

4-H UPDATE 3-20-2020 for Club and Project Leaders

I hope that all of you are staying well and following the recommended health guidelines. The guidelines, including social distancing, are intended to protect you, your families and friends, and our communities. And importantly, they are intended to prevent our health care system, especially our hospitals, from being overwhelmed by a large influx of cases in a short time period. We all need to do our part.

As you may have heard or will be hearing, access to all county buildings is limited. While our main doors are unlocked during our regular office hours (8:30-4:30, M-F), our office doors will usually be closed. We are asking all visitors to make appointments before coming – please call 715-748-3327 x3. We are trying to minimize any face-to-face meetings. If you need items such as record book pages, please let me know. I can mail them to you, or we can arrange for you to pick them up.

RESOURCES:

Rather than sending too many emails with resources and information, I am going to be posting information on [our 4-H homepage](#). Scroll down to Current Announcements. If you hear about resources that might interest other members or clubs, please email the information to me. I will, however, still send email updates when needed or useful.

The state 4-H website is working on a page that will include many resources such as activities and learning opportunities. I will post, and probably send an email, when that site is available.

MEETINGS:

As you were previously informed, all Extension-related face-to face meetings and events have been cancelled or postponed. This includes all 4-H meetings of any kind.

You may want to consider holding club meetings via a video meeting. There are many free options available. Here is a list sent to us through Extension:

Video Meetings Option:

1. Zoom Basic - Free - Meetings for a limited number of participants for up to 40 minutes. <https://zoom.us/> and <https://zoom.us/pricing>
2. Google Meet - Free - Restrictions vary based on whether you are using Google Suite or regular Gmail as a host account <https://cloud.google.com/blog/products/g-suite/helping-businesses-and-schools-stay-connected-in-response-to-coronavirus>.
3. Cisco WebEx - Free during the Pandemic - <https://help.webex.com/en-us/n80v1rcb/Cisco-Webex-Available-Free-in-These-Countries-COVID-19-Response>.
4. Microsoft Teams - Microsoft has tools within their MS Teams platform, both for paid and free users available as part of their response to the pandemic - <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/blog/2020/03/05/our-commitment-to-customers-during-covid-19/>.

In addition, many people are familiar with Skype, especially for one-on-one calls. It also has a group video chat feature. <https://www.skype.com/en/features/group-video-chat/>

Most of these have fairly good information about how to set up video conferencing and many work even on slower internet connections.

ACTIVITY SUGGESTION:

One idea that was shared at a recent 4-H video meeting was pen pals. That is something that could be done among members of one club, or if there is interest, among members of several clubs. It would be completely voluntary, and addresses would only be shared with permission. Not only is this a way for members to stay in touch, it is also a good way to improve writing and reading skills and to learn more about other members.

Lastly, as of now, I expect to be in the office most of the time during our regular hours, but as mentioned above, please call before coming to the office. It is possible that this could change. As of Tuesday of this week, all state Extension employees are working from home.

Cathy Mauer
715-748-3327 x 3
Cathleen.mauer@wisc.edu