

June  
2006

# In your community



## EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW IN LIFE, I LEARNED FROM THE 4-H HORSE PROGRAM

For more than 100 years 4-H has been building character, leadership and life skills in youth. 4-H Horsemanship is one of more than 150 projects available and is the most popular project in Jackson County with over 150 youth enrolled. There are close to 50 4-H volunteer leaders in Jackson County that help with the horse project. Although youth learn how to feed, fit, and show their animals, the more important purpose of the equine program

is to provide the opportunity for personal growth and development of the young person.

“The difference between 4-H and many other horse-related opportunities that young people have is that 4-H is centered on youth development first, with “winning” a very distant second goal” according to 4-H Youth Development Specialist, Meg Sage Mach. The Horse Levels Program enables youth to strive for accomplishment through completion of each of three levels. For each level there are written tests, oral tests and riding demonstrations. Each level focuses on safety, health, management and riding.

Shows give members the opportunity to demonstrate what they know, to learn new skills and develop friendships to last their entire lives. There are three 4-H sponsored shows in Jackson County. The State Fair Horse Show is the culminating horse show of the year. In 2005, Jackson County had over 70 youth participate in the show with over 35 of them placing in the top ten of their respective classes.



For more information, please contact  
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## CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH HORSE CONTESTS

**HORSE BOWL:** The Horse Bowl provides the opportunity for youth to show off their horse knowledge in a game show like atmosphere. In 2006, Jackson County hosted the regional Horse Bowl competition. Nine youth from Jackson County advanced from the regionals to the State Horse Bowl.

**HIPPOLOGY:** The Hippology event is another opportunity for you to show the skills they have learned in the 4-H horse project. There are four components to the competition: a test; a group problem stat addresses a current industry issue; 10 different stations ranging from saddle parts to feeds; and two different judging classes. Twelve youth from Jackson County participated in the 2006 State Hippology Contest.

**HORSE JUDGING:** Horse Judging provides youth a great opportunity to execute decision-making skills and test their knowledge of horses. Structure, breeding, purpose and many other items are taken into account when youth have to place a class of four animals from best to worst. Horse Judging also gives youth the opportunity to defend their decision with oral reasons.

## 4-H HORSE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

*"The horse project has taught me patience and to follow directions. I have made new friends and it is something positive I can do. I hope to have horses for the rest of my life."*

Kaci Maxwell, 2 years showing horses in 4-H

*"The horse project has given my kids a sense of accomplishment. I like that my kids have learned how to get up in front of a judge, they have learned from their mistakes, and it is a continual learning process."*

Maggie Thomas, 4-H parent and leader

*"The 4-H horse project helped me figure out my real goals in life. I learned that it is not about the ribbon, it's about how you feel you did."*

MyLissa Langford, 10 years of showing horses in 4-H

*"4-H taught me responsibility and I made new friends. The reason I am still involved is because I enjoy helping the kids."*

Jason Barnes, 4-H alumni and leader



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