



# This Just In! – From Alabama 4-H April 1, 2009



## USDA Adds 5<sup>th</sup> H



Based on research that indicates that five-leafed clovers are 20% luckier than traditional four-leaf clovers, the USDA has mandated that 4-H will now be known as **5-H**.

A task force has been appointed to determine what the H will represent. Early candidates include: Humor, Hipness, Hair, Horseplay, and Ha! – it's April Fools!

## Science Meets 4-H in Clarke County



## Why is NesQuik Quick?

During February, 4th-grade 4-H'ers in Walker County answered the question: Why is NesQuik Quick? After discussing properties of water and surfactants, youth experimented with several substances and formulated hypotheses.



After the "secret ingredient" was discovered, students challenged each other to find it in products at home and on grocery store shelves. A teen leader in one afterschool club surprised everyone when he found it listed on the package of the snack he had just consumed!

- Thanks to Becky Persons -



Members of the Solid Rock 4-H Club in Grove Hill are working their way through the first chapter of the Junior Master Gardening Level I Curriculum. Some of the activities that the group has completed are Oxygen Factory, Hamburger Plant, Plant Parts Rap, Leaf and Seed Sort and Coconut Float. The favorite activity so far has been the last activity called Plant People. The group has had a lot of fun with the activities and even enjoyed playing around with the "Wiggly Eyes" for their plant people. The Solid Rock Cloverbuds also joined in to have FUN too!!

- Thanks to Wendy Padgett -



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## Curry Livestock Team Relishes National Challenge



Members of Walker County's Livestock Judging Team took their skills to a whole new level this fall when they became the 2008 Alabama 4-H Livestock Skillathon Champions and went on to represent Alabama at the National Livestock Skillathon Event in Louisville.

Members of the team include Judson Grace, Jamie Campbell, Cody King and Jessie Brown. Their FFA Advisor is Chris McCullar and their 4-H team coach is Walker County Extension Coordinator Danny Cain.

- Thanks to Joann Wissinger -



## 4-H Day - April 18



## Musical Mobile County



Children in the *Crimson Clover Buds 4-H Club*, led by volunteer leader Joy Herring and volunteer leader Deborah Darrington, were the first in Mobile County to Use the Rattle, Tap, Thump kit. From the expression of the faces of these children, everyone had a great time.

- Thanks to Jane Hartselle -

## Cow Tipping Results Announced



Livestock Specialist Royce La Vista reports that Alabama's Earl Primrose, Jr. placed third in the National Livestock Festival's Cattle-Tipping Event. Congratulations to Earl! And kudos on the fancy uniform! Perfect for April Fool's Day.

## \$15.00 Challenge Shows Style in Pickens County



4-H'ers at Pickens Academy, Aliceville Elementary and Gordo Elementary has proven that they can become thrifty shoppers anywhere, anytime and anyplace. The youth added their own special touch to their outfits and made them unique. These young consumers took less than \$15.00 and created authentic and trendy outfits! The outfits came from garage sales, consignment stores and thrift stores.



The 4-H'ers took advantage of this opportunity shopped in new places along with learning how to save money. They also learned how to choose clothing that made them look good, to use good shopping skills, and to communicate clearly. They also had to prepare to model the outfit for judges and answer a few questions. Inspired positive thinking encouraged more \$15.00 challenges to continue!

- Thanks to Izette McNeally -

## Cat Grooming Appeals to Youth



Agent Assistant Mary Q. Smith reports that the new 4-H Cat Grooming Event has proven to be very popular with young people in Jones County: "The boys love it especially. It lets them bring out their artistic side." She notes that the competition is not as popular with the county's feline population. The event is held each April Fool's Day.

## Hats Off to Our CWF Delegation

Darius Woods, Barbour  
Katie Tinney, Blount  
Martima Penn, Bullock  
Michondria Land, Choctaw  
Candice Pardue, Choctaw  
Brooke Nelson, Clarke  
Hannah Richardson, Fayette  
Melissa Smith, Jefferson  
Wesley Balch, Lawrence  
Zilpha Balch, Lawrence  
Hannah Wilson, Marengo  
Haley Hall, Marengo  
Kaycee Terrell, Marion  
Andrew Hornbuckle, Marshall  
Anna Montgomery, Marshall  
Morgan DuBose, Pike  
Megan Davis, Pike  
Tiffany Smith, Shelby  
Ryan Moran, Tallapoosa  
Corey Robinson, Winston

Chaperones are Sherri Lynn, Blount County Volunteer; and Amy Burgess and David Perry, 4-H REAs.

## Camden 4-Hers Design Spacecraft

4-H club members in Camden were challenged to design and build a shock-absorbing spacecraft that will protect two "astronauts" when they land. The NASA Design Challenge's goal was to promote teamwork and allow students to use their reasoning abilities to design this spacecraft.



The students needed to design and build a spacecraft that can land without injuring astronauts or damaging the spacecraft. Using simple materials, students worked together to decide what kind of shock absorber would provide their spacecraft with a soft landing.

The completed spacecraft were dropped to see if the marshmallows astronauts bounced out of a paper cup. Some groups were able to drop their spacecraft up to four feet before their "astronauts" were bounced out.

After the NASA Challenge, the groups talked about why their designs worked and why other designs did not work. They also talked about how engineers' early ideas rarely work out perfectly and how testing helps them improve their designs. The students also learned from watching others test their spacecrafts.

Commenting on the program 4-H Agent Assistant Kay Dunnam said, "The students had a great time designing their spacecraft. The groups became very competitive to see who could drop from the greatest height without their "astronauts" bouncing out. I think it was a great "hands on" learning experience for them."

- Thanks to Pam Stenz -

## ALABAMA OMK/ 4-H FORT CLOVER

June 22-26, 2009

Operation: Military Kids Alabama (OMK) in concert with Alabama 4-H is hosting a FUN and EDUCATIONAL residential camp for children of military families at the beautiful Alabama 4-H Center. The registration fee for the camp will be underwritten by Operation: Military Kids Alabama and includes lodging, camp meals, camp activities and related expenses. Transportation to and from the Alabama 4-H Center is the responsibility of the camper's Parent/Guardian.

This program is open to boys and girls 8-18 who have a parent/guardian in the military – Active Duty, Guard or Reserve. 106 camper slots are available and will be assigned on the following basis:

1. Priority will be given to campers who currently have a parent/guardian who is deployed or will be by the time of camp,
2. Campers whose parent/guardian is scheduled to be deployed this year or who have recently returned;
3. Any remaining slots will be filled by assignment on a first come, first served basis to children of military families.

The camp will have three program tracks. These include the Traditional Summer Camp (8-11 yrs old); Adventure Program (13-18 yrs old) and the Science & Technology Program (11-18 yrs old). Space is limited in each track, so be sure and register early.

**A non-refundable \$20.00 camp reservation fee** for each camper is required and must be submitted with the registration forms. This check needs to be made payable to the Alabama 4-H Foundation. If reservation fee poses a hardship, please contact OMK Coordinator Charlene Hines at (334) 844-2294.

## Supporting Our Military Kids 4-H Extension Corner – March 2009 Cooperative Farming News



Those of us who work with Alabama's children realize that it can be really hard being a kid these days. Sure, childhood and adolescence have always been challenging: your body is changing, you are trying out new roles, your emotions are on a roller coaster, and you are trying to define your own identity and values. You want to be loved and accepted, but you also want to be independent and self-sufficient. Unfortunately, modern culture, with its lightning pace and community disconnection, has ratcheted up the anxiety level. Add in a truly grim economy, and the notion of "carefree" youth can seem like a naïve dream.



Many kids' families have been disrupted by a wide-array of factors over which they have no control. Within our own families there may be bread-winners who have lost jobs because of factory or business closures. And in every community, there are good kids whose parents have gotten into trouble with the law or with substance abuse. Alabama 4-H has been very much aware that all of these kids and

families need our support, yet one group of disrupted families requires special attention. They are the kids whose moms or dads or guardian family members are in our nation's military service.

Can you imagine what it would be like if your mom or dad, or any great anchor in life, had been faced with multiple deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan? There are thousands of kids like that in Alabama, and although the wave of community caring following September 11 seems to have diminished, 4-H remains deeply committed to our military families and military kids.



Alabama 4-H has our own Military Outreach Coordinator, Charlene Hines. Charlene ([hinescm@auburn.edu](mailto:hinescm@auburn.edu)) is housed at Auburn University and works with our National Guard, Reserves, and active-duty military families through a program called "Operation: Military Kids." She is also Alabama 4-H's liaison to the thriving military 4-H programs at Fort Rucker, Redstone Arsenal, Anniston Army Depot, Maxwell Air Force Base and Gunter Annex.

Following the start of the U.S.'s military campaigns in the Middle East, 4-H joined with the Department of Defense to develop a wonderful outreach to children whose parents were being called to duty. In Alabama, we coordinated a state-wide forum so that Alabama's governmental, social and educational institutions could hear, straight from

the kids, what their lives were like. Their stories were poignant: a teen girl who had been assigned major responsibilities for the family poultry operation; children who were being moved from family member to family member; disrupted homes and missing childhood.

Operation Military Kids provides a wide array of support to the children of Guard, Reserves, and to active-duty military. For example, Hero Packs are provided to children when a family member is being deployed. A Hero Pack is a back-pack given to the child at deployment in recognition of the sacrifice that the child is making. It includes a journal, a disposable camera, and a photo album, so that the child can record all the great events that Mom or Dad or the other caring family member may be missing while on duty.



Another 4-H program, “Speak Out for Military Kids,” gives military youth a voice in educating their communities about the special stresses that military children encounter. You may have seen some of the newspaper stories that 4-H military kids have included in your local newspaper. Perhaps some kids whose parents were deployed talked to your Lions or Rotary Club or to your school's PTA. This program provides a great opportunity to link military and non-military children together, with young people educating their peers and their communities on the nature of their lives.

Alabama 4-H is deeply involved in an interactive training program called “Ready-Set-Go.” Ready-Set-Go is offered to the public to educate them on the deployment cycle and its

impact on children. This important information is available to civic groups, faith-based groups, educators – anyone who deals with children whose parents may be in service.

Alabama 4-H also provides our popular “Fort Clover” and a dozen more camps that either include military kids or are designed just for military kids. These all focus on one thing that too many military kids miss out on: just having the fun of being a kid. We are especially pleased to be developing a new camping experience for military kids with special needs and another camp for young people who are working through the loss of a family member.



But no story of Alabama 4-H military programs would be complete without a tip of the hat to those wonderful volunteers and staff who work with families on our military installations. Some of the young people who pass through Alabama’s military bases may end up attending a dozen different schools, with a whole new set of school mates and teachers, and a whole new place to try to fit in. For them, 4-H programs will provide great continuity. If you were involved in a 4-H fitness program in Germany, you can pick it right back up in Dale County. You can use the same 4-H photography skills if your family moves from Vandenberg to Redstone.

Yes, it can be challenging being a young person. With caring, committed adults – like 4-H staff and volunteers – the challenges become opportunities, and the 4-H values of Belonging, Independence, Generosity, and Mastery can form the foundation for a great life to come.