

Sarah Beale

4-Her and Aspiring Journalist

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Hello!

My name is Sarah Beale, I am 15 years old, and I am a proud 4-Her in St. Mary's County, Maryland. I am looking forward to my future and hope to be a successful journalist someday. Therefore, I have taken the opportunity to spread the word of 4-H, and to reveal the life of current 4-Hers in our community. I will perform this through articles (and possibly a few interviews) I will be posting periodically. I hope you enjoy what I write, and please contact me if you have ideas for future newsletters, or any comments you would like to make.



July 1 of 2020

Hello All!

I am very excited to be starting a newsletter for our local 4-H. As I have stated to the left, I am interested in journalism, and was trying to find ways to gain more experience before I jumped into the career. I came up with the idea of writing articles for St. Mary's County 4-H, hoping that while I obtained familiarity with my interests, I could also inform others about what our county's 4-H clubs have been up to!

Now, I know that you are probably thinking, 'What have the 4-H clubs been up to? There is not much to be up to at a time like this!' Well, that is most definitely not the case. While the Corona Virus sure has tried to tie us down, we are able to join hands (not literally of course), and look up for new possibilities. For example, last week, many 4-Hers participated in an incredibly fun and creative competition called "Cupcake Wars!" With baking being a popular project in 4-H, many members were able to show off their amazing talents! From mermaid tails and unicorns, to flamingos and archery, flair could be seen from every angle. Congratulations to all who participated in that contest, they almost looked too good to eat!

Next week comes with a new contest, 'Red, White and Blue.... A 4-H snack contest for you!' This exciting contest brings more sweet treats, and even some healthy ones, all dressed to celebrate the Fourth of July! If you did not participate in last week's contest, I highly recommend trying this week! The entries are extremely fun to make, and even more fun to eat:)

On to some other business, our in-person 4-H summer camps have been cancelled... but we are holding virtual camps, instead! I know many are very disappointed that we are not able to see each other, but I can assure you that the 4-H leaders are doing their best to make sure we have a great time! The camp is for those who are between the ages of 8 and 13, but there is a chance for teenagers to participate as well! Slots are open for teens who would like to help run sessions! The virtual camp runs from July 13th to the 24th during the weekdays and will include various activities, songs and games! I hope to see you then!

More congratulations goes to the new Little, Junior, and Miss St. Mary's County Farm Bureau! Congratulations Dolly Mae Anderson, Emily Gale, and Sophie Anderson for being chosen as the new Miss St. Mary's County Farm Bureau girls of 2020! Pheobe-Tate Anderson also did an amazing job when she also ran for Junior Miss. We know that you will be astounding, even in tough times and will do an amazing job.

If you have any news you would like me to share, please reach out to the email above. Stay safe, and let's make the best better out of our COVID situation!

Inside 4-H

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(Add pictures)

FOR THE 4-H WEBSITE

The Month of August 2020

Already another month of 2020 has come and gone. Of course, 4-H hasn't slowed down one bit. There was another snack contest, called "Red, White, and Blue Cooking Contest!" The competition included healthy foods, and also some sweet treats. I was amazed by the entries this month!! The submissions were over the top and out of the box! These good looking treats included many trifles and parfaits, American Flag cakes, rice crispy treats, and so much more. Congratulations to all who participated; your hard work was all astounding and stunning!

Virtual 4-H Camp also started last month and is operating exceptionally well. The members are having a blast learning about various things ranging from how to paint, and even how to write and address a card. The camp also includes family activities and group games to play to help members feel more involved and connected while having fun in the safety of their own homes.

The Annual St. Mary's County 4-H Banquet of 2020 was held last month. Bridget Cory and I virtually emceed the Banquet via Zoom. Many awards were granted to members for their hard work in 2019, and recognition was given to many volunteers and helpers that have helped 4-H grow. Congratulations to the winners, and all who participated in the 4-H program and activities last year!

A new issue that 4-Hers have been recently facing is the cancellation of the St. Mary's County Fair. This means that the annual livestock show held at the fair, where many 4-Hers sell their animals, is also canceled. However, a community group is exploring ways to hold an auction. Although the 4-H program cannot support this auction directly, some livestock project members may be able to offer their animals there.

Another option that 4-Hers have is to find buyers on their own. This can include contacting previous buyers or finding possible buyers online and around the community. A Facebook page {link found above} was created exclusively for promoting livestock owned by 4-H, and tips are being sent out on how to find potential buyers.

I decided to add a section exclusively for interviews, that I would hopefully have every month, asking members and volunteers questions about the program. I started the section by discussing with my younger brother, Joe Beale, a 4-H member who raises swine and is a rising sixth-grader this year. I asked him, 'Now that a live auction is being considered, how has that helped you with selling your pigs?' He replied, "The opportunity to possibly sell livestock at a live auction will help 4-Hers greatly. With this in mind, I can focus on my animals' needs, rather than worrying about if I will have buyers this

year. The new option will leave 4-Hers with a sense of order, instead of leaving us trying to fly in the dark.”

Watch the St. Mary’s County 4-H website and [FaceBook page](#) for details later this month regarding available 4-H animals that are for sale, and the progress of the livestock auction. If you or someone you know is interested in buying livestock animals this year, please know that 4-Hers are still open for business!!

The 4-H program has been teaching youth valuable lessons for many years, and COVID is not slowing members down. This pandemic has taught 4-Hers how to bounce back from hard times, and look for opportunities in unusual circumstances. Please stay safe, and keep growing with 4-H!

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10 SEPTEMBER 2020

The month leading up to the St. Mary's County Fair is very busy for 4-Hers, even more so in these unorthodox times. After it was announced the St. Mary's County Fair would be cancelled this year, the local 4-H office created a contemporary way to submit entries virtually. Members were required to take pictures of their entries and submit them to the office to be judged.

The 4-H program has many diverse projects apart from livestock activities. Many of the members submit entries in the 4-H Building during the fair to be judged and ranked for ribbons. These entries comprise of crafts, baked goods, photography, clothing/textiles, and more. Results should be available at the end of September on the St. Mary's County 4-H Website (go.umd.edu/smc4-Hfair).

In August, volunteers from the community worked on ways to pull off a new version of the livestock shows and auctions that were previously held at the fair. 4-H members were asked to take pictures of their animals to display in a catalog, and that will be shown on the Facebook page that was designed to publicize the youth's livestock.

A livestock show and auction, called "Bustin' Out of the Barn," will be held in September, and members are allowed to sell a maximum of 2 animals per species. While this is not a 4-H sponsored show, 4-Hers will be able to show and sell their animals, and will be required to practice safety precautions. The shows are to be held at a local farm in St. Mary's County, however, this is not the only option members have. Some youth will search for buyers on their own, by contacting previous buyers, or interested individuals who intend on purchasing livestock.

A newspaper titled, 4-H in Action, is accepting submissions from 4-H members from all over Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware. Members can create news briefs, columns, news stories, editorials, or even enter feature photos to show off their 4-H community. The newspaper even donates part of their advertising revenue to 4-H programs in all 3 states. To participate, simply email them as a Word document to Sean Clougherty, and attach high-resolution photos separately in the email. In the email, be sure to include your county, 4-H club name, and your age. Or reach Sean at 410-822-3965. These submissions are due by September 23, 2020. The publication date is scheduled for October 6, during National 4-H week.

Onto a separate note, as a part of the Farm Bureau program, the Miss St. Mary's County Farm Bureau contest was held in June.

Sophie Anderson, Phoebe-Tate Anderson, Emily Gale and Dolly Mae Anderson, all members of the Tudor Hall 4-H club competed for the Miss, Junior Miss, and Little Miss titles. Normally the contest would be held at the Farm Bureau Banquet, but due to safety reasons it was rescheduled and held at a FB meeting.

The 2019 Miss SMCFB winners, including Sara VanRyswick, as Miss; Sarah Beale, as Junior Miss; and Delia Vallandingham, as Little Miss; attended the meeting to welcome the new winners.

At the meeting, the contestants introduced themselves and answered questions that the judges had based on their agricultural experience. Sophie Anderson was named the 2020 Miss St. Mary's County Farm Bureau, Emily Gale received the 2020 Junior Miss title, and Dolly Mae Anderson acquired the 2020 Little Miss title.

Anderson then went on to compete in the Miss Maryland Agriculture contest in August. In the virtual competition, contestants were required to introduce themselves, and then answer a random question on a live stream. Anderson was named Miss Maryland Agriculture 4th runner up.

Hopefully, when we get past these unorthodox times, the Miss Farm Bureau program and 4-H will be able to participate in more activities and events. But in the meantime, they have both worked extremely hard to continue to value the importance of agriculture in our community; while also valuing the important role that youth hold as those who will pass along agricultural traditions and ways of life for years to come.

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Link for Virtual Fair page:
go.umd.edu/smc4-Hfair

Images from State Council Activities:



The Month of October & November

The past months were filled with many activities available to St. Mary's County 4-H members. From livestock shows, to Halloween themed contests, 4-H is still growing in our community.

The Maryland State Fair ran from August 31 to September 6th. The 2 week long event was very different this year than what annual attendees are used to. This year, fair rides and attractions were not allowed, and the fair solely consisted of the livestock shows. The shows were not opened to the public, and were not directly affiliated with 4-H or FFA groups. A few 4-H families from Southern Maryland attended the shows to show their animals projects.

The local St. Mary's County Fair was cancelled as well, but to give 4-H members a chance to show and sell their animals, community leaders pieced together an event. The impromptu auction was held at Flat Iron Farm on September 26th sponsored by Bubby Knott and led by Cynthia Wise and Susan Vallandingham. The show was open to the public and online viewers and bidders. This event was not directly linked with the 4-H program, but many 4-h'ers participated.

A St. Mary's County Virtual Fair was put in place of the annual in person event. Instead of entering their projects in the 4-H building, members took pictures of their entries and submitted them virtually. The entries were then ranked and posted on the University of Maryland Extension Page. In total, there were 73 participants, and 469 entries.

In preparations for Halloween, local clubs are participating in fall themed contests. The Tudor Hall 4-H club is sponsoring a Scarecrow Contest. Photo entries are due by October 22nd. The 4-H office is sponsoring a pumpkin decorating contest. Photo entries for the contest are due by the 29th of October.

The first in-person activity was allowed to be held on November 1 at an air rifle practice at the fairgrounds. Three instructors and eleven youth participated in the event. Another practice will be planned for later in November.

4-H volunteers have been training to restart holding in-person meetings and activities. They can visit the Maryland 4-H page, under 'COVID-19 Resources for Volunteers' for instruction.

The 4-H State Council has been making their own attempts to participate in annual events in a safe way. Their meetings have

been held virtually via Zoom. Some activities they have taken part in so far include the Launch into Leadership program which happened on October 10th, the Youth and Adult Partnerships: Using Teens as Teachers took place on October 3rd, and will continue on November 7th, 14th, and 21st, and December 12th. They will have a second Launch into Leadership Virtual and In-Person Event. The date of that event is still being determined. The State Council is accepting general membership applications through November 15, so if you are interested in the Maryland 4-H State Council, make sure you check it out and get your applications in!

State Council also made it a priority to search for ways to get youth more involved in their 4-H communities. Virtual sessions, titled 'Teens as Teachers', were held to educate 4-H volunteers and parents about this idea. The sessions were led by teenagers in Maryland 4-H State Council, as a way to demonstrate the roles that youth can play in 4-H. Activities and games were held in attempts to connect the participants, and later, volunteers learned about how they can involve youth into 4-H in their communities.

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The Month of December

The end of 2020 is coming soon. Who would have thought that this is how the year would turn out? But a new year means a fresh start, and hopefully less troubling times are coming our way. These tough times have taught everyone, including 4-Hers, how to be strong and find ways around issues that seem impossible. The year took a sharp turn as club meetings in St. Mary's County went virtual, presenting a whole new ball game to the members. Activities and events were shut down, traditions were swept by the wayside. But through it all, 4-H stood tall and showed the CoronaVirus that we are not to be trifled with. This predicament has educated us in ways that we are not used to. We learned how to complete demonstrations on Zoom meetings, and social distance at Livestock Events. We know the importance of sticking together, especially through the hard times.

The closing of the year is normally an exciting time for 4-H. Members typically enjoy Christmas parties and preparations. And despite restrictions, clubs are finding ways to raise the Christmas spirit while staying virtual and practicing safety precautions. These festive parties are not only about celebrating the holiday, but also include electing new officers. The officers play an incredible role as a part of the club. They can learn about the importance of leadership while also assisting members with their projects, coordinating events, and other important responsibilities. One of the responsibilities that all members must practice is their recording skills. Record books are assigned to be finished every year and have the purpose of teaching youth how to keep records and document events. Members who raise livestock practice keeping specific records about their animals to reflect on at the end of the year. Those who focus their projects in the 4-H building more document their awards and keep pictures and lessons from throughout the year. As members age, they have the benefit of reminiscing on past memories and can also use these records to their advantage for assembling resumes.

Maryland State Council is also ending the year strong. New officer positions were chosen in the past month. Hopefully in the next year, things will go back to normal quickly, but regardless, this year has been a success. It is very encouraging to see the way that 4-Hers and members of the community can easily support each other and continue to work hard.