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SAVE THESE DATES

Community Council Meetings. 4th Thursday of the month, starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

Needlers Mondays, at 10:30 a.m. Call 365-5288 for more information.

Fire Volunteers. 1st, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m.

Fire Commissioner Meeting. 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m.

Visit the community website (www.highprairie.us) for additional scheduled events and meetings.

2014 HIGH PRAIRIE FIREHOUSE SALE

Friday, May 16 9-6
Saturday, May 17 9-5
Sunday, May 18 9-3

New Location:
High Prairie Community Center
701 Struck Road

* Rummage Sale * Silent Auction *
* Quilt Raffle * Plant Sale *
* Food Booth * Music *
* Activities for Kids *

REINVENTING THE FIREHOUSE SALE MAY 16-18, 2014

Gwen Berry

Spring just wouldn't be Spring around here without the High Prairie Firehouse Sale, and this year there's an extra buzz of anticipation. The Firehouse Sale is changing locations again! For the past several years Sharon and Arlen Aleckson have hosted the sale at their hay barn, while Sharon was in charge of the whole shebang. (A HUGE THANK-YOU to Sharon and Arlen!) Now Sharon has handed off the reins to Rocky Schultz, and the sale will be held at the High Prairie Community Center.

Of course this has meant reinventing the sale again, since the space and facilities are totally different. It's taken the creative efforts of Rocky and several others to figure out how it's all going to work. Most of the sale's familiar features will be there, if rearranged somewhat; and there's plenty of room for fresh ideas, too. There will no doubt be kinks to work out, but the committee is enthusiastic about the transition.

New this year—the sale will open on Friday and run for three days instead of the usual two. It won't be reopened for the 13-Mile Sale in June, as was done in past years. "We were burning out our volunteers, and it was way more work trying to get everything up and going again," Rocky explains, "so we're trying it this way. We're starting with 'Earlybird Friday.' It will be basically sales and food. We'll bring out more stuff for the main event on Saturday, and that's when we'll have the live music, games and face painting for kids, and all the extras. Sunday we're calling 'Super Sale Sunday,' and everything will be half-price."

A container for donations has been installed behind the old firehouse at 704 Centerville Highway. It will be open along with the Dumpster Days dumpsters on the weekend of April 19 and 20. You can drop off trash at the dumpsters and donations at the container in one trip. The donations container will be open every weekend from then on until the sale, and at any other time by appointment (call Rocky at 365-5099). You can also call to have larger items picked up.

This will be a fun year to get involved with the Firehouse Sale. With so much new, volunteers will have an opportunity to help shape the sale in its new location. And as always, it's a great way to get to know your fellow High Prairians. It's been the start of many a friendship among people who might not otherwise have met.

For those who are new, the Firehouse Sale is High Prairie's one big community fundraising event of the year. It is sponsored by the High Prairie Community Council and provides money to operate the Community Center and fund other HPCC programs and expenses; plus roughly half of the proceeds each year go to High Prairie Fire District #14 to support its operations. In 2013 HPCC was able to transfer \$7,000 to the Fire District from money raised by the Firehouse Sale.

AROUND THE PRAIRIE

Welcome to our newest High Prairian, Thomas J. Amery, who is now two months old. Congratulations to proud parents, James and Angie.

We also remember the many who have had health issues (surgeries, primarily): Jerry Free, Joe Bird, Doug Taylor and Earl Kemp. Surely there are more, but we have no (NSA) way of intercepting emails/phone calls, so if we've missed someone be forgiving to us!

Finally, we want to thank all the heroes with snowplows and snowblowers who helped clear roads, driveways, etc., during recent bouts of heavy snow.



THE HIGH PRAIRIAN

"All the news that's print to fit"

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3. Download and print your own (full color!) copy (PDF) from the High Prairie website.

HIGH PRAIRIE CHRISTMAS DINNER

Sharon Aleckson

The annual Christmas Dinner in High Prairie was held on Saturday, December 7. Our High Prairie youth served over a hundred guests a delicious dinner and dessert. The meal itself was prepared by Rocky Schultz and Arlen Aleckson. Dan Hartford provided the dessert. Besides the wonderful dinner and dessert, many enjoyed the decorations of the season, visiting with neighbors, singing a few songs, participating in an auction, and greeting Santa.

Many thanks to the cooks that prepared this community meal while dealing with frozen water pipes in the kitchen. Many thanks to those people that donated special desserts for the Dessert Auction. The proceeds from this auction helped to offset the cost of the dinner. Many thanks to those that decorated our community center. Thanks to those that helped solve the problem with the frozen pipes in the kitchen AND many thanks to those who came after the pipes were thawed to wash the dishes and clean the kitchen.

As of now, the water pipes have been well insulated and the dishwasher has been repaired. We are ready for the next event.

DOUG'S 80TH BIRTHDAY

Audrey Bentz

Nearly 80 people attended the big 80th birthday celebration for Doug Taylor at the Community Center in January. The High Prairie potluck table has never looked so lavish and scrumptious, with enough food that could have probably served 180 people! In addition to lots of conversation, a continuous power point showed pictures from Doug's many years on High Prairie, plus a verbal ac-

count of interesting stories from his birth to the present. Many of us learned some High Prairie history from those memory highlights. Everyone also sang appropriate words to the song "Long Long Ago" which described the highlights of Doug's 80 years. Happy Birthday, Doug, and many happy returns!



Above: Audrey leads the guests in a rousing 'Happy Birthday To Doug'.

Photo: Jake Jakabosky

Left: The birthday boy.

Photo: Barbara Parrish

COMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Audrey Bentz

THE OWLS!

A group for women on High Prairie has begun, especially with newer women here in mind, and also for us older ones who want a chance to get better acquainted with neighbors and HP friends. Our agenda is to devote the two hours to a discussion of a simple question—such as “What is your favorite way to spend time with your spouse or family?” or “What is it in life that you are most fearful of?” etc. Anyone can bring a question for discussion...our purpose is simply get to know each other, not just superficially, but on a bit deeper level. And, surprisingly, we have found that we also tune in to our own depth as well!

For now, we meet at Morning Song Acres (6 Oda Knight Road) on the 2nd and 4th Monday nights of the month from 7 to 9 p.m. on the lower level. If anyone wants to do some hand work at the same time, no problem! There will be tea and munchies there (contributions are nice). When the group gets larger, or the weather gets warmer, we may move to the Community Center.

Why OWLS? The acronym is still under construction but something like this: “Owls seem to be proliferating on High Prairie, so we think that calling our “night time” group OWLS would be appropriate, with O standing for outstanding but ordinary; W for women; and L for Laughing/Loving/Lavish”...

For more information, call Fern (509-637-5465) or Audrey (365-3600), and if you would like to come but want to share rides, we can hopefully work that out.

Come join the OWLS – It’s a hoot!

HISTORY BECOMES ALIVE AND LOCAL!

Perhaps you’ve seen the historical marker on Centerville Highway near Warwick (about 7 miles east of High Prairie) or wondered about the ruts visible on the slope of the Columbia Hills south of that point. These are the remaining marks of the military/stagecoach road built in 1856. This first north-south wagon road through Klickitat County was used for stage coach trips to carry people, supplies and mail to Goldendale, Yakima and Ellensburg, and its construction is credited with opening up the Valley of the Little Klickitat to exploration and settlement.

High Prairians will soon have a rare privilege in having a live presentation about the historic military/stagecoach road. Dennis Birney of the Klickitat County Historical Society will bring the road and its history to life for us with a talk and power point pictures here at our own Community Center!

So that “weekenders” as well as our local residents can take in this special event, we hope all will be free to attend on Friday evening at 7 pm on March 28. Pass the word to others so we can make this an informational celebration of our rich local area history.

SPRING FLING ON HIGH PRAIRIE!

Did you know that we have a professional DJ in our area? Chris Sattlem is offering his gifts of music presentation so we can all get together and celebrate the end of winter and beginning of Spring on High Prairie with MUSIC!

On Friday, March 21 Chris will be playing lots of 50’s, 60’s and 70’s

music which is great for listening, singing and DANCING! There will be a broad spectrum of rock, rhythm & blues, jazz, and country music, so no matter what is your music of choice, you will be tapping your toes! Music will go from 7 to 7:45 p.m., with a break for conversation, and then resume from 8 to 9 p.m.

We could use some volunteers for decorating (call Audrey at 365-3600). We suggest that people might also want to bring “finger food” snacks to share. To cover expenses, we will suggest a \$5 contribution for singles, \$8 for couples and \$10 for families. Although Chris is donating his time and equipment, he suggests that the income go to the Community Center but that we take 10% off the top to go to the Lyle Food Bank.

So put on your dancing shoes, remind your neighbors and friends from all over to join us and shake off the winter doldrums as we begin SPRING on HIGH PRAIRIE!

DUMPSTER DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN

Have you been accumulating “stuff” that needs to be tossed when you do your annual Spring Cleanup? High Prairians are fortunate enough to be provided “Dumpster Days” where residents can bring that “stuff” free of charge (although a donation would be appreciated to offset the cost). The dumpsters will be available on April 19 and 20 at the old fire hall at 704 Centerville Highway. Jim and Penny Rutledge will be in charge of the event, but they ask for volunteers to help attend to the dumpsters for a few hours on one of those days. You can contact them at 365-2700 or email jimandpenny@gmail.com.

There are some restrictions, so if you have questions about anything you’re thinking of bringing, please call. Things that cannot go in the dumpster: no concrete, no dirt, no hazardous material such as insulation, no batteries, no propane bottles, no paint, no household chemicals. The container can only have 5 tires total in the load.

There will also be a container available for donations of gently used rummage sale items for the Firehouse Sale. Drop off donations at the container and trash at the dumpster in one trip!



A winter scene: Snowy Arch.

Photo: Kelly Blanchard

BLUEBIRD NEST BOX BASICS

Jake Jakabosky

Despite the recent cold weather, the bluebirds are back! I first noticed them on February 27, and have seen them almost daily since, and they have already started checking out our bluebird nest boxes. Now is the time to clean your boxes of old nesting materials for the health and safety of these striking beauties. (See the [July 2013 High Prairian](#) for more details.)

If you plan to buy or build boxes to attract these voracious insect eaters the boxes should have a 1-1/2 inch diameter opening 6 inches above the floor to protect the eggs and young from predators. Best inside dimensions are 5 x 5 inches with a total depth of 8 inches. There should be a few 1/4 inch weep holes in the bottom and an air gap at the roof for ventilation.

For ease of cleaning, place pivot nails as a hinge near the top of the front or one of the sides and secure it with a hook or duplex nail inserted in a slightly oversize hole lower down. No perch is necessary, but a coat of light colored exterior latex paint, especially on the roof, can greatly extend the life of the box. If woodpeckers try to enlarge the hole, the addition of aluminum flashing or a 1" board surrounding the opening will discourage them.

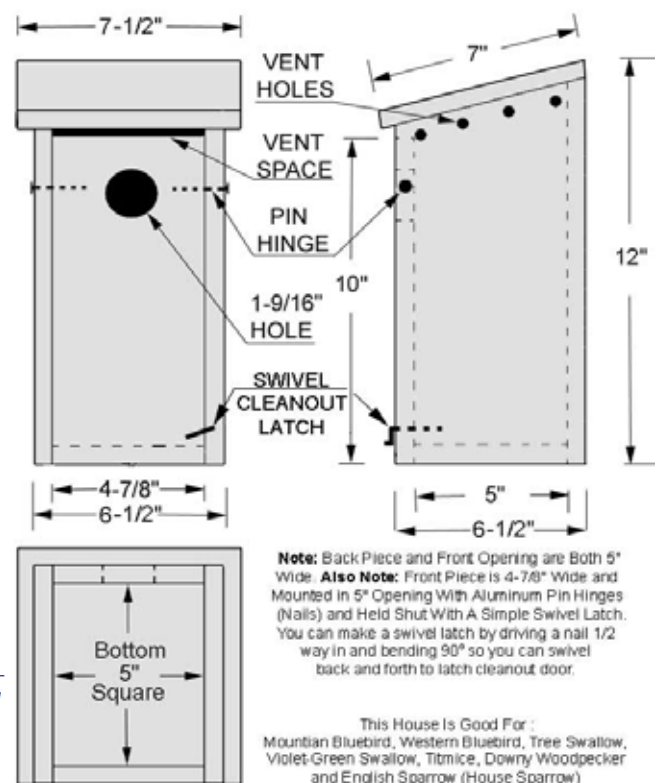
The best location for a bluebird nest box is facing a southerly direction toward an open sunny area and mounted on a post or other support 4 to 8 feet off the ground. Boxes mounted at 4 to 6 feet are easier to clean and maintain. Boxes can be placed in pairs about 25 feet apart, with the next pair 300 feet away. The pairs can be closer if a large obstruction like a building is between them. Expect the 4 to 6 blue eggs to hatch in about 14 days and the young to fledge in about 3 more weeks. Clean out the box at this point and Mom may soon start a second clutch.

Properly designed and maintained nest boxes can measurably enhance the bluebird population near your home, reduce your insect problems (think sage bugs and garden pests), and bring delight to your life.



Left: Photo: Wikimedia

Right:
Photo: Dave Kinneer
Plans: http://www.racinphoto.com/Birdhouse/Western_Bluebird_One.html





First off, a big THANK YOU to the High Prairie and Lyle Fire Departments!

Elsewhere in this issue is a story about the house fire Gwen and I recently experienced. What actions would you and your family take if you awakened at 4:00 a.m. to alarms and a house rapidly filling with smoke? It can happen even to the most fire-prevention-conscious folks, or be caused by something no one can predict. We did pretty well in handling our emergency, but from a firefighter's point of view, there were a few things we should have done differently.

1. As is typical in emergencies, our thinking processes didn't operate normally, so we made some mistakes. We're fortunate there were no tragic results. You can lessen the chance of making mistakes by planning ahead, going over the steps to take in case of a fire, and reviewing or practicing the plan periodically. For information about fire safety preparedness, check out the Internet. One good example: <http://www.ready.gov/home-fires>

2. The experts all say that if you have smoke in the house you should get out of the house immediately (don't go back in) and call 911. I guess it was a natural impulse to try and figure out what was going on, and we were probably only in the house for a few minutes; but fire moves fast, and the heat, smoke, and toxic gases can be deadly. Once we saw the smoke, ideally we should have turned around and gone out the other door.

3. Due the nature of our event, we got away with investigating problems in the house. But I made several mistakes after tracking down odd noises. Water was spraying out the top of the water heater, so I turned off the cold water there, but I forgot the propane shutoff valve near the floor. WRONG! Propane could have been leaking at the water heater, resulting in further fire or even an explosion. It should have been turned off.

4. Two-foot flames were shooting out of the copper line at the propane tank. I crossed downed power lines to shut off the propane. REALLY WRONG! This is an example of your brain not

working normally in an emergency – I knew better! Downed power lines can be hot or can re-energize at any time. Never go near them! I could be dead. It seemed important at the moment, but the gas flame was not impinging on the tank. There was no reason to risk electrocution.

5. I turned off the main breaker at the electrical panel outside, which was good; but then I propped open the crawl space hatch to reach a water shut-off, and a volume of smoke poured forth. WRONG! Opening the crawl space hatch allowed oxygen to fan the fire. The water could have waited.

6. Inside, we opened all the doors and windows to clear the smoke. Also WRONG, for the same reason! Opening up a house during a fire may lessen smoke damage, but it can give the fire a boost by providing it with lots of oxygen. In fact, experts suggest closing doors as you leave to help slow down the fire.

7. We couldn't have done anything about our driveway being blocked by the sagging power line, but it is a reminder to make sure your home is accessible by plowing snow and removing low tree limbs and other obstructions. Room for fire-fighting vehicles to turn around at the house is also important, as is space for more than one engine and tender.

Would you and your family be ready if a fire struck your home? It's essential to develop an escape plan and practice it, especially with children. The Internet is a gold mine of tips for doing that, as well as for fireproofing your home and property, making sure the fire department can act effectively when it arrives, and developing a grab-and-go kit that will get you through more than a few days out of your home. I just scratched the surface with these links:

Home Fire Safety Checklist: <http://www.seattle.gov/fire/pubed/brochures/fire%20safety%20checklist.pdf>

Emergency Preparedness booklet (start on p. 33): <http://lafid.org/eqbook.pdf>

Fire preparedness info and form: <http://www.quakekare.com/emergency-preparedness/fire-preparedness.html>

WILDFIRE SEASON IS COMING IS YOUR HOME PREPARED?



A STORY WE COULDN'T MAKE UP

Gwen Berry

JANUARY 29, 2014. Just before 4:00 a.m. Fast asleep on a dark, cold winter morning.

A sudden loud rumbling shattered the quiet, jolting us awake. Within seconds, a smoke alarm screamed into life at the other end of the house, and we were launched into action! Throwing on robes, we grabbed our flashlights and pelted down the hallway. A second smoke alarm began its wail, and then a third.

The thin beams of our flashlights lanced through thickening smoke. Outside the back door, a downed power line lay in looping coils beside the house, and a two-foot flame shot sideways from the base of our propane tank. Two more alarms joined the chorus – there was smoke in the bedroom now. Beneath the dissonant shrieking we heard the unmistakable gurgling of running water. A fountain of water was gushing from the top of the water heater.

Somehow in the chaos we managed to turn off the main breaker, turn off the water, turn off the propane, and call 911 (we can't remember now in what order). We heard Fire Dispatch on Jake's pager, calling the High Prairie and Lyle Fire Districts to muster for our fire. Surreal! How many times had we heard such pages, and it was Jake responding to help someone else.

Back in the bedroom, the smoke was getting thicker. We threw on clothes in record time and got the heck out of there. We didn't see flames inside the house, but when Jake went around and opened the hatch to the crawl space, smoke came pouring out.

While Jake kept a watchful eye on the status of the fire, I moved a few things out of the house as quickly as I could—the computer, my purse, medications and other things from the emergency list we kept on the refrigerator.

At least nine firefighters responded from High Prairie and Lyle. We could see the approaching glow of flashing lights against the dark as the engines hurried our way; but the trucks were thwarted halfway up our long, steep driveway by ice-encrusted power lines sagging to within 6 feet of the roadway. The firefighters carried their heavy gear the rest of the way up the hill.

They immediately focused on the still-active fire under the house. Chief Hutchison ducked into the crawlspace and knocked most of the fire down with our fire extinguisher. Other firefighters soon extinguished the last of the flames and started purging smoke from the home with a fan. Lyle's crew used their infrared heat-detecting camera to confirm there was no remaining fire. And just like that, the crisis was over.

The firefighters carried their equipment back down the hill, and one-by-one the trucks drove off. Their departure left an unnatural quiet. It was just beginning to get light. We sat in the car with the heater running, slightly dazed, wondering what had just hit us. Our house was cold and smoky. We had no water or electricity. At 6:00 we called the insurance company and began Phase II of this astounding experience.

Afterwards, we were able to piece together what had happened, an amazingly Rube Goldberg-ian progression of events. For almost two weeks, freezing fog had been condensing into long frost fingers that circled the power lines. The evening before the fire, rain had soaked in and frozen on the frost, increasing its weight dramatically. Just before 4 a.m., something snapped. We think a cross-arm broke on a pole above our house, which caused the cross-arm on the next pole to fall. The pole at the top of the hill snapped. The line broke and came slithering down the frozen slope to wrap itself around our propane tank and coil up beside

the house. 7200 volts of electricity burned a hole in the copper propane line and set the gas on fire. It surged through the copper line, fried the water heater and burned holes in the water pipe connections. It zapped the plumbing system, opening leaks, burning hoses and damaging the dishwasher. At some point it sparked a fire under the house. The plastic-sheeting vapor bar-



Above: The culprit—ice buildup on power lines 2 days prior to incident.



Left: Hole in the copper propane line caused by broken power line.

Photos: Jake Jakabosky

rier burned, and later we found charred boards on the underside of the house. It may have affected the electrical system—that's still being investigated. The inside of the house got smoked.

We're still waiting for life to return to normal after 5-1/2 weeks in limbo. We are half-way back in our home but a lot of work needs to be done by the contractors before we are really settled in again. The insurance company has been great, but very slow in making decisions as to what they are going to repair. It's pretty stressful. (Of course it doesn't help that two days before the fire we had torn everything out of our kitchen to remodel or that a big snow storm set everything back a week.)

Going through this has been a huge interruption in our lives and a real nuisance—but we know how lucky we are. It could easily have been a calamity instead of a nuisance. We're grateful that it wasn't, and we're grateful to be part of this very supportive community. It was wonderful that the firefighters who showed up to fight the fire were friends and

neighbors. Many other friends called to check on us, or offered us dinner or places to stay, and the HPCC has provided some financial support to help us defray extra expenses. WE THANK YOU ALL!



Propane tank snowman. At least Gwen and Jake still have their sense of humor.

TREASURES OF MUSIC

by Pat and John Parr

We have been fans and avid collectors of old-time American music for over 40 years. This is music that has its roots in traditional music brought by settlers to our country, and over the years developed a truly American form and sound. Bluegrass, Blues, and Country music are all part of the tradition of old-time American music.

It is often said that music is storytelling at its finest hour; but more importantly, it is a vehicle to lift your spirits when you are down. Look into the lives of the musical artists! Who can possibly forget the pioneers of early Americana music, the Carter Family of Virginia? Their influence on younger musicians was extremely profound. You can still hear its influence in today's music!

This proud heritage of early music belongs to you. It came from the working class and belongs to the working class!

This will be the first in a series of shared musical profiles. Please feel free to voice your interest at 365-0018. For those of you that have access to Internet high speed streaming, this music is at your fingertips (YouTube Music). Having quality computer speakers is a real advantage as well! If for some reason you have no computer, this music is available on compact discs and/or mp3s.

Enjoy the ride!

1. DOC WATSON – The passing of Doc Watson, a blind guitar player from Deep Gap, North Carolina, was a loss for many. Here is a YouTube video of his last performance. Song: "I'll Fly Away" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvyXBPaC89c>)

2. NORMAN BLAKE – A traditional guitarist from Sulphur Springs, North Georgia. YouTube video: "Jimmy Brown the Newsboy" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Krey-0-TA&list=PL8364B-44C0664265C>) and a song: "The D-18 Song" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jqi7No_9wxc)

3. THE ARMSTRONG TWINS – Let's go back to the 1940's. Lloyd and Floyd Armstrong, from Dewitt, Arkansas. Terrific harmonizing songs: "Baby Girl" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXqzbjbHdFw>) and "Mandolin Boogie" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rcX7qKsV-jRk>)

4. THE BLUE SKY BOYS – Earl and Bill Bolick, from East Hickory, North Carolina. Songs: "The Sunny Side of Life" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IfUFwAR9ma8>) and "Kentucky" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QuqLdkiY2Dg>)

5. LONNIE DONEGAN – Popular in England and a proponent of "Skiffle" music. A classic Lead Belly song: "Midnight Special" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-cRVvVvSvE8>) and "Grand Coulee Dam" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENA8_BjvOZY) (From Wikipedia, for those who aren't familiar: "Skiffle" is a type of popular music with jazz, blues, folk, and roots influences, usually using homemade or improvised instruments; Lead Belly was an American folk and blues musician active in the 1930s and 1940s.)

6. BILL MONROE – from Rosine, Kentucky (Father of Bluegrass Music). His classic song: "Blue Moon of Kentucky" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAVFpThoeB4>) and "The Doghouse Blues" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYPbMZL52QI>)



WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN 4-H

Riley Perry

I had reservations at first, being new to the area and not knowing any kids, but my love for animals compelled me to join 4-H. I soon discovered that 4-H is really fun and you have the opportunity to learn lots of lifelong skills. I have been in 4-H for only one year and have learned responsibility, organization, communication skills, leadership skills and how to work as a team. I also had a great time!

When you join 4-H you can choose from a wide range of projects. You can raise an animal, bake, sew, grow produce, create art, or you can do them all! I chose to raise two lambs and I also entered my block print. When you raise an animal you are required to show it.

I learned responsibility from having to feed my lambs in the morning and the evening, and walk them. I also had to keep up with record book entrees by recording everything I did with, and for my lambs.

I learned organization from having to keep the supplies I needed for my lambs together and clean, especially for fair.

Communication skills became part of my learning because I had to give a presentation and because I had to communicate my ideas to another lady in the club to come up with a plan of action for decorating the stalls.

I learned leadership skills from having to answer kids' questions about lambs and 4-H at the fair, and when making decisions for myself and my lambs.

I also learned to work as a team by painting boards with other kids, and after they dried, putting them up and decorating them for fair.

I think every kid should join 4-H because although the projects can be difficult, fair makes it all worth while - from the fun you have, the lessons learned, and the friends you make. I plan on having many more projects and great times next year.

See you at fair!

Note: These stories were written after the fair in 2012. Riley now has had 2-1/2 fun-filled 4-H years. You can join 4-H at any time of year—and the earlier the better, if you want to be ready for the County Fair in August.



Riley Perry and the exhibit that won the Director's Choice award

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