



PAYNE COUNTY
EXTENSION



QUARTER 3 STAKEHOLDERS REPORT



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Prepared by

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What do we do?

Serving the people of Payne County with resources and services based in university research.

Cooperative Extension provides research-based resources (many free) you can use to improve your home, workplace and community. This office's programs and services are specifically designed to solve the problems Payne County residents face. It's a service of Oklahoma State University and functions as part of a nationwide network of university extension offices dedicated to providing trustworthy public education and service.

Celebrating Unprecedented Success at the 2024 Payne County Free Fair

*Summer Leister, Interim CED and Extension Educator,
4-H Youth Development*

The 2024 Payne County Free Fair reached new heights this year, marking an unprecedented milestone as the largest gathering in its history. This year's fair didn't just celebrate community traditions; it embraced innovation and the diverse talents of Payne County, truly capturing the community's enduring spirit and commitment to excellence. Far more than just an event, the fair served as a vibrant showcase of local skill, dedication, and collaboration, setting a new benchmark for future gatherings.

The variety and quality of exhibits this year were inspiring. Our fairgrounds proudly displayed 1,300 entries from 4-H members, who shared the projects and skills they developed over the past year, embodying creativity and growth. In addition, members of the OHCE brought 290 impressive exhibits, sharing knowledge and skills that enrich our community. The 2,308 open exhibits included a vast range of categories, showcasing the diverse interests and talents of Payne County residents. Youth participation was especially strong, with 3,564 entries in the coloring and essay contests, highlighting our county's dedication to literacy and creative expression. And for those who appreciate nature, the 1,104 plant and flower displays filled the fairgrounds with vibrant colors and beauty, celebrating Payne County's agricultural roots and horticultural talents.

Adding a fresh twist, this year's fair introduced new events that added to the excitement. The inaugural Floral Design Contest saw 27 participants present their beautifully crafted floral arrangements, impressing judges and delighting attendees. Meanwhile, the family-friendly Peddle Pull Contest invited young competitors to showcase their strength and determination, drawing crowds and adding an element of friendly competition.

The extensive lineup of 4-H activities underscored Payne County's dedication to youth education and skill development. With eight skill-a-thons, a Cupcake Wars competition, horticulture judging, cattle fitting contest, and various livestock shows, there were numerous opportunities for 4-H members to engage, compete, and grow. Signature events like the Youth Cattle Handling Contest and the Cattle Performance and Stocker Contest allowed young agriculturalists from across the county to demonstrate their expertise, dedication, and passion for fields essential to Payne County's heritage.

The success of this record-breaking fair would not have been possible without the dedicated Payne County OSU Extension Staff and the invaluable contributions of our volunteers. Together, volunteers and staff contributed over 5,792 hours to ensure

each event ran smoothly, each exhibit was displayed thoughtfully, and each participant experienced the rewards of their hard work. Their collective efforts created a welcoming, engaging environment that truly celebrated community pride.

As the Payne County Free Fair continues to grow, it remains a powerful platform for community engagement, youth education, and the display of local talent. The remarkable turnout and success of the 2024 fair reflect the strength of Payne County's collaborative spirit and the community's dedication to creating an event that brings everyone together. This year's accomplishments have set a high bar, but with each fair, Payne County grows stronger, more connected, and more dedicated to supporting one another.

4-H Youth Development

Payne County 4-H Members Shine at Northeast District Youth-in-Action Leadership Conference

Summer Leister, Interim CED and Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development

Over Payne County's Fall Break, 32 enthusiastic 4-H members and Extension Educators from Payne County participated in the Northeast District Youth-in-Action 4-H Leadership Conference, held at the scenic Fin and Feather Resort in Gore, Oklahoma. Youth-in-Action is an incredible two-day leadership conference dedicated to building essential skills in young leaders. Members had the opportunity to attend workshops that promoted leadership development, engage in community service projects, strengthen friendships, and expand their 4-H networks.



This year, Payne County saw three of its exceptional members rise to new leadership heights by being elected as Northeast District Officers for 2025 - 2026. Jack Litviak from Heritage 4-H will serve as the next Northeast District Vice President, Brayden Arnall from Heritage 4-H will step into the role of District Reporter, and Herston Early from Payne County 4-H Livestock Club will be the District Recreation Leader. Their dedication to growing their leadership skills has set an example and will inspire other members across the district.

With invaluable experiences and new skills gained, these Payne County 4-H members are eager to bring what they learned back to their local clubs, helping to foster an environment of leadership, service, and community involvement. It was an exciting and impactful event, and the Payne County 4-H team looks forward to incorporating the lessons and inspiration from Youth-in-Action into all aspects of their club activities.

Agriculture

Payne County Welcomes Jennifer Patterson as Agriculture Educator

Summer Leister, Extension Educator, Interim County Extension Educator

A dedicated 4-H alumna, Jennifer's journey began with her passion for her horse project. Her experiences led her to Oklahoma in 1999, where she earned an associate's in environmental science from Eastern OK State College and a bachelor's in animal science from Oklahoma State University. While at OSU, she was a proud member of the varsity women's Equestrian Team. It was also where she met her husband and together, they raised three boys on their farm in Stilwell, OK, focusing on commercial cattle and dairy goats. In 2011, Jennifer expanded her expertise by obtaining an associate's in veterinary technology and becoming a licensed Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT). She spent over a decade working as an RVT at Patterson Animal Hospital and served as an adjunct RVT at Tulsa Community College. In 2018, Jennifer transitioned to her Extension career in Adair County, managing the county 4-H program, engaging in research and educational initiatives, and implementing practical trials with local producers. She also provided valuable public and community education for both youth and adults.



Celebrating the Successes of our Payne County Cattle Producers

Jennifer Patterson, Extension Educator, Agriculture

The 2024 Payne County Cattle Producers Association Annual Banquet took place on October 24th this year, bringing together over 200 Payne County cattle producers to celebrate and advance Oklahoma's cattle industry. The delicious meal was catered by Steer Inn, whose team always does an outstanding job.



During the event, we honored individuals who have made a lasting impact on our county, our community, and the livestock industry. A special congratulations to the 2024 Hall of Fame recipient, Nathan Anderson. Nathan has been a mentor and supporter to thousands of individuals in Payne County, both young and old—this award was a well-deserved honor.

The 2024 Norman and Jane Durham Youth Scholarship was awarded to Katrell Carpenter from Perkins 4-H, who received a \$1,500 scholarship. Congratulations, Katrell!

Brylee Fuss was recognized with two monetary awards, sponsored by the Payne County Cattle Producers Association, for her achievements in the Grand Champion Steer and Grand Champion Prospect categories at the Payne County Fair. Great job, Brylee!

The Junior Cattle Producers Association, led by Bobby and Christine Clay of Clay Ranch, played an essential role in the event. This dedicated group of young members volunteered their time and effort to help with setup, assist during the cattle contests and dinner, lead the prayer and opening ceremony, and ensure the facility was well-maintained after the event.

Before the evening program, two cattle contests were held, giving local farms and ranches the opportunity to showcase their cattle. We are grateful to Grant Hubbard and Greg Griffith for sharing their time and expertise in judging these contests. Many sponsors and supporters contribute to making this program a success. We extend our heartfelt thanks to each of you for your invaluable support.

Family and Consumer Sciences

Air Fryer Cooking Workshop at Stillwater High School Lincoln Alternative Academy in Collaboration with Our Daily Bread & Simmons Bank Foundation

Dea Rash, Extension Educator, FCS/4-H

Our Daily Bread is the county-wide Food & Resource Center for Payne County. In 2024, Rachael, Condley, Our Daily Bread Executive Director, received a second \$25,000 grant from Simmons Bank Foundation to conduct Phase II of the first successful program conducted in 2023 in



collaboration with Payne County OSU Extension for Stillwater High School Lincoln Alternative Academy students.

The grant was written to provide funding to teach students at Lincoln to make healthy food choices and prepare healthy meals using small appliances. In October 2024, Dea Rash, Payne County FCS/4-H Extension Educator, taught an educational program on MyPlate nutrition and how to use an air fryer including how they work, healthy recipe adaptation, and air fryer safety and cleaning. After students participated in the educational program, Dea and Trinity Brown, Pawnee County FCS/4-H Extension Educator, taught a hands-on workshop where students worked together in groups to prepare three quick, easy, healthy recipes in the air fryer. The program was evaluated using the FCS Youth Nutrition pre-test/post-test. After completing the educational program and air fryer workshop, 49 students received a free air fryer to use at home and they felt confident in their ability to use the air fryer to prepare meals and snacks for themselves and their families.

Horticulture

Kathy Sandefur Memorial Garden

Laura Payne, Extension Educator, Horticulture

As head of the garden committee for Our Daily Bread Resource Center (ODB), I was asked to assist with a Memorial Garden for Kathy Sandefur. Kathy was very involved with Our Daily Bread Resource Center in the early planning stages and through the pains of growing a vision of many people to create a much-needed resource for the Payne County community. She was Chair for the ODB Board of Directors for many years and was a valuable volunteer and friend.

On several occasions I met with a committee that was created specifically for this project. Originally some committee members wanted this garden on the north side of the resource building. However, my suggestion was to make a special place within the existing garden, especially since we were on a very short timeframe. In the community garden you also wouldn't have as much noise from the traffic, bus stop and barking dogs as you would on the north side of the building. The committee agreed and we created a special place in the corner of the community garden.

We then focused on elements in the garden and decided on a bench so a person could sit and reflect while looking into the heart of the community garden. 'Taylor' Junipers were planted to create a wall around the back of the garden and other shrubs to create structure. We left a space around this special garden so at the dedication ceremony, people could take wildflower seeds that we placed out and spread them throughout this area. Next spring this garden will bloom with life.



Kathy and her husband Gary moved to North Carolina to be close to grandchildren. The dedication ceremony was scheduled on a date that the family was planning on coming to Stillwater for a visit. Needless to say, the family was very touched by this garden and the number of friends that attended the dedication, as there wasn't a formal ceremony of her passing for her friends to attend.

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