

Cultural Arts Festival 2026

Contest Information



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Event held Sunday, April 12, 2026

location to be determined

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

To ensure a smooth transition into the Drama contest at 1:30 PM, all Arts & Crafts and Photography entries must be set up 1:00-1:25 PM. Following the drama performances, in-person contests and face-to-face Arts & Crafts judging will begin.

ENTRY DEADLINE: Sunday, March 15, 2026

Look on our website registration links

<https://burnett.extension.wisc.edu/4-h-and-youth/>



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Demonstration Contest

Fair premiums for each demonstration class: 1st - \$3, 2nd - \$2.75, 3rd - \$2.50, 4th - \$2.25

Type of demonstration include two options: Individual or Team

Divisions differentiate time limits:

Cloverbuds	grades K-2	2-3 minutes
Junior	grades 3-5	3-5 minutes
Intermediate	grades 6-8	3-5 minutes
Senior	grades 9+	5-8 minutes

*If the grade levels of team members differ, enter under the level of the oldest member.

Categories

- Leadership
- Dairy
- Communication Arts
- Family
- Health
- Mechanical Sciences
- Plant & Animal Sciences
- Animal Sciences
- Small Animals
- Cultural Arts
- Home
- Clothing
- Environmental Education
- Safety
- Any other not listed above



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Communication Contest

Prizes for each communications category: 1st - \$5, 2nd - \$4, 3rd - \$3, 4th - \$2

- Type:** Team or Individual
- Divisions:** Cloverbuds - Grades K-2 Junior – Grades 3-5 Intermediate – Grades 6-8 Senior – Grades 9+
*If the grade levels of team members differ, enter under the level of the oldest member.
- Category 1** **MEMORIZED 4-H PLEDGE**
Open to first year members and Cloverbuds. Enter this category once in a 4-H career.
- Category 2** **PREPARED SPEECH**
May be on any 4-H appropriate subject. You are allowed to use a speech you prepared for another contest. Props and visuals may not be used. Judges may ask up to 3 questions.
Time limits: Grades K-2 – 2-3 minutes
Grades 3-8 – 3-5 minutes
Grades 9 and up – 5-8 minutes
- Category 3** **EXTEMPORANEOUS**
Each participant will draw three topics and choose one for their speech. Participants will have 30 minutes to prepare their speeches. 3X5 cards will be provided. Other writing materials should be provided by the member.
- Category 4** **PROSE ORIGINAL**
May be read or memorized. Cloverbud & Junior entries: 5 minute maximum time allowed.
Intermediate & Senior entries 10 minute maximum time allowed.
- Category 5** **PROSE NON-ORIGINAL**
May be read or memorized. Cloverbud & Junior entries: 5 minute maximum time allowed.
Intermediate & Senior entries 10 minute maximum time allowed.
- Category 6** **POETRY ORIGINAL**
May be read or memorized. Cloverbud & Junior entries: 5 minute maximum time allowed.
Intermediate & Senior entries 10 minute maximum time allowed. One poem, not a collection.
- Category 7** **POETRY NON-ORIGINAL**
May be read or memorized. Cloverbud & Junior entries: 5 minute maximum time allowed.
Intermediate & Senior entries 10 minute maximum time allowed. One poem, not a collection.
- Category 8** **WRITTEN CREATIVE SHORT STORY**
The story may be on any 4-H appropriate subject, and may be fiction or nonfiction. Stories must be original. Entries may be typed or legibly handwritten. (Typing may be done by someone else.) Each entry must have a cover page giving the following: Title of story, circle: Fiction or nonfiction, and write author's name and age. Entries should have a plastic or paper binder cover.
- Category 9** **WRITTEN CREATIVE POETRY**
The poem may be on any subject, and may be fiction or nonfiction. The poem must be original. Entries may be typed or legibly handwritten. (Typing may be done by someone else.) Each entry must have a cover page giving the following: Title of story, circle: Fiction or nonfiction, and write author's name and age. Entries should have a plastic or paper binder cover.
- Category 10** **CLOVERBUD PROJECT ORAL PRESENTATION**
Anything created from Cloverbud Activity/Record Book between October 1, of current year and date of contest. Open only to youth in grades K-2. Bring your item and share with the judge and audience your creation, something unique about it, and why you made it the way you did.

Related Resources:

Public Speaking & Demonstrations: <https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/public-speaking-and-demonstrations/>

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/wi4hpublications/getting-ready-for-speeches-and-demonstrations/>

Public Speaking: <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/4h983.pdf>

<https://washington.extension.wisc.edu/files/2013/10/17.-4-H-Public-Speakers-Handbook.pdf>

Demonstrations: <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/4H980.pdf>

<https://oneida.extension.wisc.edu/4h/demos/> (this link includes example videos of 4-Hers giving demonstrations)

Effective Presentations: <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/4H984.pdf>

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Drama Contest

Prizes for individual drama category: 1st - \$5, 2nd - \$4, 3rd - \$3, 4th - \$2

Prizes for each team drama category: 1st - \$10, 2nd - \$8, 3rd - \$6, 4th - \$4

4-H Mini Drama

- 4 or more people.
- Must be memorized.
- 15-minute maximum time limit.
- Minimal props and costumes.
- Can be performed in any room.
- Can be original or non-original.

4-H Choral Reading

- Group reading a story, poem, prose, etc.
- Can be done in unison or each member reading parts or both.
- 2 or more people. No props or costumes. 10-minute max.
- Does not need to be memorized.
- Can be original or non-original. Examples of non-original include Readers Theatre or reading a book together.

4-H Storytelling

- Memorization is encouraged.
- Minimal props/costumes.
- 10-minute time limit.
- Can be original or non-original.

Act in a Sack (Extemporaneous Acting)

A team of two to four youth receive a sack of 10 props for an act and have ten minutes to organize a 5 minute act or play using at least 8 props.

The Act should have:

- A situation and characters whose meanings are clear to the audience.
- There must be a problem or conflict for the characters to solve (this is what makes a drama)
- The characters must actively show, not tell, the events of the story.

Examples of situations:

- Recently crimes have been taking place. You are detectives, how can you solve the mystery?
- Orders have arrived from the President to a group of scientists to go explore a new island or creature, or planet. How can you prepare for the trip?
- A group of travelers are all aboard an airplane bound for a foreign country. After some engine malfunctions they are forced to land. They discover they are in a country no one has ever know before. The inhabitants and their customs are very different from those in the U.S.
- A school is closing and all students are to be bussed to another school on the other side of town. The students there seem to be quite different from those at the other school.
- Create your own situation.

Dance or Juggling or Clowning Act

- An individual or team can perform a juggling act or a clowning act.

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Music Contest



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Prizes for each communications category: 1st - \$5, 2nd - \$4, 3rd - \$3, 4th - \$2

Category: Individual
 Group Performance
 Club Performance

Age: Cloverbuds grades K-2 Junior grades 3-5
 Intermediate grades 6-8 Senior grades 9+

*If the grade levels of team members differ, enter under the level of the oldest member.

Division	Title of Presentation
Division A: Instrumental Performance	What instrument?
Division B: Piano Performance (K-5th grade)	
Division C: Piano Performance (6th grade +)	
Division D: Vocal Performance	Accompaniment/background music provided by:
Division E: Vocal Performance Plus	Accompaniment/background music provided by:

Rules & Guidelines:

- Each 4-H member may perform in two events in Divisions A-E either as an individual or group IN ADDITION to club performance. Example: group vocal (Division D) and group instrumental (Division A) and your club's performance OR individual piano (Division B or C) and a group vocal performance (Division D) and your club's performance. An entrant cannot perform a group vocal with two 4-H'ers and a group vocal with two different 4-H'ers as he/she would be competing against himself/herself.
- All clubs are encouraged to bring a large ensemble, as it builds club cohesiveness.
- Individual and group performances are limited to three (3) minutes, except for grades 9-13, who are limited to give (5) minutes. Advanced piano performances are allotted 5 minutes. Points may be deducted if the contestant goes over the time limit.
- Each individual/group entry should consist of one musical selection.
- Each instrumental and piano performer must provide the judge a copy of the music they are performing.
- Voice over recordings are allowed but strongly discouraged. Please try to use an accompanist or background music only. If the singer must use a voice over recording, the singer will need to use a microphone to have his/her voice heard over that of the recorded performer.
- In all divisions, appearance and stage presence will count as part of the score. Remember to dress so that you look and feel your best!
- Judging criteria available online for this and other Cultural Arts Fest contests.
- Monetary awards will be given to 1st-4th place as all other contests within the Cultural Arts Festival.

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Photography Contest

Prizes: 1st - \$5, 2nd - \$4, 3rd - \$3, 4th - \$2 **(Limit 3 entries)**

Photos must:

- All photos must be **4"x6"** and **mounted on 8 1/2"x11" white cardstock**
 - Neatly print on the back of the cardstock: name, club, category of photo, and division
- Have been taken by individual entering the photo after September 1, 2025
- **New for this year:** The prize premium will be doubled for one entry in which a member elects to do face-to-face judging! Members can decide on the day of Cultural Arts Fest which entry to have face-to-face judged. Contact Beth with any questions/concerns. To prepare for face-to-face judging, see the text box on the next page.
- Photography entries must be set up by 5:30 PM on the day of the contest
- **NO EARLY REMOVAL** until all contests have been judged.

	Type of Photo	
Category	Single Print	Digitally manipulated (Must show both original photo and manipulated photo)
Nature/Landscape		
People		
Animal (all kinds)		
Still life (ex: tractor or shoe)		
Water		
Plants/Flowers		
Trick Photography		

	Type of Photo	
Category	Original Photos	Digitally manipulated
Two or more pictures that tell a story (mount each photo separately)		

Division: Cloverbuds – Grades K-2
 Junior – Grades 3-5
 Intermediate – Grades 6-8
 Senior – Grades 9 and up

Digitally manipulated includes using an app or feature on a smartphone, editing software at the photo printing center, online photo editing software, etc. Brighten a feature, blur a background after the photo was taken, change the words on a sign, change the photo to black and white then add one pop of color within the photo, etc.

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Arts and Crafts Contest

Prizes: *Individual* – 1st - \$5, 2nd - \$4, 3rd - \$3, 4th - \$2

Club Entries – 1st - \$25, 2nd - \$20, 3rd - \$15, 4th - \$10

- Maximum of 3 entries-complete separate forms online for each entry
- **New for this year:** The prize premium will be doubled for one entry in which a member elects to do face-to-face judging! Members can decide on the day of Cultural Arts Fest which entry to have face-to-face judged. Contact Beth with any questions/concerns. To prepare for face-to-face judging, see the text box on the next page.
- **If you are unable to attend face-to-face judging, create a 3x5 index card to include the title or description of the entry to explain how it was made.**
- Arts & Crafts entries must be set up within the first 30 minutes of the event on the day of the contest
- **NO EARLY REMOVAL** until all contests have been judged.

Category		Category	
1	Holiday Decoration	16	Original Hand Drawn Cartoon
2	Textiles (weaving, batik, silk painting, tie-dye, etc.)	17	Drawing (pencil, marker, charcoal, crayon, scratchboard, etc.)
3	Fancy Work (latch hook, embroidery, needlepoint, plastic canvas, cross stitch, etc.)	18	Painting (acrylic, oil, watercolor, glass, etc.)
4	Quilts/Pillows	19	Collage/Scrapbook (1 page)
5	Ceramics/Pottery (premolded/precast purchased green ware, etc.)	20	Mosaic
6	Pottery (hand built or wheel thrown)	21	Mobile
7	Sculpture	22	Fine Woodworking (wood burning, detailed cutting or carving, whittling, etc.)
8	LEGO-non-kit	23	Models – Non-Kit
9	LEGO-kit	24	Models – Kit
10	Metal Art (embossing, punching, etc.)	25	Recycled Craft
11	Leather Craft	26	Educational Display (class subject exhibit – plant book, diorama, replica, etc.)
12	Jewelry	27	Club Craft
13	Computer Generated – Original Artwork	28	Club Art
14	Paper Craft (origami, silhouettes, snowflakes, quilling, etc.)	29	Club Banner (new banners only)
15	Greeting Card with Envelope	30	Any other art or craft (must have approval from 4-H Educator. Call or text 608-347-6994 to talk with Beth)

CHOOSE ONLY ONE

Conference/Face-to-Face Judging Suggestions

When it is your turn to meet with the judge, confidently share your name and which 4-H club you belong to.

"Hello, my name is _____ from the _____ 4-H club. Today I am exhibiting my _____"

Be prepared to answer some questions such as:

What was the hardest part of creating this exhibit?

Where did you create this exhibit?

What did you learn while making this exhibit?

What was your favorite part of making this exhibit?

What will you do with this exhibit after this event?

What you do differently if you made an exhibit similar to this?

Have you taught others how to make something similar to your exhibit?

How could you share your knowledge of this art form with others?

When answering questions, phrase your answer by rewording the question. For example, if asked, "What was the hardest part of creating this exhibit?" You could say, "The hardest part of creating this exhibit was..."