

4-H Clubs Ready For A New Year



POSTED BY: TRIBUNE AUGUST 31, 2016

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4-H is about more than just raising animals for the fair, and local leaders are working hard to show potential new members and their parents what the organization has to offer.

The annual 4-H Kickoff at the Imperial Valley Mall last Saturday morning saw a steady stream of interested kids and parents learning about the national club from local advisors and the county's 2016-17 All Star members. It was targeted at those who aren't in the organization already, with some fun activities aimed at getting them excited about joining.

A prize wheel was set up, with a variety of questions about 4-H in all of the slots. After landing on a question, kids looked over the displays and talked to the All Stars to learn the answer. They were then able to pick out a prize, and a raffle was held later in the day for everyone who was there with some bigger prizes. Afterwards, everyone was invited to enjoy a free movie in the nearby Cinemark theater. There are currently 14 chapters throughout the Imperial Valley, with the possibility of three more being added soon. Holtville has two clubs based here in the Carrot Capital, Verde and Holtville.

The clubs hold a wide variety of events, competitions and learning opportunities throughout the year. While show animals are what everyone thinks of when they first hear about 4-H, members can take part in activities ranging from photography, sewing and cooking to model rocketry.

4-H members are almost twice as likely to get into college and get better grades throughout their younger school years, proving the value of providing a positive experience for a community's young

people.

Verde 4-H will be holding its first meeting of the year on Monday, September 12 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in the 500 block of Chestnut Avenue. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m.

Holtville 4-H holds its monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month in the Finley Cafeteria. The meetings begin at 7 p.m.

The meetings are open to all returning members, new members, and those who are thinking about joining but might need more information before making a decision. Sign-ups can be done during those first meetings.

Membership is open to children who are five years old or in kindergarten as of January 1 of the program year. The county enrollment fee is \$38 but may be reduced or waived for low-income families who fill out a form.