Lafayette 4-H Adds Shooting Sports to Programming

Lafayette 4-H agent Shawn Jackson and 4-H volunteer Craig Riley recently spent a Saturday in Wakulla County with other agents and volunteers at a training to get certified Air Rifle Marksmanship as part of introducing Shooting Sports to Lafayette 4-H. Air rifles may include BB, pellet and Twenty-two rifles. While the training topic included Safety as a top priority at all times, instructors also taught the different positions used in shooting air rifles which were kneeling, sitting, standing and prone.

The focus of all 4-H programs is the development of youth as individuals and as responsible and productive citizens. The National 4-H Shooting Sports Program stands out as an example. Youth learn marksmanship, the safe and responsible use of firearms, the principles of hunting and much more. The activities of the program and the support of caring adult leaders provide young people with opportunities to develop life skills, self-worth, and conservation ethics. Lafayette 4-H plans to incorporate shooting sports in the 2021 local day camps.

Meeting Held to discuss 4-H Teen Programing

Fourteen local teens attended a meeting on February 10, to discuss programs that interest youth ages 13-18. Ideas brought forth by teens included cake decorating courses, Grill Master Classes and competitions, kayaking and shooting sports. One of the primary goals of this meeting was to find programs of interest not being provided by other clubs and organization. Plans are being made to offer summer camps and short-term clubs known as “spin clubs” to provide these programs. The meeting was
February in North Florida was a mostly cool month combined with moderate to heavy rainfall. This coming off the wet final week of January has left area lakes in the county and swamps in the Western portions of the county full to capacity. This with heavy rains in South Georgia has also led to the Suwannee River reaching or slightly exceeding flood stage in Luraville and Branford as of March 1. Forecasts are for the Suwannee to crest in Lafayette County areas by March 3, but water levels in area lakes and rivers will continue to rise or fall depending on March rainfall in the Suwannee River Valley and South Georgia as well as spring temperatures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>February 2019</th>
<th>February 2020</th>
<th>February 2021</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midway Tower</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooks Hammock</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>6.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mowery Swamp</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>5.47</td>
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Chart above shows monthly rain fall averages in February for three consecutive years. The city of Mayo has seen more than 12 inches rain in December, January and February (not shown on chart).

### 4-H anglers make the best of social distancing at Koon Lake

The Lafayette 4-H fishing club met Tuesday February 16, at Koon Lake for a late afternoon of fishing and learning. The skills taught during the meeting were baiting fish hooks with live bait and safely casting the real. Although the cool breezy day was not favorable weather conditions, the members present had a wonderful time with friends in the outdoors practicing their angler skills and untangling fishing lines. Due to rising water levels in area lakes, the March meeting will be held at the extension office and will focus on how to clean and prepare fish for cooking. The 4-H Anglers Club is open to all 4-H Members age eight and up.

Right: What could be better than social distancing at Koon Lake with 4-H anglers with real and rods and fish bait.

### Senior Commodity Pick-Up

Commodities are distributed from 2:00-4:00 on dates in chart and should be picked-up on those days unless prior arrangements are made. Volunteers are needed to sort and bag items. Reach out to the extension office at 386-294-1279 for information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>March 31, 2021</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>April 28, 2021</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>May 26, 2021</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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The Lafayette County 4-H/Tropicana School Speech contest was held February 16, 2021 at Lafayette Elementary School. All fourth and fifth grade students were able to choose the topic of their choice, write a speech, and deliver it in a classroom competition in order to narrow down the students to compete in classroom finals and where eight students in the two grades would advance to the final competition. Due to pandemic safety restrictions, the final contest was held during school hours for classmates to watch rather than the evening PRIDE Night contest for parents and guest. Winners were: 1st place Sadie Hamlin, 2nd place Caty Jones and 3rd place Kellan Clark.

At its core, the program allows students to work on a speech of their choice, guided by a teacher. Speeches must last at least two minutes, but no longer than three, and visual aids are not permitted. Below: Sadie Hamlin, Caty Jones and Kellan Clark with their awards.

LES Students add potatoes to School Garden

Second grade students at Lafayette Elementary School recently added two rows of potatoes to the LES School garden. With help from 4-H Agent Shawn Jackson, the students learn about the parts of a potato, how to cut a potato into pieces for planting, how to prepare potato beds, how to properly plant potatoes. The students planted Red Potatoes on February 14, a day many area old timers insisted on planting. Second graders look forward to growing, digging and eating the potatoes this school year. The potatoes were added to the garden with 3rd grades Cabbage plants and carrots, Mrs. McCray’s classes onions, and second grades strawberries.

Like us on Facebook
For daily updates on local IFAS, 4-H News and events, visit and “like” our FB Page UF IFAS Extension Lafayette County 4-H.

Check out our YouTube channel at: LAFAYETTE 4-H

IFAS Extension is an equal opportunity Institution. We encourage all races, religions and ethnicities to attend our summer programs. There are scholarships available for minority and underprivileged children. Please contact our office for more information.
Youth Learn to Graft Fruit Trees in 4-H Garden Club

The first meeting of Lafayette 4-H Junior Gardeners included a visit by Fonzie Albriton and Al Williams, experienced tree grafters from Suwannee. The two guest taught 4-H members their experiences with grafting, the reasons for grafting and the different ways to graft including Saddle grafting, T budding, and whip and tongue. Grafting trees allows growers to produce an exact replica of a fruit and can also make it possible to grow trees faster and adapt different species to a variety of soils and climatic conditions. Each member present was able to choose a root stock and a scion to be grafted on to the root stock. The member used the saddle graft method to graft their trees due to it being one of the easiest for those with little experience grafting.

Photo above: 4-H Volunteer Al Williams demonstrates a saddle graft for Justin Swinson, Jr.

Cooking Club Has Fun Making Valentine Cakes

The Lafayette 4-H Cooking Club met on February 2, 2021. Members attending had a blast learning to make cream cheese icing and combining it with pie filling and fruit to make delicious desserts. Each member present decorated small heart shaped cakes covering them with the cream cheese icing they had prepared and then adding a fruit topping. They were also taught that there were ways to use trimmings and pieces of cake that may have stuck in the pan. Miniature punch-bowl cakes were made in punch cups by layering broken up pieces of cake, fruit, and icing. All present were able to take home their decorated cakes and a punch-bowl cake.

Above: 4-H members ready to start cooking! Heart cakes prepared by club members.
The Lafayette County Community 4-H Club which also includes Clover Buds met on Tuesday, February 9, 2021. With the meeting taking place just prior to Valentine’s Day, activities would be all about valentines! Four separate stations allowed members present to work in small groups. The first station was for making bird feeders shaped like valentines by stringing cereal on pipe cleaners and shaping them into a heart. The next station would be making a valentines trail mix with white chocolate ships, fruit flakes flavored cereal, mini-cookies, red M&M’s and mini marshmallows. The third station would let kids make their own chocolate peanut clusters by melting chocolate, adding peanuts and dipping them out into mini cup cake wrappers. Finally, there was a craft station to make valentine cards and assemble small candy boxes to place their treats in they had made.

Deadline to Register for 2021 Chick-Chain is March 26

4-H members wishing to participate in the 2021 chick-chain program should register by March 26. There will be a mandatory chick-chain meeting on April 1. You can get more information about rules and how to purchase chicks from the extension office.

The chick-chain is a program where 4-H members purchase baby chicks in the spring, raise them to laying age and show them at a show in the fall. This is Lafayette 4-H’s second year participating in the Chick-Chain program.
Youth Livestock Show and Sale Continues As Planned

The 2021 Suwannee Valley Livestock Show will continue this month as scheduled with some changes to help meet CDC Safety guidelines. The shows and sale will be held at the rodeo arena on the fair grounds which is adjacent to the livestock barn that have been used for past shows. This should allow more social distancing for audiences attending both events. Due to there not being a midway, parking will be available on the fair-grounds itself. A variety of food vendors will be present at all events including the Live Oak Lion’s Club.

Exhibitors must have record books submitted by March 19, 2021 by midnight. The link for the steer record book is: https://forms.gle/iH7ExXvt4EuAk3RV7 and the link for a swine record book is: https://forms.gle/5y6ebcm97BHVAV96. These links may also be found at the Suwannee Valley Youth Livestock Show and Sale Facebook page. All record books must be submitted online. The swine weigh in is March 22, 2021 from 8:00-10:00AM. The steer weigh-in is March 23, 2021 from 8:00-10:00 AM.

The swine showmanship is scheduled for March 22, 2021 at 6:30PM. The Swine show will be March 23, 2021 at 6:30PM.

The steer show will be March 24, 2021 at 6:30 PM. The sale for steers and hogs will be March 25, 2021 at 9:00 AM. Lafayette County 4-H would like to invite the community and local business to come out and support the local youth by bidding on and buying steers and hogs from local youth in our area.

Second Monthly Gardening Workshop Scheduled

UF IFAS Lafayette 4-H and Taylor County Master Gardeners have teamed up with the Three Rivers Library System to offer free basic gardening workshops. The February workshop focused on the most basic fundamentals of gardening. The March meeting will be focused on composting. There will also be presentations made by Lafayette County 4-H members on the topic of gardening tips carried down from generation to generation, including incorporating the almanac in your home garden program. Lafayette County Extension hopes to see you at the Mayo Town Library on Monday, March 8th, at 6:30 PM.