

Portage County 4-H NEWS



Fall 2025

We sustain life.



On Oct. 30, 2025, five Portage County 4-H members spoke with our Portage County Board of Commissioners to share how 4-H has shaped their lives. 4-H members that participated were: Bailey Baldasare of the Crazy Critters 4-H Club; Julia Shanahan, Edinburg Seambusters 4-H Club; Jenna Canale of the Edinburg Seambusters 4-H Club; Alexis Huffman, Creatures-N-Features 4-H Club; & Ivy Klazon, Portage Explorers 4-H Club.

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Youth Opportunities

Thanks to the generous support of the Portage County Randolph Fair, Portage County Youth Benefit Committee and other local sponsors, youth have the opportunity to attend many camps, workshops and leadership trips throughout the year. This edition of our Portage County 4-H News highlights those opportunities and how to apply!

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4-H Enrollment open through March 18, 2026!

All 4-H members and volunteers must re-enroll for the 2026 4-H year. If you need a refresher or are brand new to the 4-H enrollment process, visit go.osu.edu/joinportage4h. Here you will find everything from how to enroll as well as a complete list of Portage County 4-H Clubs.



2025 Portage County 4-H By The Numbers

684

4-H Youth Enrolled in a 4-H Project

140

Cloverbuds Enrolled in 4-H

191

Adult Volunteers

36

Active 4-H Clubs



Ohio 4-H Achievement Record

Open to youth ages 14-18 as of Jan. 1, 2026

What is it?

The Ohio 4-H Achievement Record is a comprehensive record of a 4-H member's career, accomplishments, and achievements. It is a great way to capture all the experiences they have had in 4-H, practice for filling out future job or college applications, and get a head start on applying for scholarships.

Due: Jan. 21, 2026 to the Extension Office!

Application available at go.osu.edu/pocoyouth

Why fill it out?

Awards: The achievement record can be used to apply for county and state awards.

Scholarships: The achievement record can be used to apply for county and state scholarships.

Trips and Opportunities: Many of the trips and opportunities offered at the county level require filling out the achievement record form.

Enhance your record keeping: Record keeping is an essential tool that can be used in any future career.

Youth Representative Wanted!

Are you interested in joining a dynamic group of 4-H advisors, committee volunteers, Junior and Senior Fair members, and non-4-H professionals working collaboratively for the advancement of Portage County 4-H? If so, the Youth Representative position would be an excellent addition to any young professional's resume.

The committee currently has four (4) Youth Representative openings, available to county youth across a variety of project areas. The youth rep for the Portage County Advisory Committee will serve for a term of (1) year (4 meetings).

Applications available at go.osu.edu/portageadvisoryapp

Portage County 4-H Achievement Record Workshop

When: Nov. 20, 2025, 6-8 p.m.

Where: Portage County Extension Office, Community Room, Suite 101, 705 Oakwood Street, Ravenna

RSVP: By Nov. 19, go.osu.edu/DAVH



Need help refining your application, or are you just not sure where to start? Whether you are applying for the state award, a county trip or just want to get a head start on your application, this workshop is for you! RSVP using the link or QR code above to help us better prepare.

Portage County 4-H Trips & Opportunities

The following trips and opportunities require the completion of the Ohio 4-H Achievement Record to apply. Applications for these trips are due to the Extension office by Feb. 1 of each year. Visit go.osu.edu/pocoyouth for more details about each trip below and for a link to the application and cover sheet.



Buckeye Leadership Workshop

March 18-22, 2026
Ages 14 and older

Buckeye Leadership Workshop is a learning, sharing “workshop” intended as a balanced program of social, physical, mental, and spiritual activities. In a positive and supportive atmosphere, workshopers are encouraged and empowered to experiment with new activities, develop new abilities, discover new interests, expand their creativity, practice, and master new leadership skills, share ideas and personal skills, establish new friendships, and develop networks of human resources. Sessions are balanced among 5 pillars: Arts and crafts, music, song, and dance, nature and outdoor education, experiential education, and personal and professional development. More information:
www.buckeyeleadership.com

Ohio 4-H Leadership Camp

June 1-5, 2026 - Ages 15-18

The Ohio 4-H State Leadership Camp is the premiere leadership development opportunity available to Ohio 4-H members. The focus of the five-day leadership experience is the development of concrete peer leadership skills that will enable participants to have an immediate impact in their home 4-H club, county, community, or school. The camp program targets 4-H members with significant leadership potential or leadership experience within their home county’s 4-H program.

Forestry and Wildlife Camp

April 17-19, 2026 - Grades 7-11

Join Ohio 4-H, Hocking College, and ODNR professionals at Canters Cave 4-H Camp for a weekend of learning about forestry and wildlife education, fishing, hiking, tree climbing, outdoor survival, ODNR careers, college opportunities, and more!

4-H Space Adventure Camp

June 9-11, 2026 - Ages 11-13

Youth will have the opportunity to explore the world of flight and science as they build and test flying machines, conduct computer flight simulations, learn about the principles of aerodynamics, and gain an overview of the development of the space flight program.

4-H Sea Camp

July 20-24, 2026 - Ages 14-17

Through partnerships of Ohio State University Extension and organizations that offer aquatic education and water recreation, Ohio 4-H Sea Camp at Kelleys Island has offered hundreds of young people the opportunity to learn about aquatic science and experience a variety of recreational water sports on Lake Erie.

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Applications for the following opportunities will be available in late summer/fall of 2026!

Citizenship Washington Focus

Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF) empowers 4-H aged teens between 14 and 18 to become informed and engaged citizens, while also offering expanded opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and inspiration alongside 4-Her's from across the country. 4-Her's will spend a day on Capitol Hill, engage with representatives, enjoy guided tours of Washington D.C., explore career opportunities and more. **Look for 2027 application in next fall.**

Ignite by 4-H

Ignite by 4-H is a national summit designed to bring high school youth (between 14-18) together from across the country and give them the opportunity to explore the best 4-H has to offer in different tracks including Agriscience, Animal Science, Community Accelerators, Healthy Living and STEM. A hallmark of Ignite is the Lead to Change campaign which empowers youth to be Agents of Change where you (as a delegation) will create and present a proposal to address issues within your community. The best proposals are then awarded funding for implementation. **Look for 2027 application in next fall.**

STEM Camp

June 21-23, 2026 - Ages 15-18

STEM Camp provides authentic STEM experiences for as many as 90 youths each June. The camp develops 21st-century workforce skills including teamwork, problem-solving, communication, and leadership. 4-H STEM Camp is a two-night, three-day residential camp experience where youth stay overnight at Canter's Cave 4-H Camp, unplug, and develop life skills.

Ohio 4-H Junior Shooting Sports Camp

June 12-14, 2026 - (Grades 3-6)

Open to any youth completing grades 3-6 in the current school year. No previous shooting or archery experience needed. Basic shooting & archery disciplines only which include: Archery, Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, Living History and Hunting & Wildlife.

- Location: Canter's Cave 4-H Camp Inc. 1362 Caves Rd. Jackson, Ohio 45640

Ohio 4-H Senior Shooting Sports Camp

July 12-17, 2026 - (Grades 7-12)

Open to any teen completing grades 7-12 in the current school year. Basic disciplines offered at this camp include: Archery, Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, Living History and Hunting & Wildlife. Advance disciplines offered include: Action Archery, Advanced Pistol, Rifle Sports, Marksmanship, Shotgun Sports, Intro. to Steel, Steel & Pistol/Rifle.

Advance disciplines require previous shooting/archery experience.

- Location: Canter's Cave 4-H Camp Inc. 1362 Caves Rd. Jackson, Ohio 45640

Immersion Projects

The best way to understand a different culture is to immerse yourself in it! Ohio 4-H has several cultural immersion project opportunities for teens. Each location has unique opportunities for learning, but in all experiences teens will participate in service-learning, individual and group reflections, and other cross-cultural experiences that aim to develop their understanding of the culture. Cultural Immersion Projects change throughout the year, but if you are interested in applying for one, check with your 4-H Educator to learn more. You can also visit go.osu.edu/pocoyouth and select "Cultural Immersions" from the Trips and Opportunities table to learn more about previous trips.



Ohio 4-H Teen of the Year and Teen Hall of Fame Awards

Due November 24, 2025

Nominations for the 2025 Ohio 4-H Teen of the Year and Teen Hall of Fame are open now! If you would like to submit a teen for one of the below awards, please reach out to Catie Noyes-Johnson for more information. Nominations need to be received by the 4-H office by **Nov. 24, 2025!**

Teen of the Year

Honors one outstanding teen that has had great accomplishments in the past year. This award was created to honor a select individual for their performance, dedication, and passion for the 4-H program. Nominee must be between the ages of 13 and 18 as of January 1 the year they are nominated.

Teen Hall of Fame

Induction into the Teen Hall of Fame is meant to be thought as a very high honor for youth who are selected. It is meant to honor those who have dedicated it all to make the best better in their club, community, country, and world. Nominee must be between the ages of 15 and 18 as of January 1 the year they are nominated and been a 4-H member for at least six years including the current year (but not including Cloverbud years).

Volunteer Awards Through Ohio 4-H

Nominations for the following awards are due by Dec. 1! For more information about each award and to submit nominations visit: ohio4h.org/about/ohio-4-h-conference

- Friend of 4-H Award
- Community Service Award
- 4-H Hall of Fame Award
- Innovator Award
- Meritorious Service Award
- 4-H Alumni Award

Ohio 4-H Conference

March 21, 2026

The Ohio 4-H Conference is the largest gathering of 4-H volunteers in the United States! Nearly 1,100 teen and adult volunteers participate each year.

The Ohio 4-H Conference is designed to equip participants with resources, information, and skills to meet the ever-changing needs of youth. Attendees have the opportunity to receive training in more than 125 different topics such as career exploration, risk management, camping, leadership, life skills, animal sciences, and more.



In addition to the educational sessions, Hall of Fame and Ohio 4-H Award winners will be announced. Registration costs are covered for Portage County youth and volunteers thanks to sponsorships from the Portage County Youth Benefit Committee and Portage County 4-H Advisory Committee.

More details and registration information coming soon. Visit go.osu.edu/pocoyouth.

National 4-H Conference

Apply by Dec. 1, 2025



OHIO 4-H TEEN OPPORTUNITY

National 4-H Conference

April 9-15, 2026 | Apply by Dec. 1 at go.osu.edu/N4HC

Any 4-H member in Ohio ages *14-18 is able to apply. In 2026, National 4-H Conference takes place in Washington, D.C., April 9-15, 2026 (Ohio delegates arrive a day early on April 9. Conference begins April 10).

The National 4-H Conference is specifically focused on civic engagement, civic education, and personal development. Delegates arrive ready to connect, learn, engage, lead, and impact their communities, their nation, and their world.

- Interested Ohio 4-H members must complete the application by December 1 at 11:59 p.m.
*Applicants must be 15-18 as of January 1, 2026, and currently enrolled as an Ohio 4-H member in 2026.

- After an application is received, the State 4-H Office will request a referral from the county 4-H professional for the respective candidate.
- A selection board of advisors, 4-H educators, and past attendees will review applications and conduct interviews, as needed.
- Those selected will be expected to fully engage in all pre-conference and conference activities and adhere to all National 4-H guidelines, complete all required work as a result of conference participation, and share knowledge gained with Ohio 4-H upon their return.

More information about the opportunity and the link to apply can be found at: go.osu.edu/N4HC

Clover Awards

Ohio 4-H is unveiling a new opportunity to encourage 4-H youth of all ages to engage in a variety of projects and activities, refine their record keeping skills and enhance their leadership skills.

The 4-H Clover Awards program is designed to recognize youth for their continued involvement and growth in the 4-H program by awarding different levels of achievement. Levels are based on developmentally appropriate activities and natural progression of skills and types of activities pertaining to a member's age, experience in 4-H, and opportunities available.

Youth may begin applying for Clover Awards as 4-H project age members. There are 5 levels of completion available:

- Level 1: Green Clover
- Level 2: Bronze Clover
- Level 3: Silver Clover
- Level 4: Gold Clover
- Level 5: Emerald Clover

Each level requires meeting a list of criteria approved by the County Educator (for levels 1-4) and the State 4-H Office for level 5.

There is no limit to the number of youth awarded each level. Look for more information on how to apply coming soon!



VOLUNTEERS

4-H Volunteers are essential to the Portage County 4-H program. Providing youth endless opportunities for growth and leadership, we can't say "thank you" enough to our fearless leaders. Below are some reminders for the upcoming 4-H year!



Volunteer Trainings

New opportunities for volunteers to complete training

All volunteers, new and returning, are required to attend a mandatory yearly training in order to remain a volunteer in good standing.

The following trainings have been confirmed for Waterloo Middle School.

- Sat., Jan. 10, 2026, 9:30-11:30 a.m. All Advisor Training
- Thurs., Jan. 22, 2026, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Committee Focused Training

We are hoping to offer multiple opportunities to complete trainings this year. Additional dates, times and locations are currently being finalized and will be sent out once they are confirmed.

4-H Enrollment Open Now!

Enrollment Closes March 18, 2026

All volunteers, 4-H youth and Cloverbuds must register in 4-H online each year. As you are registering your accounts in 4-H online, please make sure your email addresses and phone numbers are up-to-date. This database is used to contact volunteers and members throughout the year with important 4-H information. Advisors will be able to make changes with the Extension Office through April 1, 2026.

Background Checks

Due Feb. 15, 2026

Letters have been mailed out to volunteers whose background check is up for renewal. You will need to get your prints done by Feb. 15. Just a reminder, in order to receive a reimbursement for your background check, you must pay for the fingerprinting yourself and bring the letter and receipt into the Portage County Extension Office!

Project Book Orders

New Process

Extension Publishing has informed our offices that project book prices are increasing to \$12. Shipping is also no longer free for our office, but we do not plan to pass those costs onto our 4-H clubs. In order to minimize the shipping costs accrued by our office, we will only be placing book orders on Wednesday's the first and third week of the month. Please try to consolidate your orders as much as possible to make this a more efficient process!

New 4-H Volunteers

Applications Due Feb. 1, 2026

Know someone who would make a great addition to our Portage County 4-H Volunteer family? Visit go.osu.edu/portagevolunteers for an application! We ask that all new volunteers turn in an application by Feb. 1, 2026 to allow time for background checks and training to be completed.

Holiday Office Hours

As we approach the holiday season, the office will be closed the following dates:

- Nov. 27 - Thanksgiving
- Dec. 24-25 Christmas
- Dec. 26-Dec. 31 - Winter Recess
- Jan. 1 - New Year's Day

*It is always best to call or email the office to make an appointment if you know you will be stopping in to ensure someone is available to assist you!

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