Abstract for NAE4-HA Communicator Award Submission

Applicant: Jessica Spence, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Yates County, 417 Liberty Street, Penn Yan, NY 14527, (315)536-5123, jls233@cornell.edu

Member Recognition Category: Personal Column

Objectives: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Yates County has a column in the weekly Chronicle Express of Penn Yan, NY that each staff member has the opportunity to contribute to with the 4-H program being highlighted once each month. The goal of the “4-H Spotlight” is to give readers some information relating to a timely topic and share highlights of the Yates County 4-H program, while promoting and marketing 4-H and youth development. The applicant chooses a topic that is appealing and informative to readers, relevant to the time of year, and that also highlights a 4-H theme or initiative.

Target Audience: All Chronicle Express subscribers and their immediate families, mainly residents of Yates County. All articles are also sent to the Finger Lakes Times and Dundee Observer, which run the articles as space permits.

Current Population: The Chronicle Express and Dundee Observer have a weekly circulation of approximately 3,800 and 6,000 respectively. The Finger Lakes Times is a daily paper with a circulation of approximately 14,300.

Publishers Requirement: The articles are to be typed by the applicant using Microsoft Word and limited to approximately 600 words. The article, along with any accompanying photographs (sent as separate jpg attachments), is to be emailed to the newspaper staff. The 4-H spotlight logo, seen on one article in this entry, is included in each Word document as a reminder to the publisher to include if space allows as a brand for the monthly 4-H column.

Methods Used: Applicant researched 4-H and youth development topics relevant to the general public, gathered information from current clubs about their events and activities, and turned it into a story of human interest.

Production Cost: Applicant time, approximately 2 hours per month.

Impact Results: The community is more aware of what happens in Yates County 4-H and are provided with information about positive youth development and how they can become involved.

Information on the Role the Applicant had in the Entry: Writes 6 of the 12 “4-H Spotlight” articles per year. Emphasized a specific topic each month while describing how it relates to the 4-H program. Also highlighted past and future events to better inform the reader about the impact 4-H is having on the community and to encourage new participation.

Other: One article, “4-H Public Presentations, A Foundation for Success” was mislabeled when printed. The applicant, Jessica Spence, wrote the article but the paper inadvertently switched the author with her co-worker Jennifer Clancey! With a Jessica and a Jennifer working closely together – this mistake happens frequently!!
The 3 R's of the Holidays for Kids

Did you know that 53.6% of what we throw away ends up in landfills, 34.7% is recycled or composted, and 11.7% is combusted for energy? Every year, Americans create 250 million tons of trash of which 134 million tons ends up in landfills! (www2.epa.gov/recycle) Teaching your kids to reduce, reuse, and recycle is beneficial to our community, the environment, and the future of our world.

Recycling helps to decrease the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators, conserve natural resources such as timber, water, and minerals, prevent pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials, and more. Even the littlest hands find it fun to help sort the recyclables for pick up on garbage day! Instilling good habits early on is essential. Try this: make a chart and keep track of how many things you recycled in one month. Then use the chart as a lesson to teach your children what happens to recycled materials vs. those that end up in our landfills. You can also encourage your children to look at the labeling on products to see if they are made from recycled materials. Be sure to contact your trash collector to find out more about what materials can be recycled in your area.
Reducing waste is easy to achieve, especially at the holidays. Many organizations in our community are looking for donations of gently used items including clothing, blankets, small appliances or electronics, books, and more and many families are cleaning out to make room for gifts they will receive at the holidays. Donating items not only prevents your unwanted trash from ending up in the landfill but it also helps those in our community who are in need. Encouraging your children to clean out some of their unused toys and books is a great way to build a passion for citizenship and community service.

Reusing can be tons of fun for kids at the holidays! There are many great ideas floating around, geared at all ages, about how to create fun and festive gifts out of things you may be considering throwing away; from tin cans to paintbrushes, mayonnaise containers to holiday catalogs. Here are a few 4-H favorites you may like to try with your kids:

Missing a puzzle piece? Make a picture frame ornament out of the remaining pieces!
What you will need – white paint, cardboard, scissors, white glue, picture (optional)
- Paint the puzzle pieces white – you can spread them out on newspaper outdoors and use spray paint to make the job go quickly (you can add glitter if you’d like!) – let dry completely.
- Cut a piece of cardboard into your favorite shape about 1 inch wide (you can use empty cereal boxes!).
- Glue the dried puzzle pieces to the cardboard, looks nice if they are overlapping to cover all parts of the cardboard – let dry completely.
- You can add a photo of your choice, even an old holiday card cover will do, or let the recipient of the frame add their own!

Broken crayons all over the house? Use the pieces to make crayon shapes!
What you will need – knife/cutting board (optional), old crayons (wrappers removed), non-stick muffin tin or oven safe chocolate molds, oven/oven mitt
- Cut up crayons into small pieces (it is safer for a young child to break them).
- Put crayons in muffin tins making sure to mix colors in each opening.
- Bake 230 degrees for 15 minutes, carefully remove from oven, and then allow to cool completely (if you chose to stir, use a toothpick and only stir a little to make a tie-dye effect and not to turn the color brown!).
- Pop out crayon shapes.
- Ideas for use: attach to a piece of construction paper with a quote, for example, “Like ornaments, thoughts of special people brighten the season and warm our hearts.” or put several in a baggie and give to a child to use as tie-dye crayons.

Have socks that are missing their match? Make them into a cute snowman!
What you will need – an old sock (crew length or longer), rice, rubber bands, decorative items (optional – suggestions listed below), hot glue gun (optional - with adult help)
- Cut the top off of the sock from the foot (where the ankle would be)
- Take the leg part of the sock and turn it inside out, attach a rubber band tightly to one end, and turn the sock right side out again
• Fill the sock with rice, make sure to pack it down as you go so the sock gets a nice round base
• Rubber band the top of the sock closed and put another rubber band ¾ of the way to the top for the head of your snowman
• Decorate! Tie a scarf around your snowman’s neck with a piece of old material (to cover the rubber band), use map buttons as eyes/nose, add buttons to the stomach, use the toe of your cut sock to make a stocking type cap. Other ideas: use different color/patterned socks to create hats or a sweater for your snowman. Add twine, bows, ribbons, etc, to decorate. Some of these decorative items may need to be secured with a hot glue gun (always consider choking hazards with small children).

Teaching youth about the 3 R’s can be fun for the whole family. There is no better time than the holidays to make recycled gifts, reduce your waste by donating to others, and make recycling fun! For more information about how you can become involved in 4-H, please contact Cornell Cooperative Extension at 315-536-5123. For more information on Reducing, Reusing, and Recycling, visit www2.epa.gov/recycle. Cornell University Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.
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Instilling good habits early on is essential. Try this: make a chart and keep track of how many things you recycle in one month. Use the chart to teach your children what happens to recycled materials vs. those that end up in landfills.

Encourage your children to look at the labeling on products to see if they are made from recycled materials. Contact your trash collector to find out more about what materials can be recycled in your area.

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You can add a photo of your choice, even an old holiday card cover will do, or let the recipient of the frame add their own!

BROKEN CRAYONS ALL OVER THE HOUSE? Use the pieces to make crayon shapes!

What you will need – knife/cutting board (optional), old crayons (wrappers removed), non-stick muffin tin or oven safe chocolate molds, oven/oven mitt

Cut up crayons into small pieces (it is safer for a young child to break them).

Put crayons in muffin tins making sure to mix colors in each opening. Bake 230 degrees for 15 minutes, carefully remove from oven, and then allow to cool completely (if you choose band tightly to one end, and turn the sock right side out again.

Fill the sock with rice, make sure to pack it down as you go so the sock gets a nice round base.

Rubber band the top of the sock closed and put another rubber band 3/4 of the way to the top for the head of your snowman.

Decorate! Tie a scarf around your snowman’s neck with a piece of old material (to cover the rubber band), use map buttons as eyes/nose, add buttons to the stomach, use the toe of your cut sock to make a stocking type cap. Other ideas: use different color/patterned socks to create hats or a sweater for your snowman. Add twine, bows, ribbons, etc. to decorate. Some of these decorative items may need to be secured with a hot glue gun (always consider choking hazards with small children).

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Yates County 4-H member Rebecca Baily shows off her reused sock snowman.

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The Observer welcomes letters to the editor addressing topics of community interest. Letters should be no longer than 300 words, typed or hand-written legibly. Unsigned letters will not be considered. Names may be withheld under certain circumstances, but only with approval from the editor.

Brief letters of general thanks will be considered. However, please limit these submissions to 100 words.

Letters that bring up a new issue will not be published the week prior to an election because a person with an opposing view would be unable to get their position in print. We reserve the right to edit all letters for space, conciseness, clarity and fair play, and the publication of any letter is at the editor’s discretion.

FROM PAGE 4

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Capturing Springtime Memories

Capturing memories of your springtime activities is great fun. Whether you are watching your children ride bikes, spotting flowers as they grow and bloom, playing with your dog in the yard, or installing a new dock at your cottage, photographs are the perfect way to cherish these special times.

The camera you decide to use should be based on your needs and abilities. There are infinite options open to the amateur photographer ranging from basic point-and-shoot cameras that can be as inexpensive as $10-20 to SLR cameras costing several hundred dollars. Much of this decision should be based on how much you plan to use your camera, what resources you have available, such as a computer, and how much time you want to spend learning how to effectively use your camera.

Once you have a camera, you need to pick your subject. Children and animals, in particular, can make great subjects but can also change in a split second. Make sure you are ready to take the photo before you miss the opportunity! Photos taken of friends and
family at spring parties can be rather busy. Try choosing a single subject and zooming in, don’t be afraid too get close!

Always make sure what you see through your lens is what you want in your photo. When taking pictures of landscapes, be sure there is nothing distracting in the photo such as a bright glare off of water (one that you didn’t intend to be in the photo) or power lines through the top of your frame. Here is a fun outdoor tip, try holding your sunglasses over your lens to make the colors in your photo warmer – they are a filter you always carry with you!

After you have finished capturing your memories, it is important to make sure you properly store your photos so that you will be able to enjoy them for years to come. Temperature, humidity, or constantly changing weather can be devastating to photo prints. Never store prints in an uninsulated attic or basement where the weather extremes could be 100º+ in summer or down to 0º in winter. As for digital, it is easy to download the photos to the computer forget about them. The importance of backing up those photos cannot be stressed enough. Burning them to a CD or DVD or saving them to a mobile storage device will ensure the safety of your photos if you have a computer malfunction.

Many Yates County 4-H’ers are involved in photography projects. In fact, over 30% of all 4-H exhibit hall items entered at the Yates County Fair last year were photos! They know that photography can be a fun and rewarding hobby.

The Yates County 4-H program will be hosting a Photo Editing Workshop on May 30th from 6:00-7:30 pm at the 4-H office. This workshop is for those with beginner to intermediate knowledge in photo editing and will highlight Picasa, a free photo editing program. Participants will learn how to crop and how to crop for effectiveness, change the lighting and color of a photo, add text, minimize imperfections, and add fun effects to photos. There is a $3.00 fee for this workshop. Call the 4-H office for more information!

4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. To find out how your child can get involved, call the Yates County 4-H office at 315-536-5123 or visit
EEO/EPO
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4-H Public Presentations, a Foundation for Success

“I have a dream…” famous words by a powerful and motivational speaker – considered by many to be the most recognized speech in history. Why? Because Martin Luther King Jr. knew how to deliver a speech in a way that made people want to listen. He was an expert at selecting a topic, organizing his thoughts, and delivering his message.

4-H’s public presentations program aims to help youth develop a positive self-concept and poise, gain self-confidence before a group, learn to express ideas clearly, respond spontaneously to questions, and gain subject matter knowledge. Each spring, Yates County youth have the opportunity to present in one of several categories; demonstration, illustrated talk, speech, Power Point, impromptu, recitation, college or job interview, team presentation, horse communications, or produced in New York.

Youth are encouraged to select a topic that they are interested in and want to learn more about. This year’s Yates County 4-H public presentations topics include everything from
dogs to sign language, Cleopatra to maple syrup, the human body to sting rays! After selecting their topic, the young person researches the subject and gathers information, and then creates an outline and a plan for how to deliver their new found knowledge in a way that is educational, persuasive, or entertaining. The 4-H’ers, this year ages 7-17, have been practicing for many weeks to make sure their presentations are well versed and they are comfortable with their material.

After several successful presentations at the county level, being evaluated by a judge and provided feedback for improving their public speaking ability, many 4-H members are encouraged to take their public speaking to the next level and participate at the Finger Lakes District Public Presentations Event. This event gives members the opportunity to gain valuable feedback from a different evaluator with a different perspective, and present in front of a group of people who they likely don’t know. In 2013, there will also be a state level event, another opportunity for unique feedback and practice becoming comfortable in a crowd. Those presenting in Horse Communications also have the opportunity to attend a National event if selected.

Those who have had opportunities to practice public speaking shine in a crowd. Many alumni credit public presentations as one of the most impactful programs of their 4-H career. School teachers remark that they can peg a 4-H’er in a roomful of students based on their confidence speaking in front of their peers. The college and job interview gives youth an edge on building skills by doing a real interview, for a real employer, in a safe environment.

Public speaking is just one exciting project area you can learn about in 4-H, here are some other upcoming events in Yates County 4-H:

Your Next Step Workshops – learn resume writing and interviewing skills on March 19, 21, 26, 28 from 7:00-8:30 PM. Workshops are open to the public but space is limited and registration is required. Must attend all 4 sessions, open to youth ages 14-19, $10 for current 4-H members, $20 for non-members which includes 4-H enrollment.

Tied Fleece Blanket Workshop – with a grant through the Clarence Tallman Fund, tied fleece blanket kits were purchased and a workshop will be held on Sunday, March 17th from 3:30-5:00 PM to introduce youth to the art of tying blankets which will be donated to the Christmas for the Needy program. Open to the public, registration is required.

Sewing Workshop – a beginners sewing workshop is scheduled for April 2nd from 1:00-4:00 PM in the Yates County Auditorium. The participants will be making a pillowcase at a cost of $2 + supplies. Open to the public, space is limited, registration is required, youth under 9 must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information about the Yates County 4-H program, please contact Cornell Cooperative Extension at 315-536-5123 or visit us online at [http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/yates/](http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/yates/). Be sure to watch for next month’s “4-H Spotlight” in the Extension Corner for monthly updates on the Yates County 4-H
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