4-H Club Days kick off in February

Kansas 4-H director says Club Days help youth develop life skills

By Taylor Jamison, K-State Research and Extension news writer

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Each year, Kansas 4-H clubs host Club Days: a day packed full of meaningful activities and showcases that involve youth and their community.

“At its core, (Club Days are) an opportunity for young people to gather together, share a talent, share a skill, (and) how they’ve been learning about a project area,” said Kansas 4-H Youth Development program leader Wade Weber.

He said Club Day activities differ by county, ranging from project talks, speech competitions, and music demonstrations, along with other learning opportunities like horticulture judging, photography contests and more. Many county-level clubs in Kansas will host Club Days in February.

According to Weber, each activity allows youth to develop and refine skills they are learning during the 4-H year, especially public speaking; responding and generating constructive feedback; and working cooperatively in groups.

For example, in an activity known as gavel games, Weber said young people practice parliamentary skills, speaking and leadership they’ve learned in their local 4-H clubs. He notes that in a supportive Club Days environment, youth refine the often times difficult skill of public speaking as well as facilitation and leadership.

During Club Days, judging contests allow youth to receive and respond to feedback given by adult judges and peers.

“(Club Days help youth) recognize that there are so many folks, in their communities and peers, that are cheering them on and encouraging them to take the next step,” Weber said.

He said Club Days also bring youth together with their peers through group activities, and through interaction with community members. Youth take what they’ve learned in Club Days and use it for the rest of their life, according to Weber.
“It’s really great to recognize the fact that because of these activities, young people (develop) resiliency and confidence, take on a challenge, and really shine in opportunities like that,” Weber said.

Weber called community volunteers “the backbone of Club Days,” saying thanks to those who have served as judges, facilitators, room monitors, and others who dedicate their time to create “a great learning environment.”

More information about Club Days is available at local extension offices in Kansas. Weber said some clubs may have remote viewing options.

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K-State Research and Extension statewide offices, https://www.ksre.ks-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html

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