

4-H CLUBS:

- 4-Her's
- 4 Paws
- Aquatic All-stars
- Blazers
- Canine Connections
- Clogging Clovers
- Eagles
- East County Steer & Swine
- Eastside Rabbiters
- Florida Crackers
- Foxmill Kids & Colts
- Fruitville Exceptional Equine
- Green Thumbs
- The Green Team
- Half Pint Pullers
- Home Grown Explorers
- Horse N Around
- Indian Creek 4-H Club
- Jr. Cattlemen
- Kelly Community Clovers
- Little Rascals
- Livestock Club
- Miakka Allstock
- Mini Hooves of Sarasota
- Muddy Boots
- Myakka Ranchers
- Open Gaits
- Reef Rovers
- Ridin' Rednecks
- Sarasota County Ranchers
- Sarasota Sharp Shooters
- Sarasota Swine
- Southern Spurs
- The Group
- Venice Bits & Spurs
- YMCA Youth



The Clover Times



From The Agents Desk, by Marcia Morris

Happy New Year 2008 to all from the 4-H staff!

The year is bright with possibilities. During the next few weeks there will be some housing changes for the 4-H office. At this time we are unsure of our new location but check with the office staff for updates and we will let everyone know our new location. We must leave "Building A" by January 31st. Rest assured all will be in order and we will be ready to start the New Year off in style. Speaking of starting off, the year will start with a District Nine Senior Retreat held in Sarasota County on January 5th. Everyone should enjoy the chance to learn new and exciting leadership skills.

County Council enjoyed a holiday visit to the Salvation Army Family Services Unit in December. We all enjoyed meeting one-week-old Elijah and the other families at the center, a great time was had by one and all and we look forward to our spring visit, if you would like to be involved contact our Council President Jared Padgett.

It's Not too early to start thinking "Fair" and that means County Events. Please be sure to have your entry forms turned in on time, starting January 18th, 2008. Refer to the Fair handbook or website for details.

As we begin this new year and all that lies ahead please take a few minutes to think about what you would like to accomplish this year in 4-H. By working together we can all have a wonderful 2008. Let's make 2008 the best year ever for Sarasota County 4-H!

Marcia Morris, 4-H Extension Agent

January—New Location;

Leader and Council Meetings!

January 28th 7:30, Council members will meet in the Ken Clark Building at the fair grounds and Leaders will meet in the Mini Building.

*I pledge,
 My Head
 to clearer thinking,
 My Heart
 to greater loyalty,
 My Hands
 to larger service,
 And My Health
 to better living,
 For my club, my community,
 My country and my world.*



CLOVERBUD FUN DAY

All 4-H Cloverbuds are invited to Twin Lakes Park, outside learning pavilion, to enjoy a morning of active learning and fishing. The event will occur on Saturday February 2 from 10am-12noon at the 4-H Office at 6700 Clark Road and involves numerous 30 minute activities which include studying sharks, toadfish, flowers, trees, turtles and more. 4-H Cloverbuds may bring a friend along to join the fun. The event is free and supported through the generosity of our Sarasota County 4-H Foundation. Contact Mr. Wilson at 861-9818 to sign up.





Fair Days Ahead...

DATE CHANGE!!! Write This Down:

The dates for the Steer Sale and Swine Sale have been changed. The Steer Sale will be held on Friday, March 21st at 7:30 and the Swine Sale will be held Saturday March 22nd at 6:30. Make sure your buyers get the right information!

All Checked in...

The 2008 Sarasota County Fair is off to a great start! 4-H youth have checked in 68 Steer; 178 Swine; 18 Dairy Cattle; 20 Beef Breeding; 13 Pygmy Goats; and 5 Dairy Goats for this years fair.

Good Luck to all... and see you at the fair!

4-H County Events Day

Don't be late! Demonstration and Public Speaking entry forms are due by 5:00 PM on January 18th at the 4-H OFFICE. Forms must be filled out completely! Our County Demonstrations and Public Speaking Event is Saturday, February 23, 2008 and will be held at the

Meadowland Worship Center

8893 Fruitville Road (3 miles east of I-75)

All those who turn in entry forms will receive a letter of confirmation and a scheduled time for your activity. Please check your confirmation carefully to make sure that all the information is correct. Winners in each category will advance to District Events on May 3rd. Junior and Intermediate District winners will receive a scholarship to Camp Cloverleaf June 16—20, Senior District winners will advance to State competition (4-H Congress) in Gainesville July 21—25th.

Try Something New... at the Sarasota County Fair

Judging contests at the fair are fun and a good way to learn more about your project area. The contests are open to ALL 4-H members. Why not try... Livestock Judging, Dairy Judging or Rabbit & Cavy Judging.

Are you a Smart Shopper? Try the Consumer Choices Contest, the 2007-2008 member guides are on the Florida 4-H website or available at the 4-H Office, this event takes place on Sunday, March 16. We also have a Horticulture Judging Contest, did you know the top four senior 4-Hers receive a scholarship to attend 4-H Congress in July and participate at the State Horticulture judging event?

Judging contest entry forms are due by January 18th in the 4-H Office. Trophies and premiums are given to the top 10 seniors and juniors in each category. Check the Sarasota County Fair Rules Book for information and entry forms or call the 4-H Office at 861-9810 for details.

Poster Art Contest Starts Here...

"4-H In Your Community"

The 4-H Poster Art Program gives 4-H members an opportunity to use poster art to promote public understanding and support for the 4-H Program. The contest begins at our county fair and the winning posters are sent to the State Contest in Gainesville. Posters are judged and displayed during 4H Congress in July.

Use the Mini Building entry form to enter your art work, forms are due January 18th.

Attention Cloverbuds

Would you like to enter a project, that you have been working on this year, in the Mini-Building? Just complete this form and return it to the 4-H Office by January 18, 2008. Only 1 item will be allowed per Cloverbud, so pick your favorite! Cloverbuds will receive a participation ribbon only, no premiums will be given. If you turn in a record book you will be eligible to receive a year pin for the 2007—2008 4-H year.

Cloverbud Name: _____

Age (as of September 1, 2007) _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Club: _____

Description of Article:



Upcoming Project Workshops...

January 10: Leather Craft. Try your hand at leather crafts; embellish these beautiful key chains just in time to enter this in the Sarasota County Fair. Cost \$1.00.

February 13: Valentine. Arrange a beautiful tea cup Valentine for that very special someone. Bring a new or used tea cup (or mug) and we will provide all the ingredients to make it spectacular! Cost \$2.00.

April 10: Make a Statement! Your friends will flip over these custom "flip-flops" to wear all summer! Bring a pair of plain flip-flops to the workshop and we will supply all the materials to make them dazzling! Cost \$1.00

These hands-on workshops are held at Twin Lakes Park at 4:45 PM. We do ask that you pre-register one week prior to the workshop so we have enough materials for everyone in the class. Thanks, and come join the fun!

Sign-up today!

2008 Area E T-Shirt Design Contest

Show your creative side... enter the Area E T-shirt Design Contest. The winner will receive a free t-shirt and a \$100.00 savings bond! The contest is open to all 4-Hers ages 8-18 as of September 1, 2007 that reside in the Area E Horse District. You do not have to be entered in a horse project to participate. T-shirts (made using your design) will be sold as a fundraiser for the Area E Horse Program.

Guidelines: 1. All designs must be original and specifically relate to the Area E 4-H Horse Show. 2. Designs must include a 4-H clover and the words "2008 Area E Horse Show" 3. No copyrighted materials can be used. 4. Designs may be horizontal or vertical to be used on the front or back of the t-shirt. 5. Designs must be submitted on an 8 1/2 X 11 sheet of white paper. Only 1 entry per member will be accepted. Entries are due in the Sarasota County 4-H Office no later than 5:00 PM, Friday, February 26, 2008.

4-H Showcase at the 2008 Florida State Fair

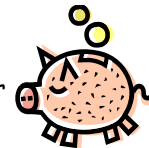
When: Saturday, February 9, 2008, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Where: FL State Fairgrounds, Special Events Building

Have you ever wanted to participate at the State Fair? Would you like to participate in the **FL State Fair Fashion Show, Share the Fun, or Public Speaking?** Show case your clubs activities at "make and take" interactive booths. Registration materials are available in the 4-H Office or go to the Florida State Fair website at:

www.florida4h.org Forms are due in the State 4-H Events Office by 4:30 pm - Friday, January 18, 2008
Interactive booth registration: January 11, 2008

Financial Planning... When should you start?

Now! Personal Financial Planning is the process of defining goals, developing a plan, and putting that plan into action. As a high school 4-Her you should be thinking about life after high school, your goals, and how you are going to get there. How do you manage your paycheck, what do you do with other income - like steer or swine checks?



Sarasota County 4-H will be offering "NEFE High School Financial Planning Program" open to 4-H youth and their parents. This is a 3-week series of one two-hour class per week starting in April, 2008. Guest lecture, Phillip Smelser is a dynamic speaker and will engage youth and parents in financial management education.

Look for more details and registration in the upcoming 4-H newsletters or contact Keith Wilson at 861-9818.

Looking Ahead... Two Leadership Adventure Weekends Planned

Attention Intermediate and Senior 4-Hers... here are two fun-filled weekends of learning and experiences that you definitely don't want to miss!

January 25-27, 2008: Senior Leadership Adventure Weekend at Camp Ocala (ages 14 and up as of September 1, 2007)

February 1-3, 2008: Intermediate Leadership Adventure Weekend at Camp Cloverleaf (ages 11-13 as of September 1, 2007)

Leadership Adventure Weekend or L.A.W. is designed to provide leadership training for 4-H members from across the state. It is an excellent opportunity for youth to meet and get to know other Florida 4-Hers. Hands-on training makes learning fun while learning valuable life skills. 4-Hers will also learn more about opportunities in 4-H, leadership, and team building. Leaders, why not send your club president—they can bring back this valuable information to your club. The Intermediate Leadership Adventure weekend will prepare intermediate 4-Hers for future leadership roles at county, district, and state levels. These events are planned by senior 4-H members in partnership with adult volunteers, agents, and state leaders—so you know they will be fun and you are sure to have a great time! Contact the 4-H Office for more information, registration forms, and deadlines.

District IX Senior Retreat; Sean Russell District IX Council President

Hey District IX 4-Hers, Thank you once again to everyone who attended the District IX Christmas Party last Friday. It was a great success and I hope all of you had a good time.

Our next District IX Activity is our District IX Senior Retreat. Below is the information about this event and how to attend: **District IX Senior Retreat** Mark your Calendars! The 2008 District IX Senior Retreat will be held on January 5th at the Sarasota County Extension Office which is located at 6700 Clark Road, Twin Lakes Park, Sarasota, FL 34241-9328. The District IX Senior Retreat is an event for senior 4-H members in District IX to get to know each other and work on District-wide projects and activities.

At this year's senior retreat participants will learn new skills through presentations and activities focused on team-building, leadership, and the Florida 4-H Healthy Lifestyles State Project. Youth will also work with the District Council Officers to plan District IX Congress, as well as make signs, noisemakers, and other items for our District to use during the spirit rally at Florida 4-H Congress this summer.

Check-in for this event will be from 8:30 A.M. - 9:00 A.M. Participants will spend from 9:00 to 11:30 participating in the previously mentioned activities. At 11:30 youth will have the option to go to Myakka State Park for lunch and will be able to take part in Myakka's numerous recreational activities. Please note: If you decide to go to Myakka you are responsible for your own transportation from the extension office to the park. The entrance fee to Myakka is \$5.00 per vehicle for up to eight people. Anyone coming to Myakka can bring a lunch or purchase lunch at the "Myakka Outpost" Store.

If you plan on attending the District IX Senior Retreat **please R.S.V.P. to Sean Russell at (941)-371-8340 or sdscience@comcast.net by January 3rd**. Hope to see you there! Attending this event is a great way for senior 4-H members to get more involved in 4-H and learn about the opportunities offered to them at the District Level.

If you have any questions regarding this event, don't hesitate to contact me at (941)-371-8340 or sdscience@comcast.net. On behalf of all of our District IX Council Officers I would like to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Straight From The Horses Mouth ...

Mark Your Horse Calendar...

January 6th	4-H Show, Paragon Farm
January 25th	Speed Show, Paragon Farm
January 27th	County Pleasure Show, Paragon Farm
February 9th	State Fair Horse Judging Contest
March 15th	Hippology Contest, Orlando
April 12th	State Horse Judging Contest
April 26 & 27	Area E Horse Show, Tampa
June 8, 15&22	Horsemanship Schools
June 20th	State 4-H Horse Events, Gainesville
July 10-12	State 4-H Horse Show, Tampa
July 29 - Aug 3	Southern Regional 4-H Championships will be held in Lexington, VA

4-H Horse Show

Open to all 4-H Youth! Sunday, January 6th at Paragon Farms. High Point Awards will be given in the following categories: Walk /Trot, Jr. /Intermediate, Sr., Miniature Horse, and Speed. Registration at 8:00AM and the show begins at 9:00AM

It's Show Time

The Sarasota County 4-H / Open Horse Show is scheduled for January 27th, 2008. Speed Events will be held on January 25th, 2008. Flyer available at the 4-H Office. You **must** attend one of these shows, and have your "up-to-date" record book signed by a 4-H Agent to qualify for the Area E Horse Show, April 26 & 27, 2008, Tampa

Horseman of the Year

First Place \$500 Scholarship / First Runner Up \$200 Savings Bond / Second Runner Up \$100 Savings Bond

Youth must have completed at least junior year of high school and have completed at least two years in the Horse project including current year. Youth interested in participating in the 4-H scholarship program should contact the 4-H Office. This scholarship is sponsored by the Florida 4-H Horse Program.

Horse Project Youth—New 4-H Age Division

Junior/Intermediate - 13 and under as of 9-1-07

Senior - 14 and over as of 9-1-07

At County, Area E, and State 4-H Horse Shows, classes which are split into Junior and Senior will now be Junior/Intermediate (all youth 13 & under) and Senior (all youth 14 & over). This also means that youth must be 14 (as of September 1, 2007) to qualify for Regionals.

Look What We Did ...



National Congress 2007 By: Laura Knipper

Greetings to all 4-Hers! I just got back from the most amazing 4-H trip ever and I would love to share my experience of National Congress with you. National Congress is held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Atlanta, GA annually, and is for second year to graduating Sr. 4-H members. 4-Hers from all over the US, including Puerto Rico, earn the trip by, in most cases, filling out a successful 4-H portfolio and passing an interview. From Sarasota, Sean Russell and I received the trip.

Let me give you a brief overview of a few of the activities we participated in... During our stay there, November 23-27, we attend many workshops that varied from learning about leadership skills to baking pretzels! (No, I'm not kidding, and they were very good!) Each state had a special lunch; Florida had ours at Pity Patty's Porch - a historical restaurant in downtown Atlanta. Despite its unusual name, it was quite elegant and we had a wonderful time! Every morning we were engaged in an inspirational speech by some of the best public speakers I have ever heard. Everyone participated in a community service project, Sean and I helped out at a middle school; it was a very rewarding experience. The pin exchange on the first night of our stay gave us a chance to meet some people from other states and get some really neat pins and other trinkets from them. Sean and I went to the Georgia Aquarium for our "Awesome in Atlanta Tour". The aquarium was huge, with Beluga whales, penguins, sharks, and countless fish! If you ever go to Atlanta, I would recommend visiting this amazing aquarium! One evening everyone went over to see the Atlanta History Center. We learned some Georgia history facts and watched some pretty cool shows; I saw a funny Italian Shakespeare play and an African dance performance, both were a lot of fun.

One of my favorite events held during National Congress was the International Dinner. It truly was amazing, and was kind of like Epcot! There were displays of different countries and each display had a native dish to try. For example, China had rice and egg rolls, while Italy had pizza and France had desserts. As we walked to and from each display tasting the different foods, we were entertained by the Hawaiian congress participants performing the Hula dance and next a couple Puerto Rican dancers did some Latin dancing. Each performance was awesome!

I also loved the farewell Banquet and dance on the last night. We saw some more great performances and even got to see Miss America speak to us. It was so sad to have to say good bye to all the people I met, but they and my experience will be unforgettable. There are a million more things I could say in this report about my trip, for it was absolutely so amazing, but I guess I better sum it all up! If you want a great 4-H experience that you will never forget, this is the trip to take!



4-H Foundation—Working Hard 4-YOU

From the Booth: Now that the fair is only 4 months away, I would like to ask if there is anyone that can help the foundation with a few things that need to be fixed in the Elephant ear booth before the fair. If you have the expertise or know of someone that would be willing to help us out (that way we would not have to spend money that can be used for the 4-H program and our 4-Hers). We need help with plumbing; to replace the hot water heater, and the faucet - if you worked in the booth last year you know what I mean. Also, we need a small amount of countertop constructed. We also need to rewire the trailer so if we need to move the trailer to another location it will be street legal.

As you all know all profits from the booth go into the 4-H program to reduce costs and to pay for scholarships. If you would like to help us out please call the 4-H Office or myself at 922-9193. Thanks again, we couldn't do it without you. George Liedl, EE Booth Committee Chairman 08 PS; If you know of a company that would be willing to donate the water heater or faucet please let me know. With all our connections out there we should be able to get this done.

Sarasota County 4-H Foundation Swine Fundraiser: It is time once again for the Sarasota County 4-H Foundation Annual Swine Fundraiser. Last year this fundraiser netted \$7,706.00! Look for our tickets; this year our swine tickets are WHITE. Tickets are available in bundles of 25/50/100 at leader and council meetings, the 4-H Office, or by calling Glenda Padgett at 925-3175.

This is a great Fundraiser for clubs as well as one of the major fundraisers for the 4-H Foundation. Last year 22 clubs participated. Once again clubs will earn .25 cents for each ticket they sell (if they sell 25 tickets or more). The club that sells the most tickets will win a pizza party! We would love to have independent 4-H members participate too.

Profits from these tickets will help to fund activities within the 4-H Program including: camp, congress, awards night, 4-H program materials, and Foundation Scholarships for graduating seniors. The winning ticket will be drawn on Saturday March 22, 6:00 PM, at the 4-H Foundation Elephant Ear Booth. The hog will be one exhibited at the Sarasota County Fair and will be standard cut and wrapped. *Submitted by: Glenda Padgett*



Just For Leaders...

Attention ALL ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS...

We have received some changes and up-dates from Florida 4-H. Please check your newsletter each month for current topics.

Recommended Guidelines for Managing 4-H Club Accounts

Each county 4-H extension agent is responsible for overseeing the handling of treasuries and fund-raising activities by 4-H units, 4-H members, 4-H leaders, and parents. Additional or customized reporting procedures may be established by a County Extension Advisory Committee as approved by the county director. Any 4-H unit authorized to have a treasury or participate in fund-raising activities should be required to meet the following requirements for good accountability:

- A 4-H unit that plans to maintain more than \$25 in funds must establish its own savings and/or checking account. The 4-H extension agent can authorize establishment of an account. Accounts should be set up so that they require two signatures from unrelated people.
- All bank accounts must be established with a federal identification number and reported to the County Extension Office. No account held in the name of 4-H should use the name of a 4-H member or leader nor should a Social Security number of an individual be used in lieu of the appropriate tax identification number. Any accounts currently operating under a social security number must be converted to comply with aforementioned requirements. If 4-H clubs have sub-accounts under one County 4-H Program/Foundation account then individual 4-H units within the county are not required to apply for individual identification numbers. Under these conditions the County Extension Office must maintain account procedures according to Extension policies.
- Account names must include the club name and "4-H Club".
- Before beginning any type of 4-H fund-raising activities for the program year, the method of fund-raising and intended use of funds must be included in the annual budget proposal, then reviewed and approved by the County Extension Director or appointed designee. Note: Raising funds with no specific 4-H program or purpose in mind is not allowed.
- If a 4-H unit intends to conduct a fund-raising event to raise more than \$100, they must file an intent with the CED, or designee, indicating the type of activity and purpose for which the funds are being raised.
- Each time the 4-H unit conducts a regular business meeting, the written record of income and expenses should be updated.

At the end of the 4-H year, the funds remaining in a club account should not be excessive. Funds should not be accumulated for the sake of accumulating funds. As a general rule, a beginning balance which is not designated for any specific purpose, should not exceed 110% of a club's proposed budget for the next year. A significant aspect of the 4-H Club program is to teach the youth. Officers and members will learn how to prepare a budget, raise funds, and manage their money. Therefore, the retention of excess funds by a 4-H unit is strongly discouraged. A copy of FORM SS-4 Application for Employer Identification Number can be obtained from your local IRS Office or on the web at: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-fill/fss4.pdf>

Spread The 4-H Word...

4-H Colors: The 4-H colors are the green and white of the 4-H clover.

The white background of 4-H flags and banners symbolize purity. The green of the 4-H emblem represents nature's most common color and it represents youth, life, and growth.



4-H Motto: To make the best better

The intent of the motto is to inspire young people to continue to learn and grow, to make their best efforts better through participating in educational experiences.

4-H Slogan: Learn by doing

The basic educational philosophy of 4-H is expressed in the slogan. The learn by doing emphasis helps to ensure that projects are concrete learning experiences with a "real life" focus.

New Location: Leader and Council Meetings!

January 28th 7:30, Council members will meet in the Ken Clark Building and Leaders in the Mini Building.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!

Demonstrations...

Please encourage every 4-H member to do at least one project demonstration (individual or team) during the 4-H year.

What is a demonstration? A demonstration is DOING. It provides 4-Hers an opportunity to "SHOW HOW" as they "TELL HOW". Demonstrations allow 4-H members to share with others what they have learned.

County Demonstration Day is February 23, 2008



Spreading Fitness, Fun and Healthy Lifestyles to Others! By: Jared Padgett

On December 12th 2007 Sarasota County 4-H'ers went to the Salvation Army to carry out the County Council Community Service Project. This was our second time visiting them this year. While there we taught them about the importance of exercise and how to maintain a Healthy Lifestyle. The kids were able to identify activities that were a good form of exercise and those that were not. Everyone had the opportunity to try out a toy which promotes a fitness activity. We had hula hoops, jump ropes, bouncy balls, soccer balls, hacky sack balls, koosh balls and bean bags to toss! We all had a lot of fun trying out these activities. We also helped them make wood Christmas ornaments for the families to take back and decorate their rooms with. To get in the Christmas spirit we had the Clogging Clovers put on a Christmas show. Thank-you to the Clogging Clovers 4-H Club for an awesome performance! The families as well as all the 4-H members enjoyed the show. While there we had a news reporter taking pictures, writing notes and interviewing people. We are looking forward to reading about the fun evening in the Herald Tribune. It is great that the public can see what 4-H is really about. I would like to thank the many people who helped make this event possible: The Florida 4-H Foundation, which awarded our council \$400, with money from a Chevron Corporation Grant to carry out this project. The Bee Ridge Woman's Club for donating an additional \$400 so that we able to let every child pick out a fitness toy to keep as well as a Christmas Stocking and a new book. Albritton's Fruit Company for donating fresh citrus to the 31 kids who are currently living there. The Sarasota County 4-H Foundation for giving us the extra walk-a-thon t-shirts to give to the kids. And finally to the Jr. Cattlemen, Ridin' Rednecks, Blazers, Clogging Clovers, Southern Spurs, The Group, The Livestock Club, Open Gaits and Mini Hooves, Green Team, Sarasota Swine Myakka Allstock and Canine Connections members and families for donating their time to help make this evening at the Salvation Army successful. Keep a look out for the dates of the next trip we will be taking there in April. We are looking for members who have interesting and friendly pets that they could bring. We plan to bring animals for them to pet and games that they can play. If you have an animal that you would like to bring, a game idea or you would like to attend call Jared Padgett at 925-3175. Have a Fun and **HEALTHY** New Year!

Boost your bone health: It's never too early!

No matter how healthy you are, your body starts losing bone mass naturally after age 30 or earlier. The result can be the brittle, fragile bones and poor posture associated with osteoporosis. The good news is there are simple steps you can take to promote bone health throughout your life.

Eating 3 servings a day of dairy, in addition to regular physical activity, is important for the whole family to build stronger bones and reduce the risk of osteoporosis. In fact, a report from the American Academy of Pediatrics states that eating calcium-rich foods such as milk, cheese, and yogurt during childhood and adolescence will help build strong bones, which may reduce the risk of fractures and osteoporosis later in life.



What's Your Goal?

Kids who enjoy sports and exercise tend to stay active throughout their lives. Regular physical activity can help prevent heart disease, diabetes, and other medical problems down the road.

What are the immediate benefits of an active lifestyle: maintaining a healthy weight, and feeling more energetic. Participating in team and individual sports, can boost self-confidence, provide opportunities for social interaction, and offer a chance to have fun.

CAFFEINE

Most parents would not dream of giving their kids a big mug of coffee, but we routinely serve soft drinks, and energy drinks containing caffeine. Too much can cause: jitteriness and nervousness, upset stomach, headaches, difficulty concentrating and sleeping, increased heart rate and blood pressure—So rethink your drink!

You Need To Know...

During this time of year we all can be in a rush... but beware household products, chemicals, drugs, snake bites, spider bites and stings—all can be poisonous! Poisons can hurt or even kill you; if you eat them, breathe them, or get them in your eyes, or on your skin.

In the United States poison centers provide immediate treatment advice for poison emergencies. They also provide information about poisons and poison prevention, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Have a question? All questions about poisons are smart questions. Ask **FIRST** to prevent a poisoning! **1-800-222-1222**

Improve your vocabulary and fight hunger...

Visit: freerice.com and challenge your knowledge. Every grain of rice is essential in the fight against hunger. For each word you get right, 10 grains of rice is donated to the United Nations World Food Program. And a warning:



This game may make you smarter!



Animal Connection...

Rabbit needs a home... Bandit, a white purebred rabbit is looking for a new home. He is free and comes with a cage and carrier. Call Jim at 918-8741.

Friendly Rabbit This 1 year old, female brown rabbit is looking for a home. She is very sweet. If you would like more information about her contact: Linda at 921-6465

News From Out There...



Green Team by: Laura Knipper

The Green Team club members last got together on December 11th at Bee Ridge Park for our beautification project. We worked for at least four solid hours, picking up trash, planting, watering, and applying mulch. The park is now so much more beautiful than it was before we started! There are ferns along the fences and flowers planted at the entrance. It was a lot of work, but very much worth the effort.

Once we were done, we celebrated with our Christmas party and gift exchange. We all had a fun time, and everyone brought delicious snacks to share and awesome gifts!

Hope ya'll have a merry Christmas and a happy new year! And let's strive to keep that happy Christmas spirit with us all year 'round, and keep on making the best, better!

Happy New Year!

What's Happening with the Ridin' Rednecks By: Erin Gilliland

At our only December meeting, we celebrated the upcoming holiday season with a dinner, gift exchange and hayride at the home of the Koss family. Everyone brought a special dish or dessert to go with Mrs. Strickland's sloppy joe sandwiches. We thank Mr. Harkness for setting up the hayride, it was a lot of fun! Thanks to the Koss family for hosting us all and having a great bonfire to keep us warm.

At our **January 3 meeting**, we'll be getting our new club t-shirts. That meeting will be held at Twin Lakes in the large room just inside the double sliding doors, and to the left. Prizes will be awarded to recognize the top salespeople for our Redwheel fundraiser. If you have not signed up for a demonstration date, please see Jarrod Chapman to choose your date. The club sends out get well wishes to Mrs. Harkness for a speedy recovery from her recent illness.

November/December by Florida Crackers

What a busy time we have had. First of all we welcomed two new members in November - Kara Dooling and Kristen Shipps. We went on a "swine" buying trip to Mayo and had great success. We have gone around and weighed them and they are all growing very well.

Our club also entered a float in the Venice Christmas parade and with 109 entries in the parade our float won a prize for the most creative. Our theme was Country Holidays. We used a wooden wagon pulled by a tractor, 2 goats, 6 chickens, 2 rabbits, 3 dogs and lots of kids. It was a lot of fun.

We also went Christmas caroling at a local nursing home and everyone totally enjoyed it.

Our club demonstrations have been excellent. We have learned how to properly measure a pig, how to pick a winning pig, how to build a pig pen that lasts and the playing techniques of a volleyball player.

Our first meeting next year will be a New Years celebration with some business mixed in of course!

4-H Clogging Clovers News By: Shea Pollack

We have a new location at Colonial Oaks Park. We meet every other Thursday, from 6:30 to 8:00 until after Christmas when we will meet every Thursday to get prepared for special events, especially the Fair performance.

On 9-13-07 we elected our officers which include the following:

President: Rebecca Griffin

Vice Presidents: Haley Coles, Samantha Hamel

County Council: Rebecca Griffin

Secretary: Rebecca Griffin

Treasurer: Kelsey Buettner

Reporter: Shea Pollack

Historian: Lindsey Pollack

We are so excited to have accomplished so much in all these wonderful performances. We have just had our recent performances at the Heron House Nursing Home, the Salvation Army, and the Magnolia nursing home. We are going to be having a Christmas party for the clogging clovers club on Dec.19th. We will be exchanging gifts.



Horse 'N Around by: Maxim Lowe

Our November 27th meeting started with the usual pledges and reports, followed by "business" discussion. We raised approximately \$400 from our Red Wheel sales and discussed how we could use the money. We decided to help a nursing home for the holidays.

We also studied marine biology, identifying vertebrate and invertebrate specimens from the ocean. We had a key with pictures and names to help us, but at the State Marine Ecology contest, the contestants don't have a key, just their memory. It's a fun contest and I hope 4-H starts a Sarasota County contest. After that, we played our monthly newsletter game, with a twist.... This time *we* asked each other questions, instead of Nimie asking the teams questions. We finished the meeting, like usual, by eating a snack made by Elizabeth: angel cakes with a yummy frosting.

Our community Service Project: Nursing home

Nimie made some phone calls and found out that the J. H. Floyd Sunshine Manor nursing home was interested in working with us. So, on Wednesday, December 5th, we visited the nursing home for their Christmas tree lighting ceremony. There was an 18 ft. evergreen waiting to be lit up in wonderful flashing lights. This was in one of their small courtyards, and we listened to some great singers work their talent on some carols and we all lit candles during the songs. Afterwards we came inside for refreshments, and took a quick tour of the facilities with an employee. We plan to meet there again on December 22d to do a craft with the residents. We will make a donation of music CDs and materials for craft, which is what the Sunshine Manor needs.

Sarasota Swine; by Erica Flagg

Greetings everyone! In November are club went out to get pigs for the Sarasota County Fair. We had to go all the way out to Wimmuma, Florida. The pigs in our 4-H group are Jack, Diane, Porky, Rock star, Angel, and Snoopy. Porky was sick but now is better. All of the other pigs in our club have been doing well. Rock Star the pig is going to the State Fair in Tampa.

Our December meeting was on the 4th. We have 1 new horse in our club and her name is Ginger. She is doing very well. A member in our club taught her horse not to go to the gate whenever she was trying to go into the pasture. We are having a Christmas Party on December 21st . We all hope that you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sarasota County Ranchers; by Shelby Swartz

Hi everyone. What a busy month we have had. All our animals are registered in the fair!!! Thank you to all the fair board members and 4H agents who donated there time in registering all the 4H and FFA animals. We are so looking forward to Fair this coming year. At this club meeting the Sarasota County Ranchers had their Christmas party at the Elks club. It was a blast!! We had a lot of good food and fun exchanging gifts. Our club adopted Gocio Road and had our 2nd road clean up of the year on December 15th. We are getting ready for our club campout at the end of December. It is always a great way to kick back and relax while hanging out together. We would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holidays.

Talk to you next year.

Happy New Year from Green Thumbs!

By: Lisa Richards

Wow, What a Holiday Season the Green Thumbs had! We had a Christmas Party/meeting on December 8th with goodies that Mrs. Richards made. We also got to check out our plants that Mr. Richards is keeping in his back-yard.

Many thanks go out to the Sarasota Community for all of the help that was given to the Kubala Family. Stock Yard pulled together and supplied many gifts for the children, many 4-H Clubs donated gifts also. A special thank you to Jamie Holdsworth of the Mini Hooves 4-H Club for helping provide a Wal-Mart Gift Card for the Family.

At the club meeting on January 12th we will be planting plants for entry into the fair in March.

Have a Wonderful 2008!!!!

Open Gaits by: Calyn Beese

Greetings from Open Gaits!

We have had a very busy December. We participated in the County Council Salvation Army community service project by donating books and by helping out with promoting a healthy lifestyle by giving exercise demonstrations.

We also adopted a family for Christmas and provided gifts for them. Santa was on hand to help deliver them. They were very appreciative. We ended 2007 with our club Christmas party. Everyone had fun and enjoyed all the holiday games - one-handed team gift wrapping and cotton ball beard relay.

In the New Year, we'll be gearing up for the State and County Fairs!

Happy New Year from Open Gaits 4-H Club!



The Group by: Jeremy Mann

This year we have had three 4-H meetings. In these meetings a couple of experiments involving plant soil and growing orchids. In the soil experiment we tested what amount of fertilizer is best for plants. While in the orchid experiment we learned how to properly plant and grow these plants. We have also decorated planters with shells, beads, decorative pebbles, bells, and small bits of tile and numerous other objects. One of our members, Lewis Plush (our president) servers on the county council while James Smith (our vice-president), won the "Rookie of the Year" award! As you can see "The Group" has had a very busy year and we are no where near done! Our members are getting ready for the upcoming Sarasota County Fair and are working very hard on things that they will be entering in the Share the Fun event, the pygmy goat shows ,plant sale, and mini-building. As you can see, it will defiantly not be hard to find our members at the fair! We have learned a lot this year and we know we will learn a lot more. With about half a year left we have much to look forward to.

Venice Bits & Spurs by: Erin Timoney

Happy holidays 4-Her's!

Our 4-H group Venice Bits & Spurs over the month of December raised money for future shows, and helped out with community service.

On Saturday December 15th we all went to the Publix on Venice Ave to pass out reindeer candy canes with google eyes to raise money for our 4-H group. We made the reindeers at our last meeting. Everyone made posters with pictures of our horses, steers and animals to display. Everyone wore their 4-H shirts so it would be known what organization we were raising money for. We raised 404 dollars!!!! The elders and the children adored them all. We sent a thank you card to Publix, thanking them for letting us pass out candy canes at the store. We finished around 2:00PM and then went to Pizza Hut to celebrate our hard work.

The Saturday before that which was the 8th we all went to the Smith center in Mission Valley. We hung up stockings on the fence for the horses and we also repainted the barn from a green to a tan. We had spent a good part of the day painting the barn and it looks great! The people there appreciated our hard work and thanked us many times! I hope that they love the new paint job on the barn, and I hope they fill the horses new stockings with treats and gifts!

Merry Christmas everyone!!!! Happy New Year!!!!

Jr. Cattlemen's 4-H Club; by Jared Padgett

Our club met on December 5th 2007 at 6:45pm. We had everyone give updates on their animals and give their animal's average daily gain and feed conversion. Breana Barreett gave a demonstration on Cattle Diseases. Joe Padgett told us why steers make the best market animal project. On Saturday morning the 8th some of our members attended the heifer and goat check-in and checked in their animals they will be showing at the fair. That night our club attended the Cattlemen's Dinner at the Potter Building. We sold raffle tickets for gift baskets that members donated. That night we made \$1,694.00 towards our club trip to Marco Island! That is almost double what our club made the previous year. Thank you to all the members and their families who donated baskets and to the members who served at the dinner that evening. On January 12th our club will be doing home visits to see everyone's animals and to see how they are doing. Our next meeting will be on January 2nd 2008 at 6:45pm at Twin Lakes Park.

If you would like to join our growing club you can e-mail Jared Padgett at jpcountyboy@verizon.net or call at (941)-925-3175 for information. The Jr. Cattlemen's club wishes you a safe and Happy New Year. See you in 2008!

County Council Report; by Lewis Plush

Greetings from County Council! Our meeting began at 7:30 with Laura Knipper giving the pledges and the thought for the day. Mrs. Morris gave the treasurers report and our secretaries report was given by Laura Knipper. Club reports were given, after which Jared Padgett and Shawn Russell gave a speech on the 2nd Executive Board. The next order of business was the swine weigh in which totaled 183 swine, 20 dairy cows, and the same number of goats as we had last year. Kayla Hess spoke on LAW (Leadership Adventure Weekend). New business included the Hog Raffle tickets, various crafts and activities, and camp dates. On Jan. 18,2008 fair forms are due. Our next meeting will be Jan.17,2008.

Jared Padgett, County Council President

Hello County Council Representatives,

I would first like to thank those of you who helped out at the Salvation Army. It was a great success and everyone enjoyed it. We will be going back there in the Spring. As most of you know we will be having our next County Council Meeting on December 17th 2007. It will be at Twin Lakes Park at 7:30 pm. We will end our meeting around 8:00 and we will have our Christmas Party till 8:30. We will have games and music and I would like EVERYONE that is coming to bring a healthy snack to share with everyone else. I hope to see you all at the meeting and don't forget to bring your snack.



Welcome 2008; Happy New Year!

Yes, it's a New Year. Have you made any "New Year Resolutions"? Maybe you've decided to eat healthier, exercise more, or be the best person you can be - all very good. But, this year "go green" include making our WORLD a better place environmentally to your list of resolutions! A good place to start is at home. Recycling is something we all can do:

Red Bin

For recycling paper (things you have read)

- newspapers (remove plastic sleeve for garbage)
- magazines
- writing paper
- envelopes (including window envelopes)
- corrugated cardboard (flattened to 2 ft X 3 ft or less)
- brown paper bags
- telephone books
- paperback books
- junk mail
- glossy sale flyers
- shredded paper (in paper grocery bags)

Blue Bin

For recycling cans, glass, and plastics

- glass bottles and jars (all colors)
- aluminum cans/foil trays
- steel tin cans with lids
- aerosol cans (empty)
- drink boxes (remove the straws)
- milk and juice boxes
- plastic bottles; remove tops and place them in garbage

Do Not place these items in your recycling bins:

soda cartons, butter or margarine tubs, ceramic items, cereal boxes, egg cartons, flower pots, gift wrap and tissue paper, clothes hangers, hard covered books, mirrors prescription bottles, pool and other chemical containers, packing materials pizza boxes, plastic bags, plastic deli trays, plastic toys, Styrofoam, glass dishes, window glass, or yogurt cups.

Make Your Plans NOW!



January 2008

- 1 Happy New Year!
- 6 4-H Horse Show
- 9 Horse Advisory Meeting
- 10 Leather Craft Workshop
- 14 Foundation Meeting
- 18 Fair Forms Due
- 21 4-H Office Closed
- 25 Horse Speed Show
- 27 Horse Pleasure Show
- 28 Leader and Council Meetings



February 2008

- 7-18 Florida State Fair
- 11 Foundation Meeting
- 13 Valentine Workshop
- 13 Horse Advisory Meeting
- 15 Get your fair forms in!
- 18 Presidents Day—4-H Office Closed
- 23 **County Demonstrations & Public Speaking**
- 25 Leader and Council Meeting

February is
Heart Health Month



Happy Birthday... Alexia Balen, Megan Canevari, Cheyenne Chadwick, Nakita Chadwick, Sierra Chadwick, Jeremy Cowdill, Kerry Desmarais, Marty Dietz, Paul Dietz, Felicia Fonte, Ashlee Gainey, Shadd Graber, Cheyenne Greene, Brianna Hackett, Katie Harkness, Blane Horne, Randall Krieg, Deana Lewis, Sara Martin, Ashley Maus, Robert McPeeks, Miguel Nejedly-Hodes, Katie Popielinski, Alyssa Reber, Ellen Ross, Krista Schrock, Brittney Schultz, Joshua Spenard, Emalie Walker, Jessy Weber, Jennifer Webster, and Justin Williams!