Remember last year when I wrote that I was determined to get my Master’s Degree? I finally did it! I received my Master of Arts in Liberal Studies with a concentration in Youth and Family Development. I hope that you will set goals and accomplish them too.

Now that the Christmas season is behind us, you are probably like me…broke! So, if you want to participate in some 4-H events this year that have a fee, I suggest you start participating in 4-H activities where you can earn scholarship money. We are working on getting the 4-H Events & Activities Handbook published so that you can see how much everything costs and figure up how much scholarship money you need to earn to do those things.

New Year, New You is the theme for our staff newsletter this quarter. One of the great things about the new year is that you feel like you have a fresh start. If you want to get more involved in 4-H or try something new, now’s your chance! Get started on a new 4-H project, do a 4-H presentation, teach a Summer Fun class, go on a retreat! I think what makes 4-H so appealing to so many people is that you can learn about anything you want. If you like cooking, you can learn more about cooking. Same with hunting, horses, science, and even music.

I’m going to try a few new things myself this year. One of those includes putting little icons in the newsletter to help you figure out if you want to participate in that particular activity or event. These icons (see below) will signify if you can earn scholarship money, if the event costs money, or if it’s something you can include in your project book. Happy 2012 and you can always ask me about 4-H activities. That’s my job!

**Project Record Books**

Project record books are due **Tuesday, January 17 by 5 pm**. This is the day after Martin Luther King, Jr. Day so be sure to get them finished that day so you can turn them in on Tuesday!

Project Record Books are a way of setting goals and achieving those goals, as well as recording your accomplishments. If you’ve never done a project record book before and are interested, please let Beth know and she will work with you to complete one.

If you are new to 4-H or would like Beth to work with your club on completing projects during the 2012 year, she will be happy to come to a club meeting and do a program on projects or work with you one-on-one. Just give her a call!

It would be awesome if every club could turn in project books for their work in 2012, so get started now and you can turn them in next year. You’ve got plenty of time to get to work!

**Key**

- You can earn scholarship money from this activity

- This event/activity has a fee

- Something you can put in your project record book

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Upcoming Events & Activities

County Council Meeting
*Tuesday, January 10 at 6:30 pm*

Our first County Council Meeting of the year will be **Tuesday, January 10 at 6:30 pm**. County Council Meetings are open to all 4-Hers, family members and friends. These meetings are held quarterly and we have an educational program and discuss upcoming events as well as share reports on previous events and activities. Meetings are run by County Council officers, who are elected each fall. Clubs take turns providing refreshments and leading the pledges. We need clubs to sign up for refreshments and pledges for January, April, September and November, so if your club wants to do this, let Beth know. Also, if you have any ideas or suggestions for the program, let Beth know. The programs we did in 2011 included 4-H Project Books, 4-H Presentations, a Garden Tour, and Disaster Preparedness. We hope to see you at each of these meetings!

The 2012 County Council Officers were elected at the November meeting and they are as follows:

**President:** Meaghan Gerringer
**Vice President:** Alex Reagon
**Secretary:** Courtney Eckmann
**Reporter:** Sarah Kenney

These officers will be installed at Celebration Night in February. Congrats!

Winterfest
*Saturday, January 21 @ Palace Pointe in Roxboro*

If you are 11-18 years old and want to spend a day hanging out with your 4-H friends, then you need to sign up for Winterfest! This is a day for North Central District 4-Hers to get together for workshops, play games, and hang out with friends. We will be at Palace Pointe in Roxboro this year, which has a bowling alley, a roller skating rink and arcade. The date of the event is **Saturday, January 21** and it’s an all day event. If you want to go, please let us know by **January 5th**. The cost is $20 and you will need to provide your own transportation. Directions will be sent out ahead of time.

Celebration Night
*Thursday, February 23 at 6 pm*

You are cordially invited to Celebration Night where we will be celebrating all your 4-H achievements from 2011. The celebration will be held on **Thursday, February 23rd at St. Mark’s Church in the Atrium**, and we will have an ice cream buffet as always! During this event, we will recognize 4-Hers for all their hard work and accomplishments throughout 2011.

An E-vite (electronic invitation) will be sent out in January announcing the details. Be sure to respond to the invitation so that we will have enough ice cream for everyone.

If you have any suggestions for a theme or for decorations, please let Beth know. A questionnaire will be sent out over email asking about ideas for Celebration Night, so be sure to respond. Themes from the past have included “Wizard of Oz,” “A Night at the Oscars,” “4-H Through the Decades,” “Happy Birthday 4-H” and project record categories. See you there! Make sure you dress up because this is the biggest night of the year for Alamance County 4-H!

Teen Retreat
*April 13-14 @ Betsy Jeff Penn in Reidsville*

Teen Retreat is a fun weekend for teen 4-Hers in the North Central District. You will get to do things like meet new people, participate in workshops, dance, do a service activity, and just have a good time! This year Teen Retreat will be at Betsy Jeff Penn 4-H Camp, in Reidsville. If you are looking for leadership, citizenship, or community service opportunities, this is a great way to improve those skills, and have fun at the same time! Be sure to let Beth know if you want to go. Details about registration will be sent out soon. If you want to attend on Friday and/or Saturday, let Beth know and she can carpool with you.

Alamance County 4-H Lending Library

Alamance County 4-H has a variety of books, VHS tapes, and DVDs available for borrowing including horse videos, science books, and pet care. Stop by our office to see what we have available. Items can be checked out for 3 weeks. Please see Laurie Newlin to check out books.
National 4-H Hippology Competition Champions

Recently, members of the Southern Alamance Horse Club were featured in the December 8 issue of The Alamance News for their win at the Eastern National 4-H Competition. Here are a few excerpts from the article in The Alamance News written by Ashley McKennon.

“A few members of our 4-H club competed nationally in Hippology in November and were the champions of the Eastern National 4-H Roundup in Louisville, Kentucky,’ Polly Riddell explains.

“In order to make it to the Eastern National competition, the girls had to compete at the state level in March. The girls competed as a team in several areas and were selected to represent the four-person team for the state of North Carolina that would continue to compete nationally on the subject of hippology. Hippology is the study of the horse, and the 4-H youth were tested in a wide range of topics on the subject of horses, including 13 categories, ranging on the subjects of anatomy, horse diseases, and showmanship, during the competitions.

“Mattie Thompson, daughter of Randy and Christy Thompson of Snow Camp, was a member of the Alamance County 4-H club program that competed on the local, state, and national level. Allie Riddell, daughter of Dennis and Polly Riddell of Snow Camp, was also a member of the local 4-H Club program that was selected to compete nationally in the Hippology category. She was selected to be part of the North Carolina team that competed in multiples states, including Ohio and Mississippi, before winning the national competition in Kentucky.

“The team went through a rigorous tryout to make it to the national competition. There was a tryout in Mississippi for a Southern Regional competition. There were also tests and tryouts at North Carolina State University, in which the students went to college all summer long to learn more about their subjects. Finally, the girls were part of the Quarter Horse Congress Competition in Ohio. The four-week long show allowed the teams to be tested and quizzed on their knowledge.

“After winning at the state level and being selected to represent the entire state of North Carolina in a national competition, the girls competed in Kentucky and brought home the national championship title to Alamance County.

“Former Alamance County 4-H club member and national champion Lindsay Riddell coached the team during the national competition. Lindsay, 23, daughter of Dennis and Polly Riddell, of Snow Camp, is also a 4-H National Champion. After competing for most of her youth, Lindsay decided to coach the 4-H Hippology team when she aged out of the program at age 18.”

Upcoming Horse Events

- **January 14**—North Central District Mock Horse Bowl & Hippology @ Rockingham County Cooperative Extension Office. Registration due by January 12.
- **January 20**—Deadline for District 4-H Horse Bowl entries (postmark date)
- **February 11**—North Central District Horse Bowl & Hippology Contest @ Guilford County Cooperative Extension Office
- **March 3**—State 4-H Horse Bowl & Hippology Contest @ NC A&T University
- **March 30-April 1**—Holiday Classic Open Horse Show in Raleigh (fundraiser for NC District 4-H Horse Council)
- **April 14**—NC 4-H Horse Judging Contest @ Williamston
- **May 1**—Deadline for State 4-H Horse Artistic Expression Contests (postmark date)
- **May 19-20**—North Central District Horse Show in Raleigh
My First 4-H Camp! by Malik King

I went to Millstone 4-H Camp in Ellerbe, N.C. When I got there we were late. I didn’t know anyone when I got in my cabin line. By the time we got back to the cabin I knew everyone. My bag was the biggest one in the cabin. I shared a cabin with 6 other boys. Cabin life was stinky, literally. Kids left their clothes in the shower area and we were supposed to clean every morning. We didn’t get to because we were always late waking up. I won’t mention names but it was because of a certain assistant cabin counselor. He was the only one with a watch.

Some of the things I liked about camp were swimming, free time, rest time, food, archery and nature class but not so much the yellow jackets. I really like camp store. Some things I disliked about camp were mosquitoes, the heat and sand in my bed.

We had a talent show one night and a dance our last night. I liked the talent show better. The funniest thing about the talent show was the pickpocket skit.

4-H camp was exciting, fun and I made new friends.

Nutrition Fair
Saturday, March 24 @ ARMC Grand Oaks Center

This event is perfect for those of you who love to cook, and it’s an opportunity to earn some 4-H Scholarship money! Last year we made a few changes and this year we will be tweaking those. So if you have any comments or suggestions, please share them.

The Nutrition Fair will be held Saturday morning, March 24 at Alamance Regional Hospital, in the Grand Oaks building. Set up will be from 9-10 am, and judging will begin at 10 am. Parents, family and friends will wait in a holding room during judging. As soon as the judges are done, then you are welcome to go into the judging rooms and taste everyone’s food! Once everyone has had time to taste every thing, we will have a short awards ceremony and then you can clean up and enjoy the rest of your Saturday!

Details for entries will be sent out soon. Recipes and entry forms will be due March 9. More details will follow, along with the entry form. So start looking for recipes now!

Club & 4-Her Reports

River Mill Academy Environmental 4-H Club by Addison Caviness

Students of River Mill Academy 4-H Club started off their first official meeting of the year on September 16, 2011 with an outstanding synchronization of the 4-H Pledge and the Pledge of Allegiance.

We then moved on to listening to our newly elected President, Meaghan Gerringer, give a speech on National 4-H Week and how we can participate. She also discussed upcoming events for the year on the county level. We then moved to a program on Chromotography. We used this scientific process to tie dye t-shirts. The tie dyed t-shirts were truly AMAZING. Good job everybody! While this activity was going on with one group, another group was in the field area behind our school collecting insects. We caught many different insects but mostly grasshoppers and crickets. Another group of 4-Hers were in the RMA garden “dead-heading” the zinnia flowers to save the seeds for next year. Fifty 4-Hers had a great time and learned a lot about nature and science on this club meeting day. We will look forward to our next 4-H meeting!

4-H Camp @ Besty Jeff Penn
July 8-13, 2012

Even though it’s still cold outside, it’s never too early to start thinking about summer plans. If you enjoy canoeing, swimming, archery, horseback riding, nature and making new friends then 4-H Camp is just the thing for you! This year, we will be going to Betsy Jeff Penn 4-H Camp in Reidsville, NC the week of July 8-13. Camp is for youth ages 8-12 years old. To reserve your spot, let us know by February 1 and a $50 deposit is due when you sign up, which holds your spot. The cost of camp this year will be $150.
Auditioning for Kids Jeopardy!

by Caroline Newlin

In early October, I took the Kids Jeopardy test on-line while I was at my Grandmother’s house in Gastonia. In a week or so I got an email asking me to come to Atlanta, GA for an audition. So on November 18, my family and I went to Atlanta, GA.

Since we were there a day early, we went to Decatur, GA to see my mom’s old neighborhood, house, and school. We even ate lunch at Evans Restaurant where mom used to eat with her family when she was a kid. Then we went to downtown Atlanta. Janie, my sister, and I couldn’t believe how tall the buildings were—the tallest we had ever seen! We walked around and saw lots of them. We spent the night at the Ellis Hotel in downtown. The elevator even had a speaker to announce the floors we came to. We ate supper at the Hard Rock Café.

On Saturday, November 19, after our breakfast, we went to the Georgia Aquarium, the largest in the world. It made all the others that I had ever been to seem small. I particularly liked the piranhas. We also saw catfish and other fish while we were in a large tunnel. We ate lunch at the Aquarium—pizza!

After lunch, we went to the Kids Jeopardy audition at the Westin Hotel in downtown Atlanta. When we got there, we had to fill out forms and they took my picture for their files. After we were separated from our parents, I took a written quiz that was very hard. Then we played a sample game of Jeopardy. Next we took a personality test. The producers asked us what we would do if we won some Jeopardy money and also what we liked to do. It was fun. They told us that only 300 kids from the U. S. and Canada were selected for auditions. Even if we didn’t make it for the final 15, it was an awesome honor to get to audition for Kids Jeopardy. We have to wait until early February to find out which 15 kids get to be on the show in March. That will be a long wait!

After the audition, my family and I started back home. I hope I get selected to compete in the Kids Jeopardy tournament in March. Then, I would get to go to Los Angeles!

My Entomology Project by Madison Grajzar

Not all bugs are creepy and crawlly little monsters that destroy everything. Insects are actually a big part of our world. Millions of bugs are right here in the USA, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean Islands. Not many of my friends like bugs, and I am surprised at the ones that actually do. I collected insects all summer long and learned it is never too early to start looking.

I was very surprised at the NC State fair when I saw that I had gotten second place. I was so excited and then I began to cry tears of happiness. I was proud of myself. I looked at the other collections and they had some really weird looking insects found close to Alamance County. I hope I can find some more like those next summer.

National 4-H Dairy Conference Delegate

Congratulations to Cole Amoriello, a member of the Clover Garden Grizzlies 4-H Club! Cole was selected to be a delegate from NC at the 2011 National 4-H Dairy Conference, held in October at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Along with educational workshops the delegates participated in dairy industry tours and a visit to World Dairy Expo.
**Whitney Wonders by Casandra Berens**

At our December 4-H meeting, we had our Christmas party. We had a lot of fun helping others and playing with our friends. One of the most important things we did was make cards for Meals on Wheels. We were also asked to bring cookies to donate to the 4-H Cards & Cookies Day. We had a delicious dinner. That amazing meal was put on by all the 4-H families in our club. We had some corn, lemon cookies, chocolate pie, pumpkin roll, and much more. We also had a gift exchange with our club. After everybody got a present, all the toys that were left over went to Christmas Cheer. We also brought in large canned food for the Allied Churches Shelter. We had a great meeting and we hope to have another one soon.

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**Fire’Em Up—Operation Christmas Child**

Hi, y’all! I am Margaret Scarlett. This past November, my three children and I, along with our friends in the Fire ’Em Up 4-H Club, went to Operation Christmas Child Headquarters in Charlotte to help with preparing shoeboxes for shipping. The day we went, OCC was shipping shoeboxes to “Special Access Countries.” The locations were secret, and the shoeboxes had very strict restrictions as to what types of items could be included. All of us were excited to be a part of something that would bring so much joy into the life of a child. Below are some recollections from my children about their OCC experience.

**by Isaac Scarlett**

Hello, everybody. On November 23, 8 adults and 9 kids from our 4-H group went to Operation Christmas Child. We prepared shoeboxes, filled with presents, for shipment to children overseas. My job was to help pack the shoeboxes into the shipping cartons and then carry the cartons from our work place to the conveyor belts. This was our third annual trip to Operation Christmas Child and I hope to make many more in the future.

**by Michaela Scarlett**

Hello, my name is Michaela Scarlett. I will be telling you about what I did at Operation Christmas Child. I was the inspector which means I looked for any “not allowed” items like medications, army men, scary figures, gummies, meltable candies and broken or used items. This was a very important job, as that day the shoeboxes were being sent to special access countries. This meant that objects such as flags, anything with pigs, and a few other things had to be removed. It was fun and the part I liked best was seeing some of the ways people had shown they cared for the kids who would be receiving these boxes. I would highly suggest working at Operation Christmas Child.

**by Ethan Scarlett**

On November 23, I went with my 4-H group to Charlotte to Operation Christmas Child Headquarters. First, we watched a video about certain jobs that were available. Second, we volunteered for a specific job: inspector, boxes, scanner (which I volunteered for!), and heavy lifter. As a scanner, I didn't get to do much, so I helped with boxing. Our team leader said that usually the most common boxes were for 5-9 year old girls, but my team packed only about 100 boxes for that age group, compared with the 500+ boxes for 10-14 year old girls. It was fun and I hope to go back next year.

**Dogwood 4-H Club—Operation Christmas Child**

by Elizabeth Kenney

On November 12th, the Dogwood 4-H club got the opportunity to fill boxes for Operation Christmas Child at Mebane Presbyterian Church. The members got to choose if they wanted a boy or a girl and which age category they wanted. After that, they got to choose what they wanted to fill their boxes with. The club was fortunate to have items donated by the parents to fill lots of boxes. This year we filled more boxes than we did last year! They got to choose from socks, toys, candy, headbands, pencils, and a lot of more. After the work is done, the boxes go to one of the seven processing sites in the United States. There the boxes will be put into bigger boxes and then shipped to their destination overseas. The Operation Christmas Child is a great organization that helps spread happiness and joy during Christmas time to kids overseas. All of the members of the Dogwood club love to get together for this awesome tradition.
Cards & Cookies Update

On **Saturday, December 11**, twenty eight 4-Hers and family members from around the county gathered to make Christmas cards and cookies for Allied Churches Homeless Shelter and Meals on Wheels. These cards and cookies were given to individuals who come to the homeless shelter and to the recipients of Meals on Wheels. Hopefully they will spread some holiday cheer!

It's important to give back to our community, especially at this time of year. Many of us are fortunate enough to get just what we want for Christmas and it's important for us to show how much we care about our community, our county, our state and our world.

Fundraiser Update

Fall Plant Sale

This year, we did much better on the Fall Plant Sale than in 2009, which was the last time we did the Fall Sale. We made almost $500 more than the last time! Our total profit was $1300, which will be used for scholarship money and 4-H programming. The money used for 4-H programming is what provides you with scholarship money for participating in county events such as the talent show, project books, presentations and more.

We sold a total of 223 plants that included apple trees, peach trees, muscadine grapes, blackberry plants, pecan trees and fig trees. This is 85 more plants than our last sale!

Wreath Sale

This year, we sold 28 Fraser Fir wreaths and 34 Cedar wreaths. We also sold 14 orders of garland. We made a profit of $559, with $230 going directly to 4-Hers scholarship funds. The rest will go into the general scholarship fund.

Spring Blueberry Plant Sale

This February and March, we will be selling blueberry plants. Plants will be $6 each, which is a great price! More details will come, so keep your eyes on our website! The funds raised from this sale will go toward our scholarship fund as well as programming efforts.

Leader’s Corner

Volunteer Leader’s Conference
February 3-5 @ Sheraton Imperial, RTP

The Volunteer Leader's Conference is a great way for club leaders to learn new activities, get fresh ideas for your club, meet leaders from across the state, and just have a good time! You can participate in workshops and seminars that are especially designed for 4-H Volunteers to create positive learning experiences for young people. Annually, more than 350 conference participants gain skills and knowledge to help make the best better!

Pre-conference sessions will be offered on **Friday, February 3**. These two-hour sessions provide opportunities for more intense topic investigation for focused learning. Regular conference registration opens Friday afternoon with the evening featuring a carnival, an entertainment showcase and a service project. Saturday features more than 40 workshop choices in 60-minute settings. Everything from preparing healthy snacks to managing behavior, from leather crafting to electric project work—there's sure to be something for you!

The conference wraps up Sunday morning with brunch and a great speaker. It's always a great training event!

You are responsible for registering yourself for the conference, as well as reserving a hotel room. If you are interested in attending, please let Beth know and she will get you the information you need to register. You can register for Pre-conference ($30), Saturday only ($85), the whole weekend ($130), or the whole weekend with the pre-conference option ($160). Alamance County 4-H will pay for $50 of your registration, so be sure to let us know you’re attending so we will know to pay for you. Registration deadline is **January 20**.

Spring Leader Meeting
Monday, March 19 @ 6:30pm

4-H Club Leaders, wouldn't you like a night out with free dinner provided? Then mark your calendars for **Monday, March 19 at 6:30 pm**! This is one of our two leader meetings for the year, so it would be great if we could have at least one leader from each club present. If there is anything you would like Beth to cover, just let her know so she can meet your needs as a club leader. Possible topics could include 4-H curriculum, awards & incentives, club management, ages & stages, program ideas, club finances, etc.

Dinner will be provided and if you need child care, please let Beth know so she can arrange that. If you as a leader cannot attend, please see if a parent in your club would be willing to sit in for you.
Spotlight on Extension

4-H is just a part of Cooperative Extension. There are many other events and activities that go on in Extension. Listed below are a few that you might be interested in. Keep an eye on our website for more upcoming programs!

- **Cooperative Extension Office Closings:**
  - January 2, 2012—New Year’s Holiday
  - January 16, 2012—MLK Holiday

- **Paint & Pesticide Collection Day**
  - Saturday, April 21, 8 am-1 pm.

- **Horticulture and Gardening Classes:**
  - Tuesday, February 14—Muscadine Pruning Demo with Andy Zeman of Benjamin Vineyards, 10 am
  - Saturday, February 18—Weekend Warriors - Tree and Shrub pruning, 9 am
  - Saturday, March 3—Weekend Warriors - Fruit Tree Pruning, 9 am
  - Saturday, March 24—Weekend Warriors - Vegetable Gardening, 9 am
  - Saturday, April 14—Weekend Warriors - Summer Green Lawns, 9 am

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**Calendar of Upcoming 4-H Events**

The 2012 Alamance County 4-H Calendar will be posted on our website, but here are a few upcoming events to put on your calendar.

- **April 3:** County Council Meeting @ 6:30 pm
- **April 6:** 4-H Shines Entries **DUE!**
- **April 13-14:** Teen Retreat @ Betsy Jeff Penn
- **April 19:** 4-H Shines @ Twin Lakes Gathering Room, 6:30 pm
- **May 5:** County Presentation Day @ Alamance Community College, 9 am-12 pm
- **May 7-11:** Summer Fun Registration for 4-H Families
- **May 11:** Application/Resume/Essay **DUE!**
- **June 11-13:** Citizenship Focus in Raleigh
- **June 19:** North Central District Activity Day (Presentations) in Granville County
- **June 24:** NC 4-H Congress Registration **DUE!**
- **July 8-13:** Jr. 4-H Camp @ Betsy Jeff Penn
- **July 16-19:** NC 4-H Congress @ NCSU

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