

### **The Importance of Calendars**

As 2016 unfolds and the piles of cards and papers received during the holiday are dispersed, you may find that you received several 2016 calendars. If you are like me, I find that the good old fashion paper, hard copy calendar is my lifeline. I am a calendar snob and I am very particular about the type of calendar that works for me. I like to be able to touch my calendar and turn the pages and take pen in hand and enter important dates on the calendar. Thus, those electronic calendars don't attract my attention.

Hopefully you received your 4-H Family Calendar when you went to your first or second Community Club meeting. The format of the calendar was designed by leaders and yes, that calendar design works for me. Please note that the 4-H calendar begins in July and ends on June 30th. (There are complimentary pages that include July and August 2016). This mirrors the 4-H year and the time period that is included in the 4-H Record Book. The 4-H Year is like the school year, or fiscal year as opposed to the calendar year.

Calendars help to keep us organized. Use only 1 calendar to avoid double book or missing meetings. Utilizing a calendar will keep your head clear knowing that you aren't forgetting anything because it is all written on the calendar. Jot down everything on your 4-H Family Calendar. Hopefully the first part of the 4-H year in your calendar already is filled with notes about meetings attended, project reports given, items purchased for projects such as craft supplies or feed for the animals. If the first half of your calendar doesn't look well used, it is not to late to put the calendar into use. You may even want to give each 4-H member in your family a different color pen, so the notes on the calendar can easily be identified as who they belong to. 4-H members can be encouraged to add their own notes to the calendar or circle the meetings they attended.

The notes kept on the 4-H Family calendar will be a great asset when it comes to working on the 4-H Record Book. 4-H members will not have to rely on memory to determine what meetings were attended or when purchases were made or project reports given. The calendar aids in completing the Personal Development Report (PDR) as well as the Annual Project Report (APR). The notes kept on the calendar will help to make the entire 4-H Record Book experience easier. The information on the calendar may also inspire examples of growth that can be included in the 4-H Story. (Like the time your goat managed to unlock the gate and you searched for hours around the neighborhood to locate her.)

Look at your calendar every evening so you have a plan of what is going to take place the next day. Using your calendar will get you organized and you will have the piece of mind knowing that you didn't forget an important event, or purchase that was made.

Staying organized is an important life skill. Children need to learn ways to manage their lives to help reduce stress, and keeping a family calendar is a great way to begin.