



MERCER COUNTY 4-H 2020 RECAP

A Year Like No Other!



Mercer County 4-H Citizen Scientists work on their barred owl boxes.



Mercer County 4-H Teen Federation held a food drive to help those in need.



In October clubs decorated windows to celebrate 4-H

Back in January, we were looking forward to an exciting 4-H year which included:

- 80 youth participated in the 4-H Academy at Western Illinois University on Saturday, February 22. They got to learn and explore doing hands-on science, art, and technology activities led by local and regional experts.
- 4-H Community Clubs were in full swing with members selecting their 4-H fair projects, submitting their paperwork, raising and training their livestock and planning for a traditional fair experience.
- Plans were being finalized for the Ag Careers Camp scheduled for early summer.
- Youth were gaining skills in their 4-H Shooting Sports and 4-H Citizen Scientist clubs, while Dog Obedience was set to start in April.
- Plans were underway for the March 14 Soup Cook-off. Each club was going to make a roaster of their best soup for a community meal! In-kind donations would go to the American Legion for the Veteran's Marker Project.
- Mercer County 4-H club members were completing their community service in a variety of helpful ways such as: Saddle Teens led games at the Viola Methodist Church Fall Party, Hamlet Handy Helpers made decorations with the residents of Brookstone of Aledo, Mercer County Teen Federation helped with the Bounce House at the Oktoberfest and held a Food Drive for the community.

And then in March - the Coronavirus Hit...

When the virus was first announced, we were hopeful it would be contained quickly. We couldn't imagine at the time that months later, county and state fairs would be canceled and we would be moving 4-H shows to a virtual format. With so much at risk, many changes had to be made to ensure the health and safety of our youth, families, staff, and volunteers. True to their 4-H character, everyone responded in a caring and respectful manner!

We believe in the value of 4-H shows as the culminating experience where 4-H members have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of new skills and to receive expert level feedback about their efforts. So Illinois 4-H quickly set up a virtual system to ensure our youth were still able to exhibit without risking their safety – or the safety of our adult judges and volunteers – by meeting in person.

4-H has always been about innovation and resilience. Our ability to find a way to still celebrate accomplishments and allow youth to display their creativity is a testament to that innovative spirit. Though in-person judging could not happen, project learning never stopped. Illinois 4-H responded in new ways to reach youth in a safe, virtual setting.

4-H members still received expert-level evaluation of their project work. All youth who entered projects are receiving awards and prizes. They will also get an **"I survived the 2020 4-H Virtual Fair" t-shirt**, thanks to our friends at River Valley Cooperative!

We appreciate everyone - members, parents, volunteers, staff and donors - who helped us adapt to this challenging year!

Mercer County Extension & 4-H Foundation

The Mercer County Extension & 4-H Foundation is a valuable source of support for our local 4-H and Extension programs. When you support their fundraisers, you are helping provide the following to Mercer County Extension & 4-H each year:

- \$2,600 in operating support for Mercer County Extension & 4-H programs.
- \$1,250 in Scholarships to 4-H members/alumni from the Mercer County 4-H Memorial Scholarship fund.
- \$1,500 for Mercer County 4-H Achievement Awards.
- Continue to build the endowment to sustain 4-H and Extension programs for future generations.
- Assisted with program fees/waivers for 4-H members.
- Printed the 2020 Mercer County 4-H Fair Book.
- \$500 grant to support the 2020 4-H Academy on February 22 at Western Illinois University, Moline, IL.

Congratulations to the 2020 Mercer County 4-H Foundation's Memorial Scholarship Recipients:



Barbara Close - \$500



Dylan Cheline - \$250



Sheridan Hank - \$250



Evan Wynne - \$250

VIRTUAL MERCER COUNTY 4-H BBQ Fundraiser

Because of the Coronavirus, this year's 4-H BBQ fundraiser had to be cancelled.

Since this is the main fundraiser and typically brings in over \$4,000 in revenue for Mercer County 4-H programs, **we would like to invite supporters to send in \$10, \$20, \$30, \$50 or whatever you can spare - to help make up some of the lost revenue.** This year, your support is especially important as Mercer County Extension has been limited in its ability to raise revenue through its usual means.

We appreciate any support you can provide to help meet our goals!



**Thank you!!
We hope to see you in person next year!**



Yes! I/we will support Mercer County Extension & 4-H with a donation in the amount of \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Make check out to Mercer County Extension & 4-H Foundation and send to:
Mercer County Extension, 910 13th Street, Viola, IL 61486

Mercer County Ag Literacy

University of Illinois Extension, with funding support from the Mercer County Farm Bureau, the Mercer County Soil and Water Conservation District, and local business, brings agriculture to life for hundreds of youth and families. Extension Program Coordinator Teresa Kirwan shares agriculture lessons through school outreach and community events, like Farm in the Park, safety day camps, and Dr. Seuss Day. She also helps organize the Summer Ag Institute for teachers.

*Thank you to these businesses for their support of this program in 2020:
BankOrion, Gold Star FS; Midwest Bank; and 1st Community Bank*



Sherrard High School students helped celebrate Dr. Seuss Day by reading stories with agriculture themes and leading activities to students at Winola Elementary and Sherrard Elementary.



Students in Mercer County love their agriculture lessons!



Flat Aggie helps youth show the impact farming has in our lives!

Thank you Mercer County 4-H Fair Trophy Donors!

1st Community Bank
All Animal Veterinary Clinic
BankOrion
Bill and Marilyn Hessman
Bill and Stacey Boruff
Birkey's Farm Store
Blackhawk Bank & Trust
Blessed by Nature
Bluff View Farms
Bob Davison Memorial
Brian and Sandy Harkey
Buffalo Prairie State Bank
Burrus Seed Company
Buyers Group
Camp Creek Cattle
Campbell Farms
Carl Anderson Memorial
Cash Memorial- Davison Farms
Charley Martin Horseshoeing
Cheline Farms
Cliff Nesbitt Family
County Line AgriService
Compeer Financial
Cpt. Joshua Steele Memorial
Dale Jones & Co. Auctioneers
Dan McLaughlin Memorial
Dave and Beth Ryan

Erin Neuleib Memorial
Essig Motors, Inc.
Evan Biddle Memorial
Exchange Club of Aledo
Farmer's State Bank
Gary and Joyce Smith
Gary Mayhew Memorial
Gerald and Judy Young
Gold Star FS
Hamlet Handy Helpers 4-H Club
Hamlet Mutual Insurance Co.
Heartland Dairy Goat Club
Hessman Family
Huffman's Farm & Home
J & K Accounting
Jack Jungmann
Jeff Hessman and family
Joy State Bank
Jr. and Lorraine Kinsey
Jungmann Family
Kaitlyn Ryan
Kistler Prairie Mill
Klein Equipment
Leland and Nan Martin
Line Family
Local Breeder's Association
Lop Rabbit Club of America

Loving Plumbing & Heating
Luke Jungmann
Mercer County Alumni
Mercer County Eye Care
Mercer County Farm Bureau
Mercer County Friends of 4-H
Mercer County Pro- Ag
Mercer County Youth Auction
Mercer Market
Merle and Doris Hyett Memorial
Midwest Bank of Western Illinois
Morris and Lloyd Shorthorns
Morrison's Market
Myrna Adamson Memorial
New Windsor Youth Horse Show
Pork Producers
Randy and Sharon Coopman
Reason's Locker Service
Reynolds Feed and Supply
Richardson Family
River Valley Cooperate
Roger and Elizabeth Grundstrom
Ron Partlow Memorial
Sell Farms
Speer Funereal Home
Spivey Family
Stan & Brenda Gregory

Thomas Trucking
Tom and Kyle Lloyd
Touchwood Ranch
Ty Stead
WRMJ Radio
Young Farms

Mercer County 4-H Virtual Fair

The 2020 Mercer County Virtual Fair is Complete!

4-H members from Mercer County clubs participated in sharing their 4-H projects at this year's Virtual Fair. Hats off to the members, leaders, parents and judges for putting in the time and effort to transition their projects to an online format. The 4-H members recorded videos, snapped photos and wrote project reports to showcase the skills they gained in working on their projects.

Here are a few photos which included 150 Livestock, 126 General Project and 6 Public Speaking virtual fair entries! You can see the results, watch videos and see photos of the entries on our website and see highlights on Facebook

Web: extension.illinois.edu/hmrs/4-h-mercercounty Facebook: www.facebook.com/4HMercerCounty

