyce Frick
Rilynn White
Paxton Alexander
Cassidy Waggoner
Paxton White
Brinlee Weillert
Jaylee Speer
Audrey Bryant
Champion: Kealie Bryant

Beef

Tryan Pitts
Braden Robinson
Kason Robinson
Kinley Unruh
Champion: Hailey Unruh

Food

Bethany Horton
Perry Horton
Hailey Unruh
Josiah Horton
Kinley Unruh
Audrey Bryant
Brinlee Weillert
Madyn Boyd
McCoy Tuttle
Paxton Alexander
Champion: Kealie Bryant



Horse

Jaxson Pitts
Champion: Madelyn Waggoner

Reading Adventures

Champion: Audrey Bryant

Swine

Theodore Cooper
Dorthea Cooper
Cole Hensley
Eleanor Cooper
KJ Plunkett
Paxton Alexander
Champion: Kayla George

Sewing & Textile Design

Katie Lobmeyer
Paxton Alexander
Kinley Unruh
Champion: Hailey Unruh

Sheep

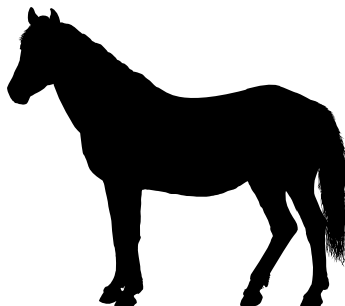
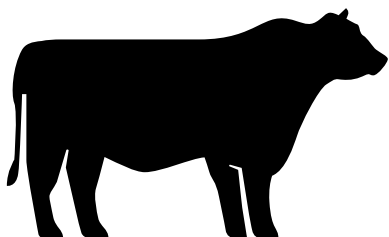
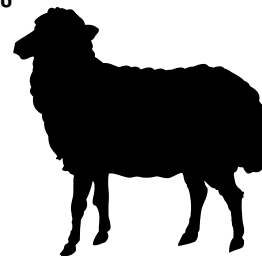
Faith Frick
Kasen Robinson
Paxton Alexander
Braeden Robinson
Hudson Fryman
Champion: Grady Gleason

Pet Care

Champion: Jaxson Pitts

Visual Arts

Teddy Lobemeyer
Tryan Pitts
Weston Fryman
Paxton Alexander
Audrey Bryant
Colton Fryman
Champion: Hudson Fryman





Club Recordkeeping Awards

Secretary Awards

Sherlock Striver	Katelyn Novack - Red
Finney Flyers	Abigail Elam - Red
Happy Hustlers	Kealie Bryant - Blue
Wide Awake	Paxton White - White
Beacon Boosters	Taylor Knoll - Purple

Treasurer Awards

Beacon Boosters	Kasen Robinson - Blue
Sherlock Strivers	Madyson Schreibvogel - Blue
Wide Awake	Madelyn Waggoner - Blue
Finney Flyers	Addison Claussen - Blue
Kourageous Kids	Braeden Boyd - Blue
Happy Hustlers	Lauren Gigot - Champion

Reporter Awards

Sherlock Strivers	Kayla George - Blue
Happy Hustlers	Hailey Unruh - Red
Beacon Boosters	Taylor Knoll - Champion

Historian Awards

Kourageous Kids Aubrey Coash & Eleanor Cooper - Champion

4-H CAMP COUNSELORS RECOGNITION

Camp Lakeside 4-H Camp
Abigail Elam

Club Seal Awards

Beacon Boosters
Purple Seal

Finney Flyers
Blue Seal

Happy Hustlers
Purple Seal

Kourageous Kids
Blue Seal

Sherlock Strivers
Purple Seal

4-H Community Service Award:

Individual Service Award:

Kayla George

Club Service Award:

Happy Hustlers 4-H Club

I Dare You Award:

Kayla George

Wide Awake
Blue Seal

2024 Finney County 4-H Alumni Award:

Annie Gerber

2024 Finney County Friends of 4-H Award:

Mary Buchele

CLUB REPORTS:

FINNEY COUNTY 4-H Sherlock Strivers

Sherlock Strivers 4H club
November 2024 monthly meeting notes
Colton Oregon, club reporter

The Sherlock Strivers 4-H club held their regular scheduled monthly meeting on Sunday, November 3, 2024 at the Holcomb Elementary Cafeteria. This gathering started at 6:00 p.m. with a pulled pork potluck dinner for members and their families. After enjoying the tasty treats, the meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. by Jill George. This meeting was led by the parents of the recently elected club officers. Club members were reminded to submit artwork by November 20th for the 2025 fair theme of "Deep Roots and Dusty Boots". Old business was discussed regarding the Christmas Parade on December 8th and possible float themes. The club signed up for the December community service project, which is ringing bells for the Salvation Army. Also discussed was a possible donation to the Family Crisis Center for our January meeting. Club member played an exciting game of "Sharky" and then adjourned. Next Meeting will be on December 8th at 4:30 pm at 3l parking lot, directly before parade.

FINNEY COUNTY 4-H HAPPY HUSTLERS

The Best Pre-Thanksgiving Meeting Ever

November 3rd, what does that date mean to you? Oh, probably nothing, but to the Happy Hustlers 4-H club, it is the date of their November meeting. This meeting was even more memorable due to the fact that there was a great program, many committees had meetings, and it was the month of Thanksgiving.

First on the program was Mason, who did a spectacular talk on quartz and amethyst stones. He gave a well put together information about each stone. Beautiful rocks were presented for the talk, and every member loved looking at and feeling them. Mason talked about rock transitions and transformations. He even presented enough scientific evidence that he would put Albert Einstein to shame. He stated interesting facts about their origins and how they were formed many years ago. Mason's presentation was amazing, who knew that rocks could be so fascinating?

Molly shortly followed her brother's presentation with one of her own, on the subject of basketball. You name the fact, she covered it. From helpful tips on how to play to what to do during specific situations. She gave helpful drill ideas and practicing routines. If you didn't already love basketball, after hearing Molly's presentation, you do now. Molly and Mason both presented so well.

The club's song-leader led the club in a quick song on "Heads, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes". Following up with the club singing "Happy Birthday" to their November birthdays. For Recreation, the club partook in a fun game of capture the flag, with a two time victory for one of the teams. They got in a lot of reps that night. November is truly the best, and this was the best Pre-Thanksgiving meeting for sure.

SCOTT COUNTY 4-H NEW HORIZONS

SEPTEMBER 2024 -- NEW HORIZONS 4H MEETING
September 2, 2024 at 7:00 pm

19 members present
13 parents, 4 leaders in attendance

Parent-led meeting: Scott Noll / President, Duane Strine / Vice President, Erica Stephens / Secretary
4H Pledge: Led by Kelley Palkowitsh

Leaders Report: Pancake Feed, October 6th, \$\$ for Dearden and McKinney families, Supplies \$25/club
Achievement Banquet, October 27th, 12:30 pm - \$100/club, \$\$/person
National 4H Week, Oct 6-13, wear 4H shirts to school, put club sign somewhere
Club baskets made \$660, given to families in need in SC
November 3rd election - Ambassadors are baking cookies Oct 28th for it, we can also donate
Cookies if we choose to (deliver to ext. office or election day)

New Business: Record Books due Sept. 27th to the Extension Office
(Dropoff at Bank/Salon to be signed by leaders by Sept. 25th)
Ambassador interviews: Oct. 22nd - Main Kerr reported will speak at County Commissioners meeting, giving her 4H story and is speaking at the State Fair.
Download 4H photos for the historians on Google photos
Pay extension office for achievement banquet and pancake feed, \$125
Club Seal form: Enough line items for a purple seal

Reporter's Report: Addison submitted minutes
Treasurer's Report: Balance: \$975.07 after a deposit of \$102 for "pens of 3" at the fair

Election of Officers 2024/25:
President: Brody Strine (Hayzen moved to cease nominations, Levi 2nd)
Vice President: Marin Kerr (Hayzen moved to cease nominations, Levi 2nd)
Secretary: Ava Stephens (Addi moved to cease nominations, Cutler 2nd)
Treasurer: Addison Noll (Ava moved to cease nominations, Levi 2nd)
Reporter: Hayley Shapland (Baylor moved to cease nominations, Statler 2nd)
Historian: Gabi Tucker & McCall Miller (Levi moved to cease nominations, Statler 2nd)
Council Rep: Baylor Vasquez (Levi moved to cease nominations, Statler 2nd)
Parliamentarian: Baylor Vasquez (Addi moved to cease nominations, Brody 2nd)

Jr. Officers 2024/25
Jr. President: Levi Stephens (Addi moved to cease nominations, Statler 2nd)
Jr. Vice President: Cutler Cox (Hayzen moved to cease nominations, Statler 2nd)
Jr. Secretary: Brooklynn Wilkinson (Levi moved to cease nominations, Cutler 2nd)
Jr. Treasurer: Statler Kerr (Levi moved to cease nominations, Cutler 2nd)
Jr. Reporter: Allie Plummer (Addi moved to cease nominations, Levi 2nd)
Jr. Historian: All Members (Addi moved to cease nominations, All in favor 2nd)
Jr. Parliamentarian: Kaisen York (Brody moved to cease nominations, Ava 2nd)
Jr. Song / Recreation: Devon Drelling & Greyson York (Levi moved to cease nominations)
Jr. 4H Council: Hayzen Kerr (Levi moved to cease nominations, Cutler 2nd)

2024/25 Club Leaders: Duane & Marcy Strine, Brad & Jody Kerr

Adjournment: 8:00 pm (Baylor moved, Statler 2nd)