



THE COURIER

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



Members of the Carson Climbers club visited an assisted living home for Bunnies and Bingo. Members brought their 4-H project bunnies, made sock bunnies and played bingo with residents!

4-H OFFICE UPDATES:

Lisa Promoted to Associate Educator

We are so excited to announce that as of 2026, Lisa has officially been promoted to Associate 4-H Educator with Extension! Don't worry, she'll still be doing much of the same support work for our families, leaders and members, but will be able to have an even more involved role in our active programming. In addition to assisting with Educator led events, Lisa will be working to build a robust Cloverbud program and will be the primary programmer when it comes to our littlest 4-H'ers!

Amy Transitioning to State 4-H Role

Amy has accepted a State Manager position with Wisconsin 4-H as the Career and College Readiness (CCR) State Program Manager! She will continue to work out of the Portage County Extension office with the 4-H Team, however be focused on CCR programming around the state. We are excited to have the opportunity for Amy to remain here in our county and potentially pilot some awesome career and college programs right here in Central Wisconsin! For the time being, Amy will still be the go-to contact for all things 4-H.

New County 4-H Educator to Be Hired

With Amy's transition to the State 4-H Leadership Team, the process for hiring a new Portage County 4-H Educator will begin soon. The process takes a bit of time to move through UW-Madison HR, but we are hopeful that there will be a new educator joining the team in April or May. (Until then, Amy will continue providing county-support and programming for clubs and members and will remain here in Portage County to assist with a strong transition and continuity).



Participants at the Charcoal Drawing workshop hosted by the Plover Clovers 4-H Club.

DID YOU KNOW?... The Portage County Leaders Association is now covering 30% of the cost of state and national 4-H events and trips that youth 4-H members sign up for! (Plus the state has scholarship opportunities too!) Questions about how to sign-up? Let us know!



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!

FEBRUARY

- 8 Charcoal Drawing Workshop, 2:00-4:00pm, Boston School Forest
- 8 Club Leaders & Club Officer Training, 4:30-6:00pm, Boston School Forest
- 15 4-H Family Bowling Party, 4:00pm, Skipp's Bowling Center
- 18 Awards & Ambassadors Interviews, 6:00pm, UW Extension Office

March

- 8 Cloverbud & Explorer Mad Scientist Workshop, 10:00am-12:00pm, Boston School Forest
- 8 4-H Ceramics Workshop, 1:00-3:00pm, Boston School Forest
- 15 Portage County 4-H Scholarship Application Due
- 17 Clover Craze Makerspace, 12:00-2:00pm, Jordan Park West Lodge
- 26 4-H Leaders Association Meeting, 6:30 PM, Annex Building Rooms 1 & 2



Summer Academy is the Positive Youth Development Institute's signature career, leadership, & college readiness conference hosted at UW-Madison. The event focuses on preparing young people (grades 8-11) for higher education in a way that complements formal education prep programs. Summer Academy offers an immersive college experience; participants will experience life in a residence hall, explore campus, and enjoy the unique elements of higher ed that only Madison can offer.

For more information, please visit go.wisc.edu/4HSummerAcademy... We can't wait to see you in Madison!

April 1st Project Change Deadline

April 1, 2026 is the final day to review and update your project selections in 4-H Online. Please take a few minutes before the deadline to log in, look over your current project list, and make any necessary changes.

If you are interested in receiving a project workbook, please contact your club leader. Club leaders will coordinate workbook orders through the 4-H Office.

For step-by-step instructions on how to update your project list in 4-H Online, [click here](#).

If you have any questions or need assistance, contact the Extension Office at 715-346-1462 or email lisa.henriksen@wisc.edu.



PICK YOUR PROJECT

SNOWMAN BUILDING CONTEST

Show off your holiday creativity in the Portage County 4-H Snowman Building 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 - February 27th.

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

CLOVER CRAZE MAKERSPACE



Celebrate St. Patrick's Day the 4-H way! Join us for a hands-on craft adventure making all things Clover! With some schools on Spring Break, it's the perfect chance to enjoy a fun and creative afternoon creating clover crafts!

When: March 17th | Noon - 2:00PM
Where: Jordan Park West Lodge (5800 Jordan Rd, Stevens Point)
Who: Open to all 4-H members in grades K-13. Non-4-H youth may also attend for a \$5 materials fee.

Registration Deadline March 1st. Visit the Portage County [4-H Events & Calendar](#) page for registration link and additional information.

4-H MAD SCIENTIST WORKSHOP

Sunday, March 8th | 10:00am - 12:00pm
Boston School Forest

Join us for an exciting hands-on adventure where young scientists get to explore the wild and wonderful world of science. During this workshop, children will experiment with colorful mixtures, surprising reactions, and playful STEM challenges that spark imagination and make learning come alive.

This event is open to both 4-H members and non-4-H friends in grades K-3.

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



CERAMICS PAINTING WORKSHOP

Sunday, March 8th | 1:00-3:00pm
Boston School Forest



Join us for a ceramics workshop! Through a generous donation of ceramics this is a free event open to all Portage County 4-H members.

Ceramics, paints and supplies will be provided, or you can bring your own paints and brushes if you prefer. Techniques covered will be painting and staining. Finished pieces can be used as entries for the fairs!

Register by March 1st! Visit the Portage County [4-H Events & Calendar](#) page for registration link and additional information.



4-H'ERS IN ACTION!



The Mitten Tree at The International Bank of Amherst, organized by the TR Voyagers Club, has helped collect mittens and hats donated by generous community members.



Members of the Carson Climbers club at their December meeting held at Pizza Ranch participating in a fun gift exchange!



Members of the Tomorrow River Voyagers club at their December meeting participating in a frosting demonstration.



Members of the Carson Climbers visited an assisted living home for Bunnies and Bingo!



Members of the Carson Climbers community service project at the Human Society of Portage County.



Members of the TR Voyagers proudly carrying the club banner in the Amherst Holiday Parade!

4-H CLUB REPORTS

TOMORROW RIVER VOYAGERS

The Tomorrow River Voyagers 4-H club doesn't let the cold and snow stop their learning and fun! The club has had a busy start to winter with many different club and service activities!

In addition to promoting 4-H on a 4-H-green float in the Amherst parade, members of the club braved the elements to ring bells for a cause on many different dates in December in front of Amherst Family Foods. It was great to see the outpouring of kindness from countless community members who generously contributed to the bucket. Throughout the past month, the club also made a point to make a difference in a number of other ways including gathering items to help local families brighten their holiday season, contributing gifts to local causes, and gathering donated items from the mitten tree at the International Bank of Amherst.

Along with all the many ways club members have served the community, we also made time to gather together, share skills that may be used in future fair projects, and engaged in many other fun club activities including a gift exchange and holiday party, cake and cookie frosting and decorating, ice-skating, attending a UWSP hockey game, learning how to wood carve, and learning how to care for Turkeys to show at the fair! It's certainly been a busy season of learning, growth, and fun!

As always, these activities are just a sample of the many club and service activities that the Tomorrow River Voyagers take part in throughout the year! Membership in 4-H provides so many great opportunities for kids to grow in their leadership and service skills while making a positive impact on their community.

The Tomorrow River Voyagers encourage all local families and youth to explore the enriching opportunities that 4-H provides! Whether a student is interested in service, STEAM, home projects, agriculture, or any other number of interests, 4-H offers a supportive environment to learn and grow.

To discover more about joining the Tomorrow River Voyagers or other Portage County 4-H programs, please visit the [Portage County Extension website](#). Interested families should look for the "New Family Interest Form" link to get more information!

Submitted by Gabriella Young Bassett, Tomorrow River Voyagers Reporter



SCHOLARSHIPS

The following scholarships are currently available. We encourage you to explore and apply as you plan for your future!

PORTAGE COUNTY 4-H SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: March 15th | Award: \$500

The Wayne Schroeder Portage County 4-H Leaders Scholarships and the Pinkerton-Burns-Noble-Portage County 4-H Leaders Scholarships are available for eligible Portage County 4-H members and leaders pursuing higher education! For additional scholarship information and application visit the [4-H Youth Forms & Applications](#) tab.

The scholarship requires one letter of recommendation (can be from any mentor – does not have to be from a 4-H leader) and a signature from your General Leader. Please start soon to give your mentors time to write a thoughtful letter!

2026 WISCONSIN 4-H SCHOLARSHIP

Deadline: March 1st

Each year, Wisconsin 4-H recognizes outstanding students in our communities with scholarships that celebrate dedication, leadership, and achievements in 4-H. We're excited to announce that this year we will be awarding more than \$20,000 in scholarships to outstanding Wisconsin 4-H members and alumni.

For the application form, specific scholarship information, and complete instructions on how to apply, visit <https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/opportunities/wisconsin-4-h-scholarships/>

Applications must be received electronically by no later than 11:59 p.m. on March 1, 2026.

WISCONSIN RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FOUNDATION (WROF), SCHOLARSHIP

WROF, Inc. will present \$3,000 scholarships to seven outstanding high school students. Scholarship requirements include the following: High school seniors must have lived in rural Wisconsin for at least two years, currently attend school in Wisconsin, and plan to return to their rural roots upon graduation. WROF, Inc. will accept applications online until 11:59 pm on Friday, March 6, 2026. Please visit www.wrof.org for more information, to access the Scholarship application.

Deadline: March 6th | Award: \$3,000

AG SOURCE DHI FOUNDATION PORTAGE COUNTY FUND GROUP SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarships awarded for:

- College students having already completed a college semester and evidence of continued college enrollment
- Adults seeking continuing education
- Those wanting to attend professional ag related seminars, conferences, or courses

Additional information and application can be found on [here](#).

Deadline: May 1st

SCHOLARSHIPS CONT...

WISCONSIN TOWNS ASSOCIATION 2026 SCHOLARSHIP

The Wisconsin Towns Association, in partnership with Rural Mutual Insurance Co. and Scott Construction, Inc., will award a total of ten \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors graduating in 2026 from either a public or private Wisconsin high school who plan to enroll in a Wisconsin public or private college or university in 2026.

Scholarship recipients will be selected through an independently judged essay contest. More information and application can be found [here](#).

Deadline: May 22nd | Award: \$1,000

JOHN AND ISABELLE AMES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The John and Isabelle Ames Memorial Scholarship, a \$750 award, was established in memory of John and Isabelle Ames of Ames-Way Holsteins in Darien, WI. This scholarship is offered to college sophomores and juniors with current or recent involvement in 4-H, FFA, or the registered Holstein Industry who are enrolled full-time and attending classes in-person while seeking a four-year degree in any field. The application form is available through the [Wisconsin Holstein Association website](#). The application deadline is March 1, 2026.

Deadline: March 1st | Award: \$750

BADGER STATE SHERIFF'S ASSOCIATION (BSSA) SCHOLARSHIP

The Badger State Sheriff's Association (BSSA) will provide four scholarships to four students graduating in the Spring of 2026 and enrolled in continuing education for Fall 2026 at a Wisconsin Technical College or University. These are \$1000 scholarship awards.

Applicants must be pursuing careers in criminal justice or related public safety fields.

More information and application can be found [here](#).

Deadline: March 27th | Award: \$1,000

Mark your calendars and plan to join us for 4-H summer Camp for 4Hers in grades 3-7 in Iowa, Portage, and Waupaca Counties!

Camp will be held at Upham Woods near Wisconsin Dells from June 15-17, 2026. Registration will be posted soon!



Managerial Agreements—DUE: APRIL 15th

If the animal you are bringing to the Amherst or Rosholt Fair is not owned by the exhibitor or the persons who live at the exhibitor's primary place of residence, you must send a Managerial Agreement to the Portage County Extension office no later than April 15!

This applies to Cattle, Horses, Swine, Sheep, Goats, Poultry, Rabbits, Dogs, Cats, and Alpacas. Please note: Market Animal Project Beef, Swine and Sheep cannot be managerial animals. Copies available at <https://portage.extension.wisc.edu/> (4-H — 4-H Forms and Applications).

PORTAGE COUNTY 4-H LEADER'S ASSOCIATION MINUTES

October 2025

The Portage County 4-H Leader Association meeting, held on 10-23-25 at the Portage County Annex, was called to order by President Christine Keck at 6:30 p.m. Pledges were recited and roll call was taken.

PRESENT: Christine Keck (Casimer Boosters), Marilyn Pederson (Carson Climbers), Louise Skornia (Sunnyside Climbers), Kathy Glodowski (County-Wide), Sharon Cisewski (Plover Clovers), Robin Oliver (Nelsonville Zippy Zees), Caroline Peterson (Nelsonville Zippy Zees), Michelle Waltenberg (Silver Knights), Carrie Wade (Almond Busy Bees), Malayna Polum (Sunset Stars), Wendy Carlson (Nelsonville Zippy Zees) and Amy Boelk (4-H Educator). |ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: None | MINUTES: Minutes were approved as presented

OFFICER REPORTS: Treasurer's report was placed on file. |Secretary's Report and Correspondence: Thank you card received from Marie Keck for her scholarship. It was read to the group.

COMMITTEE/CLUB/LEADER REPORTS: Virtual Pumpkin Contest & Snowman Contest – Due in November. Prizes have been ordered and Lisa will handle. | By-Law Review & Revision – Will continue discussion in January. Christine will convene the committee before the January meeting to have a draft prepared for the board to review.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Quarterly Meeting Structure Proposal- Discussion about reducing the number of annual meetings to encourage more people to attend. A calendar of regular events/voting patterns was created by the 4-H office by looking at 3 past years of agendas and minutes for the group to review. Additional discussion to be had in January to finalize 2026 schedule. |Nomination & Election of Board Members - Christine Keck volunteered to be president and Malayna Polum volunteered to be secretary. Moving forward, secretary and treasurer will be a split position to be filled by Malayna. No nominations were received for vice president. As of now, that position remains open. Amy & Lisa will work with Christine & Malayna to transition bank duties from Jan (former treasurer) to add Malayna & Christine to account going forward. Malayna will work on facilitating bank signatory authority change on the BMO scholarship account and the Community First Bank checking/savings accounts.

NEW BUSINESS: Request for funds for National Poultry Quiz Bowl Team – Ciara Waltenberg, Colton Schulist, and Kennadi Borchert qualified their team for the National Poultry Quiz Bowl held in Louisville, Kentucky. Requesting funds to help cover the related expenses. Request for funds from the dog project account – Matthew Carlson requested \$110 for reimbursement for state dog show fees. Motion made by Malayna Polum to fund both requests to the Poultry Team and Dog Project, seconded by Caroline Peterson, to approve the payment of \$110 to Matthew Carlson for state dog show fees. Motion passed by voice vote. Checks will be written to Michelle Waltenberg and Matthew Carlson for the association amounts. |4-H Trip Funding Application - Leaders Association agreed to fund 35% of all trip applications from Portage County 4-H members. Group agreed to still ask for applications so they are aware of youth that are attending trips. |Leaders Appreciation Banquet – November 7th/Awards Program – November 9th - Registration for banquet is due by October 31st along with payment. Work is underway to prepare for both events. Youth who attended 4-H trips are being asked to give a presentation at the Awards Program. |New Fundraising Ideas – Malayna volunteered to spearhead new fundraising ideas moving forward. Two current fundraisers by the Leaders Association – Plant sale & plat books. |Plat book Coordinator – Platbooks have arrived at county office. The list of locations has been sent out to the Leaders Association, we are looking for people to take on pickup/drop off duties of platbooks to these vendors. If interested, ask Amy & Lisa. |Other – None

EDUCATOR UPDATES: Planning for a multi-county Winter Leadership Camp experience for youth ages 13 and above. |Development of study materials including several study sessions for 3 Portage county youth teams for the 2025 State Poultry Quiz Bowl taking place at the International Poultry Show at Portage, WI including attendance at the event where 2 junior teams placed in the top 3 and our senior team won the state championship title to qualify for nationals. |Hosted an all-county 4-H virtual onboarding and info session for all current and new 4-H families to give an overview of the upcoming 2025-2026 4-H year, calendar, events, policies, changes, new incentive program and highlight state and national opportunities for youth.

Next Leader Association Meeting Date – January 22, 2026, Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm

Yours in 4-H,
Marilyn Pederson

PORTAGE COUNTY 4-H LEADER'S ASSOCIATION MINUTES

January 2026

Attendees: Malayna Polum, Amy Boelk, Christine Keck, Agnes, Kathy Glodowski, Louise Skornia, Sharon Cisewski, Steph Radtke, Caroline Peterson, Robin Oliver, Karen Jastromski
Call to order: 6:31 1/22/2026

Additions to Agenda: Banquet

Treasurer's Report: List of bills paid and deposits made was read.

Minutes: A motion was made by Malayna, seconded by Kathy to approve the minutes for October's meeting.

Committee/Club/Leader Reports

County-Wide project workshops/meetings: Gingerbread Contest & Snowman Contest - 50 entries and will be announced next week. Snowman Contest ends at the end of February | Ceramics Workshop – March 8th. Will be open to all and is general techniques. |Upcoming workshops: February 8th Officer Training at Boston school Forest 4:30-6 pm, 2/18 Ambassador and award 6 – 8 pm, 2/20 7 pm virtual dinosaur K-5 grades, 2/24 Virtual Resume writing for teens in Portage, Wood, and Marathon County, 3/8 Ceramics and 10-12 Cloverbud day camp, 3/17 Clover Craze 12-2 pm Clover craft stations and 4-H activities | Bylaw Review & Revision Committee – Christine will work with the committee to get this complete

Unfinished Business:

Quarterly Meeting Structure Proposal - A motion was made by Malayna, seconded by Agnes to combine the leader's board and general leader meetings. A motion was made by Kathy, seconded by Agnes to have 4 meetings per year and add meetings as needed. A motion was made by Malayna seconded by Caroline, to meet January, March, June, October on the 4th Thursday of the month. | 4-H Trip Funding - The Leaders Association will cover 30% of the cost of the trip for the participants. Most trip registrations have closed. 3 youth will be attending Space Camp that costs \$1300 per youth to be covered. \$390 to be covered by the Leaders Association. One is from Almond so that one should be covered in full. There will be one member attending American Spirit. That trip will be a little over \$2000 and that youth is from Almond. Three youth were set to attend Winter Camp, but it has been postponed. \$185 for weekend with \$56 per youth being covered by the Leaders Association. Summer Academy and Summer Camp registration haven't opened yet. There will be a reminder put in the newsletter that the leaders help with the cost of the trips.

New Business: Award Ceremony/Banquet - Discussion on combined award ceremony and banquet. Kathy to see if 11/1 is available at the Jenson Center at 1 pm. Leaders to come up with ideas to have a volunteer social at our next meeting in March. |Ag Youth Award Applications - 3 Applicants were received. Nothing is needed by the Leaders' Association as it is not decided by us or provided by us. | Portage County Scholarships - Applicants review in March and they were then reviewed and awarded at July meeting. New process is to have applications in by 3/15. We would like to review our March Meeting. Checks will be awarded in May at the signing event. | Ambassador Apparel - Comments from youth about changing the polos. Logo on jackets don't have the 4-H emblem with. Update the logo and change the color of the polo to a darker color and more athletic type. |Need for Spring Fundraiser? – Not at this time.

4-H Educator Update: Lisa received a promotion! Congratulations! |Juniper is coming back this summer! |New Area Extension Director |Amy received a promotion! She will be staying in Portage County. |New 4-H Educator will be hired. | New Livestock Educator was hired and will be launching a lot of new youth programs.

Next Meeting Date – March 26th at 6:30 pm

Adjourn – A motion was made by Caroline, seconded by Kathy to adjourn at 8:04 pm.

Portage County Extension Staff

- Mallory McGivern, Interim Area Extension Director
- Amy Boelk, 4-H program Educator
- Lisa Henriksen, 4-H Associate Educator
- Vacant, Family Living Educator
- Adam Hartfiel, Regional Livestock Educator
Serving; Portage, Adams, Waushara, & Green Lake
- Katie Livernash, Community Development Agent
- Denise Rocha, Extension Support Staff

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

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



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