New Medicare Cards are Coming

The Social Security Number Removal Initiative (SSNRI)

We’re removing Social Security Numbers from Medicare cards to prevent fraud, fight identity theft, and keep taxpayer dollars safe.

Expect to begin to see them in April, 2018 - December 2019! Be sure to open your mail!

Medicare Part D Open Season - October 15- December 7

In September, people with Medicare should have received an “Annual Notice of Change (A.N.O.C.)” letter. This letter will tell you how your Prescription Drug Plan is going to change including Premium cost and how your drugs are covered.

If you would like to shop your Part D Prescription Drug Plan (PDP), please call 620-241-1523, the McPherson County Extension Office to schedule an appointment with Jana McKinney, a certified SHICK (Sr. Health Insurance Counselor of Kansas). She will be glad to go through the medicines you currently take and help you identify the best PDP for you.

If you don’t shop your Part D PDP, you will continue on the same plan that you have. We are accepting appointments now. Please be sure to bring your Medicare card with you and also a list of your current medicines!

Last year, 543 people with Medicare shopped their Part D and collectively saved $327,000! Perhaps you could save too! It’s easy to shop and save! 620-241-1523 to make an appointment.
Fast and Nutritious Breakfast Ideas

No meal is more important than breakfast. This is the meal that breaks the fast from the night before and stokes your metabolism. It's also the meal that gets the brain and body ready to face the day. Going without breakfast, especially for kids, puts them at a huge disadvantage in school and will not help them keep up academically, physically or emotionally even, with their breakfast-fed peers.

Need some ideas?

- Make extra pancakes, waffles or french toast, then, freeze them and reheat for a quick breakfast. You can even sneak in fruit or nuts for more nutrition and vary the taste.
- Another fast meal is eggs and toast. One or two eggs a week are a good source of protein, and you can prepare them in a variety of ways to keep it interesting.
- Muffins are as easy as 1,2,3 and a great grab and go breakfast. Add a juice box or a travel cup of milk and you're all set with time to spare.
- Cold cereal is a staple, but can get expensive, plus extra sugar. Look for store brands and cereals on the top and bottom shelves for the best prices.
- Oatmeal and other hot cereals are ideal a cold winter's day. There are a many flavors, plus you can add your own fruit.
- Cereal bars work in a pinch, but read the labels for sugar and fat content.

Also, if you get a headstart before your household wakes up; that might be the key to helping you prepare breakfast for your family and get yourself ready too.

Halloween is coming! There are lots of safety measures and hints to take note of regarding Trick-or-Treating. I’m sure you’ll be seeing them as Halloween gets closer. One of the articles that you may not see is the one in regards to the flammability of Halloween costumes. Be sure to give careful consideration to costumes that you select for your children or grandchildren. The biggest concern is pumpkins on the front porch that have a candle in them. Children get too close to the flame and their costumes catch on fire, seriously burning children, even killing them. Costumes that have flowing over-skirts or loose articles of clothing are also dangerous. Many costume companies are working to make them more flame-resistant. There are lots of great suggestions for home-made costumes that are close-fitting and do not use masks that could interfere with children’s ability to see traffic.

Why not try giving something to the Trick-or-Treater’s rather than candy. Look around, there are many positive choices that are better for our children than loading them up on candy. Children love pencils, fun erasers, even small bags of popcorn rather than a handful of candy.

Tip of the Month: October

- When you have a disagreement with someone, try to stay connected and engaged with one another instead of being defensive and unkind.
- Consider exhibiting affection, interest, and shared respect. If possible, exhibit your sense of humor even during times of disagreement, but remember to still display respect to the other person.
- Consider turning toward one another in times of disagreement, as this will allow you to react in a positive way, thus promoting emotional connection. Over time, a couple can develop stable, long-term relationships from this behavior.
- Avoid turning against one another in times of difference.
Opioid Crisis

Every day, more than 90 Americans die after overdosing on opioids. The misuse of and addiction to opioids—including prescription pain relievers, heroin, and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl—is a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that the total "economic burden" of prescription opioid misuse alone in the United States is $78.5 billion a year, including the costs of healthcare, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice involvement. How did this happen?

In the late 1990s, pharmaceutical companies reassured the medical community that patients would not become addicted to prescription opioid pain relievers, and healthcare providers began to prescribe them at greater rates. This subsequently led to widespread diversion and misuse of these medications before it became clear that these medications could indeed be highly addictive. Here is what we know about the opioid crisis:

-- Roughly 21 to 29 percent of patients prescribed opioids for chronic pain misuse them.
-- Between 8 and 12 percent develop an opioid use disorder.
-- An estimated 4 to 6 percent who misuse prescription opioids transition to heroin.
-- About 80 percent of people who use heroin first misused prescription opioids.

This issue has become a public health crisis with devastating consequences including increases in opioid misuse and related overdoses. It has also resulted in how these drugs are covered by the insurance companies. Please, keep a close watch on these type of medicines in your medicine cabinet.

We have...Radon Education and Home Test Kits - Radon exposure in homes and other indoor environments is the leading cause of lung cancer death for non-smokers in the United States, and the second overall cause of lung cancer death behind tobacco smoking. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that approximately 1 in 4 homes in Kansas will test at or above the EPA's radon action level of 4.0 picocuries of radon per liter of indoor air (pCi/L). The US Surgeon General and the Kansas Radon Program recommends all homes in Kansas be tested for radon gas. Check out www.kansasradonprogram.org for great fact sheets and helpful information. The test kits are $7.50 each; we have found them to be very accurate.

my Social Security - Put it on your to-do list!

If you do not have a my social security account, you should create one! An account lets you access your Social Security Statement to check your earnings and get your benefit estimates. You can also do a variety of other things such as change your address and phone number, request a replacement Medicare card and get a replacement Social Security card too!

There is no fee to create a my Social Security account, but you must have an email address.

To set up your account, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount It is very user friendly, if you would like to set up an account and need assistance, contact Jana, she will be happy to help you. However, you have to have an email account.
Fall Lawn Care Preparation

Fertilizing

Fall is the perfect time of the year to work on your lawns. Cooler temperatures allow us to work and enjoy getting out and improving our landscape. Now till the first half of October is a great time to fertilize your tall fescue or Kentucky bluegrass lawns. We can also recondition bare spots or reseed the whole lawn at this time. If you could only fertilize your cool-season grasses once per year, this would be the best time to do it. Apply fertilizer to established lawns to make your lawn look best in the spring. A new lawn does not require as much fertilizer as an older lawn. Having a rich, green, thick lawn requires high amounts of nitrogen during the summer months and we need to replenish that supply. A good fertilizer should be 3:1:1 ratio for Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium. Apply 1 to 1.5 pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. The settings recommended on lawn fertilizer bags usually result in about 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. We recommend a quick-release source of nitrogen at this time. Always use ½ the amount of fertilize and spread in one direction then add the other half and go the other direction in the yard. This helps to get an even amount over the entire area that needs the fertilized.

Watering

McPherson County rainfalls have been spotty at best, so watering now is important if soils are dry to help alleviate moisture stress. A good, deep watering with moisture reaching at least a foot down into the soil is much better than several light sprinklings that just wet the top portions of the soil. A soaker hose is a good way to water if used correctly. Regardless of the watering method used, soil should be wet at least 12 inches deep. Use a metal rod or something similar to check depth. Wet soil is much easier to push through than dry soil. Although all perennial plants benefit from moist soils before winter, it is especially important for newly planted trees and shrubs due to limited root systems. Even trees and shrubs planted within the last 2 to 3 years are more sensitive to drought than a well-established one. Evergreens are also more at risk because moisture is lost from the foliage. Trees or shrubs planted within the last year can be watered inexpensively with a 5-gallon bucket. Drill a small hole (1/8") in the side of the bucket near the bottom. Fill the bucket and let the water dribble out slowly next to the tree. Refill the bucket one more time and now you have applied 10 gallons to the tree. Large transplanted trees and trees that were transplanted two to three years ago will require more water.

Seeding

Although tall fescue is our best shade grass that does not mean that tall fescue is all that good in the shade. Large trees that produce deep shade will not allow tall fescue to survive over the long term. I say “over the long term” because fall-planted cool-season grasses will often do well under shade trees through the fall and spring when there is less leaf cover and growing conditions are better (cooler and moister) than in the summer. We often see people plant tall fescue in the shade each fall and then wonder what happens the following summer. The answer is stress from multiple fronts. Sunlight that passes through the leaves of trees has had most of the “good” light that drives photosynthesis stripped out. The grass struggles to make the food it needs for survival and growth. When this poor diet is combined with the additional stresses of drought and heat, tall fescue is unable to survive.

So, what should you do if you have too much shade for your turf? You have three choices. Reduce the shade by pruning up the lower branches of your trees so more early and late sun reaches the turf. This is not practical with many trees because it can destroy the desired shape. A second option is to plant a groundcover that is well-adapted to shady sites such as periwinkle. Another solution would be to mulch the area under the tree.
Tips to Avoid Subsoil Compaction During Row Crop Harvest

Across much of Kansas the soil conditions are dry as of the time of this publication. On one hand that’s a problem for crop production, but on the bright side, soil compaction is less of a problem when soil conditions are dry. Soil water content is a critical factor in soil compaction potential. Moist soils are the most susceptible to compaction. There are different types of soil compaction, but the deep compaction is the main concern at harvest time. Soil compaction occurs when soil particles are pressed together, limiting the space for air and water. The results are decreased permeability, moisture and nutrient stress, and the reduced exchange of gases.

Deep compaction is related to the maximum axle load and is not reduced by distributing the weight across more tires or larger tires. Deep compaction is very difficult to remove with tillage as it occurs at a depth that is beyond the depth of most tillage implements. For example, a moist soil can be compacted to a depth greater than 18 inches by a 10-ton axle load. Removing compaction at that depth will require more horsepower. As the depth of tillage doubles, the necessary horsepower increases by four-fold.

Much agronomic research has been conducted on subsoil compaction. The conclusions are that axle loads greater than 10 tons per axle can be very destructive to soil structure and lead to decreased crop yield potential. These yield effects will be most severe in a dry year, and less so in a wetter year, since soil strength increases as soils dry.

Harvest time is when most fields experience the heaviest loads from combines, silage harvest, and grain carts. Consider the following example:

* An empty 1,050-bushel grain cart weighs ~19,700 lbs.
* A full 1,050-bushel grain cart weighs ~78,500 lbs (assuming grain weight is ~56 lbs per bushel).
* Assume the cart transfers about 8,000 lbs to the tractor through the wagon tongue.
* The grand total for this example is 70,500 lbs.
* If the grain cart has two axles, that equals 17.6 tons per axle.
* A 12-row combine full of corn often exceeds 20 tons per axle.

Of course, producers must traffic fields at harvest time. Two key points for minimizing compaction from heavy axle loads are to limit traffic when fields are wet, and to confine the majority of traffic to end rows when possible. Keep in mind that the first wheel pass causes 70 to 90 percent of the total soil compaction, so preventing random, unnecessary traffic routes on the field is very beneficial.

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Tree Pruning Workshop

November 9, 2017
McPherson County Extension Office
600 West Woodside, McPherson
1:00-3:30 p.m.

RSVP: tregehr@ksu.edu or call Extension Office 620.241.1523

Sponsored by: Kansas Forest Service, K-State Research & Extension, City of McPherson and McPherson Tree Board

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Optimum Sowing Dates and Seeding Rates for Wheat in Kansas

Ensuring that the wheat crop is sown at the optimum date and seeding rate are the two steps needed to ensure that the maximum yield potential can be attained for a given growing season (Figure 1). Sowing date affects yield potential due to stand establishment, soil and air temperatures to which the crop is exposed, tiller formation, disease pressure, etc. Optimum seeding rate depends on sowing date and its adjustment is crucial to ensure the crop will maximize its yield potential.

Here is a list of management practices that needs to be adopted before and after planting to ensure maximum yield potential can be attained in a given growing season.

BEFORE PLANTING:

◆ Soil test
◆ Determine P, K, lime rates
◆ Control volunteer wheat
◆ Variety selection
◆ Clean, treated or certified seed
◆ Prepare seedbed (CT)
◆ Control weeds (NT)
◆ Optimal planting date
◆ Optimal plant population

AFTER PLANTING:

◆ Harvest timing
◆ Disease control
◆ Topdress N,S,CL
◆ Insect control
◆ Weed control
Considerations of Wheat Growth Affected by Sowing Date

1. Sowing wheat early: Sowing wheat at an earlier-than-optimal date can result in lush vegetative growth which will require more water to maintain the canopy later in the growing season. For that reason, producers who graze their wheat are encouraged to plant wheat two or three weeks earlier than the optimal sowing date for grain. Early sowing can also lead to an increased incidence of fall pest infestation, such as Hessian fly, and diseases transmitted by certain vectors more active in warmer temperatures, such as wheat streak mosaic (transmitted by wheat curl mites) and barley yellow dwarf (transmitted by aphids).

2. Sowing wheat at the optimal time: The optimal sowing time differs year-to-year due to environmental conditions, such as temperature and precipitation, but the optimal winter wheat sowing range for different regions in Kansas is shown in Figure 2. Sowing wheat at the optimal time stimulates the right amount of fall tiller formation as well as root development to optimize yields while avoiding a lush vegetative growth. Fall-formed tillers contribute more to yield potential than spring-formed tillers, therefore, it is crucial that about 3 to 5 tillers are well established before winter sets in. Additionally, this tiller formation combined with good crown root system development prior to winter dormancy increases winter hardiness of the crop, and consequently the chances of winter survival.

3. Sowing wheat late: Many reasons may lead producers to plant wheat late. Double-cropping wheat following a late-harvested summer crop, such as soybean or sorghum, is common in many regions of Kansas. Delayed planting date due to environmental conditions, such as low or high soil moisture levels, may also occur. When wheat is sown past the optimal window, it is generally sown into colder soils and the crop is exposed to cooler air temperatures during the fall. Sowing into colder soils will delay wheat emergence, so the importance of a seed fungicide treatment increases as planting date is delayed. Additionally, the crop will experience decreased fall tiller formation because wheat development is dependent on temperatures. An increase in seeding rates in these circumstances is warranted.

According to historical data released by the USDA-NASS crop progress reports, on average, producers in Kansas planted approximately 50% of the crop prior to October 4th and about 90% of the crop prior to October 25th during the 1994-2015 period.

Optimum planting dates for winter wheat according to geographical location within Kansas. Figure adapted from KSRE publication L-818, Kansas Crop Planting Guide

Seeding rate

Optimum seeding rate varies with geographical location in Kansas, following the existing east-to-west precipitation gradient. If sown at the optimal date, optimum seeding rate should be about 1,125,000 – 1,350,000 seeds per acre in the east or under irrigated conditions in the central. Seeding rate should be decreased to 900,000 – 1,250,000 seeds/acre in the central region, where annual precipitation ranges between 20 and 30 inches; and a further decrease in seeding rate should occur in the western third of the state.

Seeding rate should always be discussed along with planting date, and in many times with soil fertility status as well. As mentioned above, later planting dates will decrease the potential number of fall tillers formed and grain yield will be more dependent on the main stem and maybe one or two tillers formed during the fall. Thus, seeding rate should be increased as planting date is delayed. On the other hand, producers with a history of manure application and very high soil phosphorus and organic matter levels have been observing a yield increase from reduced plant populations. The reason behind this response is that high phosphorus levels and increased overall fertility resulting from long-term application of manure can increases the wheat tillering potential, decreasing the need for high plant populations.
Welcome to Fall! The start of a brand new 4-H year! I want to congratulate everyone who participated in the Kansas State Fair. McPherson County was well represented and did amazingly well! I hope you all made it to Hutch to see the exhibits on display! You can find all results online. https://fairentry.com/Fair/Results/1281 Take a look and congratulate your fellow 4-H’ers!

Now it is time to start thinking about the new 4-H year, what goals you will set and what you will learn and accomplish in 2017-2018. Please remember that all enrollment is done online! Beginning Oct 2 you can go in to your 4-H Online profile and re-enroll for the year and pick new projects as well as update your participation (health) form! This program year also starts the Kansas 4-H Program Fee. This can be paid with a credit card on 4-H Online or a check sent to the State 4-H Office. Be sure to see the additional information below about investing in the future of Kansas 4-H. Remember, you can log in at any time during the year to keep up on your project enrollment and check your information.

~ Lindsey

Calendar of Events

Oct 1-7 National 4-H Week
Oct 2 Records Book Due Into Office, Must Be Screened At Club Level First
Oct 2 Club Seal Due, Along with other Various Club Forms and Awards to Office
Oct 2 Ambassador Applications Due
Oct 4-15 Paper Clover Fundraising Week- Tractor Supply Company
Oct 4-15 Paper Clover Fundraising Week- Tractor Supply Company
Oct 5 4-H Council, 7 pm, Ambassadors to follow
Oct 7 Jr Leaders Worlds of Fun Trip
Oct 7-8 484H (Service Weekend)
Oct 16 Newsletter Info submitted to Lindsey
Oct 26 Deadline to purchase Achievement Banquet tickets (Nov 5)

Looking Towards a New 4-H Year
Investing in the Future of Kansas 4-H: The Kansas 4-H Program Fee

Beginning with the 2017-2018 4-H year, Kansas 4-H will implement a $15 per member program fee for all community club 4-H members. The program fee will be paid at the time of enrollment within 4HOnline. Please read Investing in the Future of Kansas 4-H: A Guide to the 4-H Program Fee, a detailed explanation of the fee with Frequently Asked Questions.  Http://tinyurl.com/ks4hprogramfee It will answer many of your questions about the payment process.

Achievements

We have all achieved so much this 4-H year! Mark your calendars and come celebrate with us on Sunday, November 5. We will honor our 4-H’ers beginning at 4:30 p.m. and conclude with a full meal at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church. Please gather between 4:00 and 4:30. Tickets must be purchased by October 26. Cloverbuds and all 4-H’ers who turned in a completed record book can purchase a ticket for $3.00. All other youth (5-18) and adult tickets are $6.00. Please enter at the far west back doors on the South. Come celebrate with your 4-H family!
Officer Training and Family Event

Learn to be an officer, KAPs, How to be a judge, Livestock Judging, STEM, Fiscal Responsibility, Crafts.... there is something for EVERYONE! The third annual Officer Training and Family Event will be held on Saturday, November 4 at Salina South Middle School. This event is open to ALL ages of youth and volunteers. Whether you are an elected officer or not, there are sessions for YOU! And double the FUN because this event includes Central Kansas District and McPherson County. Thanks to First Bank Kansas there is no cost for this event held from 1:00-4:00pm. There is also a provided optional lunch at 12:15 prior to the opening session! Look for breakout session options and registration to be emailed to all families soon!

It’s time for... National 4-H Week!!! Do you have an idea of how to promote 4-H to others? Now is the time to do it! National 4-H Week is October 1-7. Many clubs are planning activities or promotional things during this time. Participate in those, or invite a friend to your 4-H meeting! Spread the word and let people know what you do and learn in 4-H!

To celebrate National 4-H Week, think about entering the annual window display or poster contest! These are open to everyone. Contact Lindsey with questions or if you need space ideas!

To celebrate National 4-H Week, think about entering the annual window display or poster contest! These are open to everyone. Contact Lindsey with questions or if you need space ideas!

There will be two contests for National 4-H Week this year!

1. Clubs or groups can enter a Window Display promoting 4-H. Think of where these might be located...
   - store fronts, school entry way or display case, libraries, etc. These do not HAVE to be in a store window! Displays can be located in any public space within the county. Remember to get permission!

2. Individual Poster Contest. 4-H members can create a standard size poster promoting 4-H. Posters can have any theme the entrant would like. These need to be hung in a public place for the week!

Both contests will be judged for top awards! NEW THIS YEAR... Entries will need to have short video (or picture for posters if you choose) that is posted to the McPherson County 4-H Facebook page or emailed to Lindsey. The video can be a simple phone capture, but should show the display/poster well and can include any other info you would like the judge to know. Videos must be under 2 minutes. Entries need to be in place with videos completed by October 2. Let us know what type of entry you have and where it is located when you email/post the video! Have fun and think outside the box... time to tell people how awesome 4-H is! Awards will be announced at Achievement Night!

Paper Clover

It is time again for the Paper Clover Campaign hosted by Tractor Supply Co. Between Oct 4 and Oct 15 customers can add $1 to their bill to support 4-H! Share with your friends. The store would also LOVE for 4-H’ers or clubs to come out during the event to promote the campaign by showing projects, talking about 4-H, helping carry things out for customers, etc. The more visible 4-H is, the more money will come back our direction! All money from this years campaign will go towards camp scholarships! Please contact Tractor Supply for ideas or to set up a time to come out! Maybe they would even have a spot for your poster or window display for the contest!

Calling All 4-H’ers 12 and Older!!!

A new 4-H year is about to kick off and it is time to decide what you would like to do for the year! Well if your 4-H age this coming year will be 12 or older you are invited to be a Junior Leader! If you are interested in this opportunity of leadership, service and fun, make sure to pick the project: Leadership:Jr. Leaders on 4-H Online to get all the informational emails! A reminder that the group plans to travel to Kansas City to Worlds of Fun on Oct 7. If you have not signed up you still have a few days to do so! Let the Extension Office know your intent no later than Oct 2.
Kansas Youth Leadership Forum... November 17-19

Come and build your leadership skills and potential through workshops, consulting groups, inspirational speakers and more. Check out the available class sessions online now!
http://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/conferences-events/kansas-youth-leadership-forum/

In addition, the 2018 State 4-H Youth Leadership Council will be elected at KYLF. Registration and info is online and will be due by October 16, 2017. KYLF is for all youth 14-18 years old before Jan 1, 2018.

Don’t forget that each qualifying 4-H member is eligible for one activity scholarship a year (this does NOT include the OzSome 4-H Camp Scholarship). The application can be found online:
http://www.mcpperson.k-state.edu/4-h/awards-recognition/scholarships/index.html Don’t forget to check it out if you want to attend any area or state camps or events...
KYLF (above) would qualify!

Fairboard Members Needed

The 4-H Fairboard consists of rotating members each year. That means the group is always in search of new members! If you enjoy the 4-H Fair and would be interested in making it happen, consider applying to be a member of the fairboard. We are looking for youth and adult members to help us plan, organize and run the fair. The applications are available in the Extension Office or can be emailed to you! These are due Oct 2, 5 PM. The McPherson County Extension Executive Board makes the final appointments for this group. If you have questions contact Lindsey.

484H

What is 484H?!? 48 Hours for 4-H’ers to serve our communities and make an impact on the state!

According to The 4-H study of Positive Youth Development, 4-Hers are nearly 4 times more likely to make contributions to their communities. But just how much can they do? In one weekend this fall, 48-Hours of 4-H will challenge club members, adult leaders and 4-H alumni to explore their service capabilities and inspire the community around them by taking part in some type of service project during the weekend of October 7-8, 2017. 4-H Council voted to have 4-H clubs perform their own service activities and report them to the Extension Office! You could even to individual work like raking leaves or cooking dinner for a neighbor! Be thinking about county-wide projects for 2018!

McPherson County is in need of more county-wide project meetings! Do you have a skill you could share with other 4-H'ers or are willing to learn along side them? I would love to see volunteers step-up to help teach projects county-wide as many clubs have trouble finding club leaders for each and every project. Let's encourage our 4-H'ers to learn and grow as a group! Maybe you are already hosting meetings for a club and could open them up to any 4-H'er, or maybe you have a certain project or activity you would like to share with others. No matter if you would like to host one meeting or be willing to take on the entire year, please talk with Lindsey!

Summer Fun

We might have just entered fall, but it’s not too soon to start planning for summer! The tentative 2018 OzSome Camp Dates are June 13-16. Discovery Days will be held May 29-June 1.

4-H Council

***Note 1st Thursday Date***

It’s a new council year! Let’s start it off with a bang and every club in attendance! Council Representatives are a VERY important officer position in your clubs! Plan to meet at 7 PM on Oct 5 at the Extension Office. Remember, each club should have two youth and two adult representatives! This will be our election of officers meeting. Please be thinking about the leadership role you would like to take. Please email Lindsey with your interest!