

# Inside 4-H

Sarah Beale

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## The Month of February 2022

Hello all, we have made it into a new year! 2022 is sure to be another fun adventure for us all. We have already rolled passed a month and there is no sign of slowing down in sight. From all of us here in Southern Maryland, we hope you had a wonderful Christmas and a lovely start to the new year. Let's just hope it doesn't end up like 2020, too. Get it, twenty twenty - too.

In St. Mary's county, the 4-H clubs are off to a great start. The clubs have held their first meetings of the new year and the youth club officers are learning their way around their new leadership positions. An officer's training workshop was held over zoom on January 27th. Officers from around the county joined to learn about their roles and perform a mock meeting. This event was a great way to build connections between youth from all of the clubs. The 2022 club officers will be inducted during the 4-H banquet in March.

The annual banquet is scheduled to take place in person on March 19th. In the past couple years, the banquet was required to be held virtually, so we are glad to get back into the normal groove of celebrating with friends and family face to face, even if we might still need the mask.

The Maryland State 4-H gala was held on January 28th to honor accomplishments from the 2021. Youth are also recognized for their hard work and achievements. From St. Mary's County we are celebrating Thomas Gale, Trent Vallandingham, and Sara VanRyswick for all of their hard work with the program.

New state events and programs are available for enrolled youth. The 4-H Pollinator Ambassador club had an informational meeting in January and will be meeting every month on the 4th Mondays. Participants must be 14-18 and the meetings are held at the Neighborhoods Creative Art Center in LaPlata, Maryland. This program will teach youth about the importance of pollinators and they will have the opportunity to plant a pollinator garden.

On February 12th, a dairy fun day was held virtually on zoom. This event included a dairy skillathon, quizbowl, and dairy educational experience. A dog fun day is also scheduled for February 20th, on zoom. They will be holding a dog skillathon, dog bowl, and other fun activities relating to the dog project. The skillathons test 4-Hers knowledge about a certain topic. These events are a fun way for 4-H members to learn more about their projects and also function as a way to get new members involved.

A Career 'AGsperience' Program was held at the Howard County Fairgrounds and the Talbot county Agricultural center. These meetings, held between January 12th and February 26th,

allow 4-Hers to explore career planning and agricultural opportunities within their community. The program involves resume development, internship acquisition, interviewing skills, and business etiquette in the field of agriculture. These events are open to members from 13-18. The skills learned from this program will be beneficial for all career types, not exclusively agriculture.

Lastly, the St. Mary's County 4-H program is planning our annual overnight and day camps. Volunteers are needed for both events. The overnight camp, scheduled for August, is a fun and exciting way for youth to connect and learn. The day camp is another fun way for all 4-Hers to gain experience with their environment and make new friends in their community.

That's all for this month! Thank you for reading and staying in tuned with this great 4-H program. We hope you have a good start to your new year. Until next time, stay healthy, and happy 2022!

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## The Month of April 2022

And we're back with another edition of Inside 4-H! I hope the last two months have passed by smoothly, even if the weather hasn't. It really can't seem to make up its mind. But there is much to look forward to; as the saying goes, "April showers bring May flowers", so hopefully the forecast and the fields will be looking brighter in the days ahead. Easter is such a beautiful opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, especially if there is an Easter egg hunt planned, or maybe even a nice picnic. However you prefer to appreciate the outdoors, hopefully this Easter is a delightful one for all.

Around St. Mary's County, the 4-Hers have also been enjoying the weather. In March, the annual celebration banquet was held to honor the members and volunteers of the program in their successes from 2021. The clubs gathered together at the Ridge Volunteer Fire House to share dinner and dessert. The awesome emcees, including our program assistant, Ms. Barbara Dobbins, and a few club 4-Hers, Pheobe-Tate Anderson, Emily Gale, Trent Vallandingham, and Lydia Eccleston, led the event and awarded members with ribbons for their record books and trophies for outstanding accomplishments. A ceremony was directed by the 4-H volunteers to remind the attendees of the essence and importance of 4-H.

The annual county speaking contest in Southern Maryland was held on April 8th. Participants could choose from the categories prepared speech, extemporaneous, radio spot, and interpretation for their dialogue. The prepared speech is a pre-written and practiced essay which 4-Hers read to a collective audience. The extemporaneous speech is written by participants after they arrive at the contest about a selected topic, typically encompassing 4-H ideals, and then it is delivered to the audience. The radio spot is essentially a pre-made, 30 second, advertisement for the 4-H program which is judged on creativity and time management. Lastly, the interpretation is a memorized piece of literature by another author which is then performed by the contestant. The speaking contests never fail to impress the audience, and the winners of each category will be sent to the Maryland competition. Good luck to those competing in the state contest and thank you to all who participated in the county competition!

The Discovery Commons Assisted Living Center in Wildewood is having an Easter celebration for their residents on

April 16th and the local 4-Hers will be visiting with their animals! Those who volunteer have the opportunity to bring the animals they keep for 4-H projects as a way to provide company for the residents and spread the great news of 4-H to the community.

Next, the Horse Communications Contest will take place on April 20th. The competition will be virtually judged through the videos submitted online by contestants. The categories for the competition include Individual Public Speech, Individual Presentation, and Team Presentation. The awards will be offered in three age divisions of juniors, intermediates, and seniors, with the opportunity for senior winners to represent Maryland 4-H at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup in Louisville, Kentucky. The 2022 Maryland 4-H State Horse Communications Contest will also be held during this time with similar rules to those above.

An Engineering camp is scheduled for April 22nd to the 24th in Harford county. This event will help youth from the ages of 12 to 18 prepare for future 4-H contests. The activities which have previously been explored include large tractor operation, welding, aerospace, computers, environmental engineering, GPS/GIS mapping, and underwater robotics.

The 4-H Dairy Bowl Contest is a great way for those who are or want to be involved in the dairy project to learn more about the animal and test their prior knowledge. The contest will be held on April 23rd with prizes awarded at the end of the competition. The event is to be held at the Carroll County Ag Center Complex- Burns Hall in Westminster, Maryland. Teams will compete in order to win points through speed and accuracy in answering questions.

If any of the activities above sound interesting to you, then I recommend you contact your local 4-H educator and coordinator! We have plenty of great events coming up which may appeal to a variety of project areas and interests. The 4-H program is always looking for new members, and we would love to have you! Until next time, enjoy the holiday and let's hope to see those May flowers around the corner!

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## The Month of June 2022

Hello again to local and loyal readers! What a beautiful year this is turning out to be, although it is absurd how quickly the time is passing. It seems January was only yesterday, and it can be hard to distinguish the months with the ever-fluctuating weather. St. Mary's County is enjoying the warming weather, although the occasional storms can get a bit rough. Nevertheless, our agricultural community understands the value that rain has so we won't complain too much. The 4-H groups certainly appreciate the help of the rain. Our 4-H youth can hardly wait for the end of school and the start to summer vacation! And hopefully starting in September students will have their first normal school year since 2019.

In 4-H news, workshops are available to prepare members for contests and projects. The record book workshop was hosted on April 28th at the St. Mary's County Agricultural Services Center Conference Room. The record books are extremely valuable in 4-H because they document the youth's experiences and projects. They hold members accountable for keeping up with expenses and documentation which is a life skill that can be helpful in the future.

A robotics workshop was held on May 14th for members interested in competing in the future 4-H robotics contests, including one at the State Fair. The workshop covered the rules and guidelines that must be followed, Then, participants and coaches split into groups to learn about challenge-specific content.

The horse projects are also getting competitive with a hippology contest. With registration that closed on May 23rd, contestants prepared for the event leading up to June 11th. The contest was held at the Howard County Fairgrounds and invited members from all over Maryland to participate.

The Maryland 4-H Aerospace Workshops will be available to 4-Hers from May through July at various locations. The workshops will teach students lessons about physics and aeronautics, help students find careers in the aerospace industry, and give participants the chance to build their own rockets. There will be an Aerospace Contest held in the fall which any member in the 4-H program can attend, but only if they participated in the workshops. Volunteers are also welcome if they are interested in aeronautics and are willing to help with supervising and rocket building. One workshop was held on May 21st in Caroline County 4-H Park and the next will be on June 19, 2022 at Harford County 4-H Camp.

St. Mary's 4-H is excited and preparing for the upcoming Day and Overnight camps. The day camp will span from June 20th – June 24th at the St. Mary's County Fairgrounds. Activities including baking, crafts, cooking, sewing, archery, science, gardening, and painting will be offered. Participants will also visit animals and learn about proper agricultural practices. The event is open for 5-13 years old but also includes older members who will help as junior counselors.

The overnight camp will go from July 31st - August 5th at the MD 4-H Environmental Education & Camping Center in Swanton, MD. The camp has a large lake, obstacle course, hiking trails, shooting ranges, and sport fields. The six day long camp is perfect for youth to connect with other 4-Hers from around the county.

Overall, St. Mary's County 4-H groups are excited to start the summer season and we hope that everyone reading stays safe and healthy. Until next time, thank you for keeping up with us!

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## The Month of August 2022

Hello hello! Thanks for sticking by and keeping up with your local 4-H friends. It is such an exciting, yet exhausting time of the year. Appreciating the warm weather and outdoor activities is important, but it is equally necessary to find ways to keep cool and value the heat from afar. In St. Mary's County, now is the prime time to take a breezy boat ride, find a shady place to go fishing, play in the refreshing pool, go on late-day walks, and even make new summer traditions to enjoy for years to come.

Youth of St. Mary's who have discovered wonderful opportunities through the 4-H program are finding even more joyful experiences this summer. Annual week camps were held between July and August, including a day camp and an overnight camp. Each camp was offered as a chance for kids new to, and experienced in the program to spend time with new peers.

The kids at the day camp, held in July, participated in various activities including cooking, sewing, air rifle, archery, farm safety lessons, and whole group songs. The campers ended the 5-day camp with tie-dying and water games. In August, previous and new campers traveled to Garrett County in Western Maryland. Participants, teens, and adult counselors enjoyed swimming, air rifle practice, craft making, and bunking together for a fun-filled 7-day adventure.

The 2022 Maryland Horse Visual Arts Contest opened in July for all 4-Hers aged 8-18 to submit creative works. The contest is split into three divisions depending on the age group. Juniors, intermediates, and senior divisions will have separate winners. Contestants may enter one work in each class which includes fine arts, photography, and visual arts. All entries and winning pieces will be displayed in a slideshow posted on the Maryland 4-H website.

A workshop that took place on July 26th was held by the local Wild Things 4-H club to educate youth on how to properly raise and show pigs for the annual fall St. Mary's County Fair. The class featured information regarding daily care, feeding, and walking procedures, and show ring etiquette. Skillathons and other workshops are held throughout the year to prepare new and adept livestock owners for upcoming shows.

On July 31st, another workshop was hosted by the Maryland 4-H Aerospace Program in Anne Arundel. The event offers 4-Hers an opportunity to improve their understanding and skills involving science and engineering. The participants constructed model

rockets, learned about the basics of aeronautics, and discovered careers surrounding aerospace.

On August 12th, a fossil fun day was hosted by the Tudor Hall 4-H club. The event was taught by an educator at the Calvert Marine Museum. The program is directed primarily for 4th graders, however, all members were welcome to attend.

As summer comes to a close but feels warmer than ever, try to stay cool and safe until next time. Hopefully, then we will be discussing the Fair events from September!



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## The Month of December 2022

Hello everyone! This is a special edition because it will be the last I write. Unfortunately, I am aging out of 4-H and becoming busy with college work! However, I greatly appreciate the support my readers and the Delmarva Farmer have given me. So let's end this farewell article on a merry note. There is so much fun to be had at this wonderful time of year!

In October, the St. Mary's County 4-H clubs enjoyed a day outside with a picnic and kickball game. It was held at a local ball field and the event had a big turnout. Lunch was enjoyed by everyone and soon after the group was split into two to compete in a kickball game. Kids even asked if the event would be held next year to continue the fun!

There were separate events held for the teenagers of 4-H as well. Intermediates and seniors, from ages 13-18 were encouraged to attend teen nights where the kids cooked dinner and enjoyed each other's company with games and group discussion. These events were held in October, and recently in December as well.

To celebrate Halloween, a trunk or treat sponsored by the Tudor Hall was held at the local fairgrounds. Families decorated their vehicles and handed out candy to the trick-or-treating 4-Hers.

Additionally in October, an open house was conducted by the Maryland State 4-H to encourage senior 4-Hers to join. These 4-Hers would represent their county in order to complete goals including preserving and cleaning the bay. Members can also attend important events like National 4-H Congress sessions. As a previous member of State 4-H, I can

proudly say that it is a wonderful organization and presents incredible opportunities.

At the beginning of December a holiday workshop was sponsored by the Tudor Hall 4-H club to celebrate the start of the Christmas season. This event had a contest for most festive outfit and 4-Hers made gifts and crafts.

Exciting new leadership trips are approaching in 2023 for 4-H seniors. By submitting an application, 4-Hers are eligible to attend events including the National 4-H Conference in Washington, DC, the National 4-H Congress in Georgia, and the National Leadership Conference at Camp Miniwaca in Michigan. Requirements for the application include a resume, written essay, and recommendation from a 4-H educator.

A virtual horse show event will be presented by the Wild Things 4-H club to celebrate the accomplishments of the 4-Hers in the horse program. The classes include In-Hand Trail, Trail, English Equitation, Western Horsemanship and 18" & 2' Over Fences. Videos recorded by the 4-Hers will be added to a presentation for the final virtual horse show.

Nominations were accepted for 4-H volunteer awards between November and December. A few of these awards include the 4-H Alumni Plaque Award, the 4-H Maryland 4-H Hall of Fame Award, and the 4-H Family of the Year Award. Additionally, each club in St. Mary's will pick an individual or couple to award the Friend of 4-H honor. The individuals who receive these awards are incredible supporters of the program.

Once again, I want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has read my work in the past few years. I appreciate the amazing support that everyone has given me with this

awesome opportunity. If anyone else is interested or knows a young adults interested in writing, the Delmarva Farmer is a wonderful sponsor for new and experienced writers. I wish a merry and bright holiday season to everyone, and a happy new year, too!