



THE COURIER

The Portage County 4-H's Bi-Monthly Newsletter



2025 Portage County 4-H National Congress Delegates.

From left to right: Camryn Wade (Almond Busy Bees), Marie Keck and Trisha Edmundson (Casimer Boosters)

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow 4-H lovers,

Happy Holidays! With the cold and snow can be a perfect time to slow down and set goals and plans for your coming year. How do you want to get more involved? What do you want your club meetings to look like? What personal interest, activity, or talent could you lead a workshop in? How do you want to be a better leader? What has really worked for you and the club in the past and what hasn't? Why?

Part of the plan should be to come to the Adult Leader Association meetings. They will help you accomplish a lot of what your plans and goals are. You will be better informed, have a say in what is happening in the county and can share and receive input on what other clubs are doing. Again, what has and hasn't worked for them in: i.e. membership, involvement, leadership, record books.

As with all the seasons of 4-H there are a lot of fun activities to encourage your club to be involved in. We have the ever-popular Roller-skating party. There is the Gingerbread contest and ironically when it gets warm enough to go outside, build the best snowman. The Teen Leaders are showing their holiday spirit by putting together a Holiday Basket, all teens should be attending their meetings in order to grow better as a leader. Leadership growth can also be achieved by teens going to the 4-H Winter Camp. First meeting of year for the Adult Leaders is January 22nd at 6:30pm.

Until then I wish you the best of the season and stay warm.

Christina Keck

Adult Leaders Association President

<http://portage.extension.wisc.edu>

715-346-1320



Portage County Extension Office
1462 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

Check Your Email!

Be sure to watch your email each Friday for the 'Clover Catchup'. In lieu of sending multiple emails each week, we've created a Friday one-stop news email with events, updates and reminders just for you! Our new software allows us to see how many people are opening and reading it...which is not many of you! We use the email that you have entered into 4-H online, so if you would like that updated to an email address you check more regularly- please let us know! Otherwise, you're missing out on awesome events and opportunities for your youth and family.



4-H INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

4-H county programs are automatically canceled if:

The local school districts close due to inclement weather.

We are under a Winter Storm Warning.

(Clubs may NOT hold club meetings or activities if schools are closed)

****The Extension office retains the right to cancel any 4-H programs for weather conditions deemed unsafe, regardless of whether schools are canceled or not.***

The Extension Office will notify you, if possible, by:

Sending out an e-mail and Facebook post if program is canceled during work hours.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

DECEMBER

- 15 ALL Volunteer Trainings MUST be complete in 4hOnline**
- 15 Deadline for Teen Award, Key Award, Leader of Tomorrow & Ambassador Application**
- 19 Deadline to register for 4-H Teen Leadership Winter Camp
- 21 4-H Teen Leader holiday basket shopping, 1:00pm Walmart
(Meeting at Pizza Ranch to follow)
- 24 Extension Office Closed (Christmas Holiday)
- 25 Extension Office Closed (Christmas Holiday)
- 26 Roller Skating Pizza Party, Skate City, 6:30-9:00PM

JANUARY

- 1 Extension Office Closed (New Year Holiday)
- 2 Deadline for Gingerbread Decorating & Baking Contest
- 2 Deadline for Youth & Adult Ag Awards
- 3 Market Animal Kick-Off Meeting, 11:00 AM, Jensen Center, Amherst
- 22 4-H Leaders Association Meeting, 6:30 PM, Annex Rooms 1 & 2
- 23-25 4-H Teen Leadership Winter Camp, Spencer Lake Camp, Waupaca

TBD- Speaking & Demo Workshop (more info coming soon!)

TBD- Leader and Officer Training (more info coming soon!)

4-H GINGERBREAD DECORATING CONTEST

Show off your holiday creativity in the Portage County 4-H Gingerbread Contest! Open to all 4-H members, Cloverbuds, families, parents, and leaders!

All divisions and classes are listed on the registration form—be sure to check it out to find the best fit for your entry! Entry deadline - January 2nd.

Visit the Portage County [4-H Events & Calendar](#) page for registration link and additional information.



4-H TEEN HOLIDAY BASKET SHOPPING

Who: Teens Grade 7 & Up
When: Sunday, December 21st at 1:00pm
Where: Walmart in Plover
(Meet inside through the Home & Pharmacy Door)

4-H Teen Leader Meeting at Pizza Ranch following basket shopping.

This is a great way to get together and do good with your fellow 4-H teens this holiday season!

DECEMBER 26TH
6:30-9:00PM

PORTAGE COUNTY 4-H

ROLLER SKATING PARTY



Skate City Wisconsin Rapids

(2211 36th St N, WI Rapids)

Celebrate the end of the year with a 4-H pizza and skating party! This event is open to all 4-H members, families and friends! Cost includes admission, choice of skate or inline rental, pizza, soda and ice cream. We will have a reserved seating area. Non-skating adults can chaperone at no cost. Note: When you arrive, please identify yourself as part of the Portage County 4-H Party.

Cost: \$8.00 per person. PLEASE HAVE CORRECT CHANGE or check payable to: 4-H Teen Leaders Assoc. and pay Malayna Polum the night of the event. No registration needed.

SNOWMAN BUILDING CONTEST

Show off your holiday creativity in the Portage County 4-H Gingerbread Contest! Open to all 4-H members, Cloverbuds, families, parents, and leaders!

All divisions and classes are listed on the registration form—be sure to check it out to find the best fit for your entry! Entry deadline - January 2nd.

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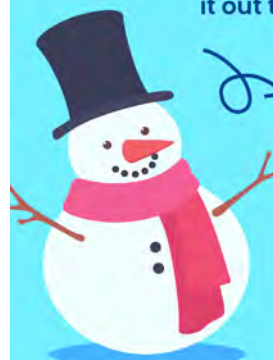
PORTAGE COUNTY 4-H

SNOWMAN BUILDING CONTEST

Calling all snow sculptors—Portage County 4-H wants to see your best snowman! Open to all 4-H members, Cloverbuds, families, parents, and leaders!



All divisions and classes are listed on the registration form—be sure to check it out to find the best fit for your entry!



Visit the Portage County [4-H Events & Calendar](#) page for registration link and additional information.

**Entry Deadline:
February 27th**

AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

KEY AWARD

Requirements: Must be in at least 10th grade of the current year, have at least 3 years' experience in 4-H and 1 year of enrollment in the Youth Leadership project.
Maximum Number: Up to 2 recipients. This is the highest state 4-H award offered. It is based on all 4-H work done by the member since joining 4-H, including youth leadership.

LEADERS OF TOMORROW AWARD

Requirements: Must be in at least 11th grade, and exhibit leadership ability and potential.
Maximum Number: Up to 2 recipients. Recognizes character, balanced personal development, and excellence in leadership.

**Application materials are AVAILABLE on the [Portage County 4-H Extension Website](#).
DEADLINES for these Awards will be DECEMBER 15th, 2025.**

MY BEST ADVENTURES!
4-H Flat Stanley Project

Register by:
Jan 9, 2026

SCAN ME

A Pen Pal program
across 9 Counties
Grades K-2
Ages: 5-8

UW-MADISON EXTENSION





Portage County 4-H

Apply Today!

**BECOME A 4-H
AMBASSADOR**
(aka: 4-H Influencer!)

Hey there, future change-makers! Want to be part of something awesome? As a 4-H Ambassador, you're not just a member—you're a leader, a role model, and a voice for youth in your community!

HERE'S WHY BEING A 4-H AMBASSADOR IS SERIOUSLY COOL:

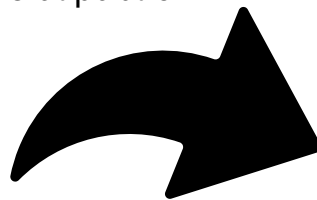
- You Get to Lead: Step up and represent 4-H at events, fairs, and community programs. You'll speak to groups, help plan activities, and show others what 4-H is all about!
- You Meet Amazing People: Connect with other Ambassadors across the county and state. Build friendships, network with leaders, and even travel to cool places for leadership conferences!
- You Grow Big-Time Skills: Public speaking, teamwork, event planning, leadership—you'll gain skills that look great on college applications and help you shine in any future career.
- You Inspire Others: You'll be the face of 4-H, encouraging younger members to get involved, dream big, and believe in themselves. That's a powerful role!

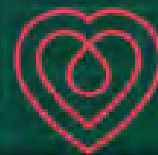
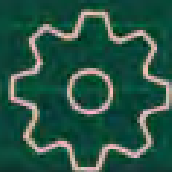
WHAT WOULD MY COMMITMENTS BE AS A PORTAGE COUNTY 4-H AMBASSADOR?

- Regularly Participate in the Portage County 4-H Teen Leaders Association Meetings & Activities
- Help Judge Cloverbud Projects and Handout Awards at the Amherst & Rosholt Fairs
- Attend & Help Promote 4-H at Event Tables such as: June Dairy Days, Celebrate Amherst, Farmers Market, Local Parades, etc.
- Assist with social media promotion of 4-H to the general public
- Represent 4-H in the community

HOW DO I APPLY?

- Scan the QR Code to visit our **Extension website**
- Complete the application and schedule a peer interview with the Portage County 4-H Office
- Attend the interview and tell your fellow teen leaders why you would make a great ambassador!





LEVEL UP YOUR LEADERSHIP 4-H WINTER LEADERSHIP CAMP

YOUTH IN GRADES 7-12TH

will enhance their leadership skills while having fun.

JAN.
23-25

2025

SPENCER LAKE

N1385 Cty Hwy E
Waupaca, WI 54981

**COST: ~~\$185~~
only \$95***

**price reduced thanks to the
PoCo 4-H Leaders Association*

REGISTER BY DECEMBER 19 ON 4-H ONLINE.

Registration opens October 1.



UW-MADISON EXTENSION



Honoring Dedication:

2025 4-H Leaders Banquet Highlights

On November 7th, the Portage County 4-H Leaders Association hosted the 2025 Leader Recognition Banquet at the Jensen Center in Amherst. This annual event honors the incredible dedication of volunteer leaders who make a lasting impact on youth in the 4-H program.

This year, nineteen adult volunteers were recognized for their continuous years of service, representing an impressive combined total of 169 years of leadership in Portage County 4-H! Among these honorees, Agnes Mallek was celebrated for an extraordinary milestone—50 years as the club leader of the Junction City Golden Stars.

In addition to milestone recognitions, several special awards were presented:

- Volunteer of the Year: Sherry Wanta & Michelle Waltenberg
- 4-H Alumni Award: Louise Skornia
- Friend of 4-H Award: Village Gardens
- Club Leader of the Year: Stephanie Radtke
- Project Leader of the Year: Michelle Waltenberg
- Clover Legacy Awards: Louise Skornia, Dr. Barb Kasprowsiz, Rachel Turney & Jenny Konkol

Thank you to all our volunteers for your passion, commitment, and the countless hours you dedicate to helping youth learn and grow through 4-H!



Agnes Mallek, our 50 year award winner with her children (former 4-H members) and many of them current 4-H volunteers!

Celebrating Excellence: Portage County 4-H Awards Program

4-H empowers youth to lead, serve, and grow through the values of head, heart, hands, and health. These achievements were celebrated at the Portage County 4-H Awards Program on November 9th at the Jensen Center in Amherst.

Youth were honored for their outstanding contributions in clubs, projects, and at the county level as well as for reaching milestone point levels and participating in programs like 4-H Summer Academy, Citizenship Washington Focus, Space Camp, and Teen Leaders' Board. Special honors included:

- Camper of the Year: Ace Hogan (Carson Climbers) & Gabriella Young-Bassett (TR Voyagers)
- Counselor of the Year: Ashley Miller (Rosholt Pioneers)
- Outstanding First Year Member: Kennadi Borchert (Silver Knights)
- Outstanding Project Awards:
 - National Avian Quiz Bowl Team Members: Ciara Waltenberg (Silver Knights), Kennadi Borchert (Silver Knights), Colton Schulist (TR Voyagers)
 - Thomas Hintz (Plover Clovers – Tractor Safety, Livestock)
 - Isabelle Francis (Plover Clovers – Crocheting & Chess Demo)
 - Kyle Wojtalewicz (Rosholt Pioneers – Dairy)
 - Casey Wojtalewicz (Rosholt Pioneers – Dairy)
- Key Award Recipients: Trisha Edmundson & Camryn Wade
- Leader of Tomorrow Award: Marie Keck & Camryn Wade

Congratulations to all youth who demonstrated leadership, creativity, and commitment to making a difference through 4-H!



Cloverbuds receiving their 2024-2025 Cloverbud recognition pins



Honors Award winners receiving their their 2024-2025 Honor Award certificate and disc

Celebrating the Legacy of Two 4-H Clubs

This year marks the conclusion of two remarkable chapters in our local 4-H story: Sunnyside Climbers and Eager Eagles. For decades, these clubs have provided youth with opportunities to learn, lead, and serve, creating lasting memories and strengthening our community.

The Sunnyside Climbers 4-H Club has roots dating back to around 1943 and has provided generations of young people with opportunities to grow through hands-on experiences and the values of the 4-H pledge. After more than eight decades, the club will be dissolving at the end of this year. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all past and present members, families, and volunteers who contributed to its success.

Special thanks go to the many previous general leaders whose dedication shaped the club's history, and to current General Leader Louise Skornia for her outstanding leadership and commitment.



Members of the Sunnyside Climbers club making Christmas cards for a service project



Members of the Eager Eagles during their last group service project - clean up of Heritage Park in Plover.

The Eager Eagles 4-H Club, established in 1993, will also conclude its chapter this year after more than three decades of inspiring youth. This club has been a place where young people could explore new interests, build lifelong skills, and make lasting friendships. We are deeply grateful to all who played a role in its success, especially the past general leaders who guided the club through the years, and current General Leader Rachel Turney for her exceptional leadership and support.

While the time for Sunnyside Climbers and Eager Eagles as clubs is coming to an end, the spirit of 4-H remains strong. We encourage youth and families to continue engaging in 4-H programs that promote learning by doing, leadership development, and community service. Thank you for being part of these incredible journeys and for helping “make the best better.”

4-H Youth Leadership in Agriculture Award

DUE: January 2, 2026

The 4-H Leadership in Agriculture Award is given to deserving 4-H youth members for their dedication to 4-H, their community, and agriculture. It will be presented by the Portage County Business Council Agri-Business Committee at the Agri-Business Banquet in the spring.

Applications are available on the [Portage County Extension Website](#) under awards & scholarships.

4-H Adult Agriculture Leader of the Year Award

DUE: January 2, 2026

This award is given out by the Portage County Agri-Business Committee. If you know of a deserving leader (must be current leader) who has made exceptional contributions to agriculture education through 4-H, please submit a nomination (you are also welcome to nominate yourself through the online form)! The award will be presented at the Portage County Agri-Business Banquet in the spring.

To submit a nomination, visit:
<https://bit.ly/PoCoAgLeader>

Rosholt Fair Market Animal Project - Kick Off Meeting

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3rd 11:00am

Jensen Center, Amherst

Members will receive their rule books and an explanation of the project. Members who do not get their rule book at the Kick-Off Meeting will need to pick it up from the Extension Office.

SAVE THE DATES

STATE 4-H LIVESTOCK
EVENTS

4-H MEATS JUDGING CONTEST
JANUARY 31, 2026

SKILLATHON AND QUIZ BOWL
MARCH 21, 2026

BOTH EVENTS HELD AT THE
UW MADISON CAMPUS



What is the 4-H Meats Judging Contest? Have you been to your local meat market or grocery store lately and think you could choose the best cut of meat out of the case?

Have you ever watched a live animal contest and thought you could choose what animals would provide the best meat products?

This is your opportunity to put those skills to work. This contest tests the knowledge of youth in the placement of carcass and retail cut classes, carcass grading, and retail cut identification.

Top teams earn the opportunity to compete at regional and national competitions.

Round-up some 4-H friends and take advantage of this fun opportunity to show your knowledge of the animal species and industry!

Email: amy.boelk@wisc.edu if you're interested in joining the team!

4-H'ERS IN ACTION!



Members of the Sunset Stars participated as a food vendor at the Sopa Fairview Farms small animal swap and flea market



Holiday basket donations sponsored by the Rosholt Pioneers



Many youth from across the county created Glow and Grow Terrariums!



Participants from the Cloverbud Halloween Craft Night with their Halloween monster slime and STEM magic potion bottles



Allison Raddatz, Sunset Stars, and her goat preparing to walk in the Amherst Christmas parade



Members of the Rosholt Pioneers singing Christmas carols

PORTAGE CO. AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

2025 Portage County 4-H National Congress Delegates Camryn Wade (Almond Busy Bees), Marie Keck and Trisha Edmundson (Casimer Boosters) joined teens from across Wisconsin to join up with 4-H'ers around the nation in Atlanta, GA for the National 4-H Conference:



WISCONSIN 4-H

AGRICULTURE AMBASSADORS



NEW!

Applications
due Dec. 15th!

Members will build leadership skills, advocate for agriculture, work on and participate in statewide events, and serve as leaders and role models for 4-H youth and adults.

Must be in grades 9-12 at the time of the application!



LAST CALL Wisconsin 4-H SPACE CAMP

★ April 23-27, 2026

★ Grades 6-8

★ Huntsville, AL

★ \$1300 to attend

Register until December 15 through 4HOnline

APPLY TO THE



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

COMMUNICATIONS, MEDIA, AND MARKETING TEAM

The **Comms/Media Team** is a part of the State Arts Ambassadors program. Youth will create original content, (Video, social media, digital promotional materials) to promote the 4-H story in Wisconsin.

**WISCONSIN
4HARTS
AMBASSADORS**

Must be in **grades 9-12** at the time of the application.

Apply to join the Ambassador Teams by **Dec. 15th!**



SAVE THE DATES

STATE 4-H LIVESTOCK EVENTS

4-H MEATS JUDGING CONTEST
JANUARY 31, 2026

SKILLATHON AND QUIZ BOWL
MARCH 21, 2026

**BOTH EVENTS HELD AT THE
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Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



Meat Judging Team

What is the 4-H Meats Judging Contest? Have you been to your local meat market or grocery store lately and think you could choose the best cut of meat out of the case?

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Top teams earn the opportunity to compete at regional and national competitions.

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Email: amy.boelk@wisc.edu if you're interested in joining the team!

PORTAGE COUNTY 4-H LEADER'S BOARD MINUTES

September 2025

The Portage County 4-H Leader Association meeting, held on 9-15-25 at the Portage County Annex, was called to order by President Christine Keck at 6:36 p.m. Pledges were recited and roll call was taken.

PRESENT: Marilyn Pederson (Carson Climbers), Christine Keck (Casimer Boosters), Karen Jastromski (Tomorrow River Voyagers), Kathy Glodowski (County-Wide), Carrie Wade and Beth Neuendorf (Almond Busy Bees), Betty Pionek (Casimer Boosters), Stephanie Radtke (Carson Climbers), Sharon Cisewski (Plover Clovers), Malayna Polum (Sunset Stars) and Amy Boelk, 4-H Educator.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: None | MINUTES: Minutes were approved as presented | OFFICER REPORTS: Treasurer's Report: Checking account - \$22,125.30 Savings account - \$656.46 Treasurer's report was placed on file. | Secretary's Report and Correspondence: Thank you card was received from Allison, Mara & Aubrey Raddatz for their scholarship. They were greatly appreciative.

COMMITTEE/CLUB/LEADER REPORTS: Clothing Revue – Held at the Rosholt Fair. 9 participants. Timing was an issue. Move indoors to the stage next year due to noise from the drag/pull. | Carson Climbers Update – Held promotional events during National 4-H week. New members encouraged to enroll.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

By-Law Review & Revision – Committee: Christine Keck, Betty Pionek, and Sharon Cisewski. Call for Committee to look at by-laws to present to association. Once by-laws have been revised it will provide further guidance on when to have meetings, limiting officer terms and clarify the differences between the Leaders Board and Leaders Association.

NEW BUSINESS: Nomination & Election of Board Members: Need nominations for vice president, secretary and treasurer. Will elect at October's meeting. | Nomination & Selection of Volunteer of the Year – Sherry Wanta & Michelle Waltenberg nominated for volunteer of the year. Motion by Karen Jastromski, seconded by Betty Pionek. Motion passed. | Nomination & Selection of Friend of 4-H – Village Gardens – Don & Keith Deziak were nominated. | Nomination & Selection of 4-H Alumni - Louise Skornia was nominated. Motion by Malayna Polum seconded by Betty Pionek. Motion passed. | 2025 Awards Program and Leader's Banquet Committee – Karen Jastromski will be in charge of food. Teens to help set up at 4:30pm. Tickets will be \$10 per plate (\$15.50 is total cost per plate). Jensen Center contract has been signed. Flag presentation with dinner at 6:00pm. | Record Books & Record Book Committee – sent out packets of record book nominations to club leaders. Record book review committee – Christine Keck, Malayna Polum and Betty Pionek. | Other: Plat Books – The new 2025 plat books have not arrived yet.

EDUCATOR UPDATES: Transitioned Rosholt Fair duties over to the fair board this year. Things went well and fair was successful. | Held club leader training. | Club visit to the Almond Busy Bees | View to new club – Sunset Stars | Practicing Avian Quiz Bowl – 3 teens from Portage County | All family night is scheduled for October 8th | 50 county sponsored programs for next year | 4-H week is October 5-11th

Next Leader Association Meeting Date – October 23, 2025 | Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm

Yours in 4-H , Marilyn Pederson

Portage County Extension Staff

- Mallory McGivern, Interim Area Extension Director
- Amy Boelk, 4-H program Educator
- Vacant, Family Living Educator
- Vacant, Agriculture Agent
- Katie Livernash, Community Development Agent

Extension Support Staff

- Denise Rocha, Family Living / Agriculture
- Lisa Henriksen, 4-H / Community Development

Office Phone : (715) 346-1316

4-H Support : (715) 346-1462

Website: <https://portage.extension.wisc.edu/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/portagecounty4h>



UW-MADISON EXTENSION
PORTAGE COUNTY 4-H

Connect with us!



<https://portage.extension.wisc.edu>