



# Arkansas Association of Extension 4-H Agents

December 2016

## Bayous & Byways: 4-H Navigating the Future

By Erica Williams

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*Diane Mashburn introduces AR delegation during Southern Regional Brunch.*

Crawfish etouffee, beignets, warm weather, jazz filled walk ways and friendly people – what’s not to love about New Orleans in October?! This year, the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents hosted its annual conference in *The Big Easy*. If you were not at this year's conference, you missed a treat.

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*“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.”*

- Muhammad Ali

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Arkansas was well represented with 32 association members in attendance. This year’s conference was hosted by LSU and Texas Extension Services and was one of the largest attended on record.

Arkansas conference attendees have uploaded materials from a variety of conference seminars in a One Drive folder. If you would like access to the files please contact Jessica Street at [jstreet@uaex.edu](mailto:jstreet@uaex.edu).

For those of you who have never attended a national conference but would like to in the future, plan early and take advantage of opportunities that reduce your cost.

Cost reduction opportunities include: early bird registration (at least \$50 cheaper than regular registration); apply for association awards. Over the years, our administration has been gracious in providing our regional and national association winners with monetary awards to attend national conference; apply for any conference scholarship sponsored by NAE4-HA; carpool to conference; and find a conference roommate (or two).

The 2017 NAE4-HA conference will be held in Indiana, Indianapolis on November 12-17. Don't delay, start making plans to attend today.

## Teambuilding, the Escape Room Way

By Amy Cofer



While trying to plan the educational activity for our local Teen Leaders club for the month of November, our Administrative Assistant, Debra, suggested we check out the new escape room in downtown Van Buren. I knew very little about escape rooms, so I decided to do some checking and see what they're all about. Once I read about the premise, I knew this would be our November activity. Great communication and teamwork are the only ways out! I told my teenagers about our plans, and have never seen them so excited! I knew we were in for a great time.

Our group arrived at Great Escapes Mystery Room in downtown Van Buren ready for whatever awaited us. I was especially excited because our Teen Leaders club has two new members for the upcoming year, and I figured this would be a great way to get to know some of the other members, in a less intimidating atmosphere. We heard the rules, and the countdown began! We had exactly one hour to escape.

The theme for our room was "Heist at the Museum!" The goal was to find the stolen copy of the Mona Lisa, with the option of one free hint. The kids immediately began looking all around the room, picking up anything, looking behind things, trying to find a clue. After less than a minute, one teen found a clue underneath the table. All the rest began trying to decipher the message. All the adults in the room just stood around. The teens had this under control!

After we had been in the room for about fifteen minutes, we were at a stalemate. We buzzed for the clue, and the teens immediately returned to work. I saw my teenagers sharing duties, delegating tasks, and all offering their own opinions and thoughts. It was incredible to see! After the hint, things fell into place rather quickly. We escaped after only 39 minutes, 32 seconds. This put the Green Machines in second place overall, in terms of time. Adults and teens alike had such a great time, we're already planning on going again over the summer. If you're looking for an out-of-the-box teambuilding activity for any age group, I highly recommend an escape room!

## Impact Your County with 4-H Afterschool

By Erica Williams



Over 65,000 school-age students (13%) in Arkansas participate in an afterschool program. In Arkansas, 79 percent of parents surveyed agree that afterschool programs help working parents keep their jobs. As the largest youth development organization in the world, 4-H has an important role in addressing the need for quality after school programs.

By providing professional development training for afterschool providers and organizing 4-H Clubs in afterschool sites we build reputations in our counties as the go-to source for all things positive youth development.

4-H Afterschool training is scheduled for January 26, 2017. At training, county agents receive curriculum to implement with afterschool 4-H Clubs and train afterschool providers to use the curriculum. Be sure to login to [learn.uaex.edu](http://learn.uaex.edu) and register by December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

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## Screen-Free Week

By Amy Monk



Screen-Free Week is a great opportunity to join thousands of schools, libraries, and community groups nationwide in a coordinated effort to encourage millions of Americans to turn off televisions, computers, and video games for several days and turn on the world around them. Screen-Free Week is a chance for children to read, play, think, create, be more physically active and to spend more time with friends and family.

*Spread love  
everywhere you go.  
Let no one ever come  
to you without leaving  
happier.*

- Mother Teresa

On average, preschool children spend over four and a half hours a day consuming screen media, while older children spend over seven hours a day including multitasking. Excessive screen time is linked to a number of problems for children, including childhood obesity, poor school performance, and problems with attention span. 4-H can provide materials and programs for kids during Screen-Free Week. All 4-H initiative areas can be addressed with a Screen-Free Week Celebration.

In past years during Screen-Free Week, Montgomery County Extension has provided learning activities related to citizenship, consumer education, physical activity, and healthy snacking. Prizes for the event provide the incentive kids need to participate. We received donations of bicycles, manicures, crystal digs, horseback rides, ride tickets, kayak and canoe rentals, fishing rods & reels, and summer art lessons.

From a teacher's perspective, "Screen-Free Week is a great way to encourage physical activity and limit passive activities. I heard a lot of comments (from students) about being responsible and helpful to others."

One student's testimonial, "Because I decided to be screen-free, I had a lot more spare time. Screen-Free Week showed me that there is so much more to do than to watch a screen. Eating healthy is important, as is getting enough physical activity and being a good citizen. Screen-Free Week was a great learning experience for me."

Screen-Free Week is a much needed respite from the screen media dominating the lives of so many children. Now, more than ever, it is imperative that we help children discover the joys of life beyond screens. Mark your calendar and make plans to participate in Screen-Free Week May 1-7, 2017. Screen-Free Week is coordinated by the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, a national advocacy organization devoted to reducing the impact of commercialism on children. For more information, visit [www.screenfree.org](http://www.screenfree.org).

2017 NAE4-HA  
membership fee is  
due by January 13,  
2017!

Dues paid after this  
date will not be  
eligible for state or  
national awards.

All payments should  
be sent to  
Sara Beth Johnson  
(Lonoke County).

## Arkansas 4-H Attends National SeaPerch Challenge

By Jeanie Rowbotham



Ten Arkansas 4-H members had the experience of a life time as they competed in the Sixth National SeaPerch Challenge held at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Thirteen hundred students from across the country, Australia, Cayman Islands and Virgin Islands, competed in an underwater robotics championship on May 21, 2016.

More than 190 teams maneuvered their hand-built remotely operated vehicles through an underwater obstacle course at the LSU natatorium. The national competition was a first time experience for Arkansas 4-H members. Two teams, The M.C. Tech Sirens senior team from Monroe County and the Johnson County Atlantis junior team from Johnson County represented Arkansas.

The SeaPerch Challenge is also part of Arkansas 4-H's larger effort to expose kids to STEM. Attending the National SeaPerch Challenge was a wonderful opportunity for my middle school team. They learned so much by building and competing with their ROV but more than that they got to experience college and career readiness, by taking a peek inside careers available in engineering. The look on their faces when they spoke to Brittany White, Senior Project Engineer for ExxonMobil as she explained her occupation was priceless. Consider training a team for the 2017 Arkansas SeaPerch Challenge scheduled for May 6<sup>th</sup> at the 4-H Center.



Naval Officer, Jeanie Rowbotham, Savannah L., Logan J., Karissa J., Frank T., Abby F., and Ant'Erica G.



Sue Y., Zainab S., Valerie Turner, Kira J., and Mae Y.



Monroe County Senior Team checking in their ROV.



Abby F. and Savannah L. maneuvering obstacle course.

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## NAE4-HA Awards Winners

Congratulations to all of our regional and national awards winners!

*"We make a living by what we get. But we make a life by what we give."*

- Winston Churchill

### Specialty Awards Regional Winners

Citizenship in 4-H Youth Development: Erica Williams & Pia Woods

Excellence in Camping: Creenna Bocksnick

Greg Yost Memorial Youth in Leadership: Sara Beth Johnson & Shea Wilson

### Service Awards Recipients

Achievement of Service: Sara Beth Johnson & Amy Monk

Distinguished Service: Alicia Hugen & Jeanie Rowbotham

Meritorious Service: Shannon Caldwell



2016 NAE4-HA Arkansas Service Awards Recipients: Amy Monk, Shannon Caldwell, Jeanie Rowbotham & Alicia Hugen.



2016 NAE4-HA Arkansas delegates attend closing awards banquet.



2016 NAE4-HA Poster Presenter – Jessica Street.



2016 NAE4-HA poster presenters - Shea Wilson & Sara Beth Johnson.



2016 NAE4-HA Regional Awards Winners - Erica Williams & Pia Woods.

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