

Greetings from the Awards Committee!

The end of the 4-H year is fast approaching and the start of the new year is upon us. We hope you are updating your record books to include the excitement and activities of Kitsap County Fair and the Puyallup State Fair. Now is the time to record the contests and results when they are still semi-fresh in your mind.

The Awards Committee is working hard to get plans firmed up for our annual Awards Recognition Event. Please stay tuned for e-mails and Facebook announcements as we work to make a special time to honor the hard work that our 4-H Youth have accomplished this past year.

We have been updating the awards process in an attempt to recognize more youth in more project areas. We hope you see awards as an important part of your 4-H experience. Just as High School Seniors apply for scholarships and hopeful job seekers fill out employment applications, we want our youth to learn the skills needed to recognize their own past successes and to apply for year-end awards.

Please go to the Kitsap County 4-H website to the awards page to look for updates and applications for the awards. <http://extension.wsu.edu/kitsap/youth/awards/>

Short version: Print out award application. Fill out application. Ask leader to sign. Bring your record book too. Turn in to 4-H office before Friday, October 14th at 4:00 pm. Each project needs to have someone to help judge awards. **Forms without all signatures will not be considered for awards.**

Long version:

We have changed the names of the Certificates of Achievements and the Medals of Honor to Merit Pin Awards since the recipients of these awards will receive 4-H pins honoring their specific projects.

When filling out the award applications, please answer every question and be sure to sign and then ask your club leader to also sign the application. Record books need to be turned in with the application. Youth who are applying for any Merit Pin Awards just need to have their record books filled in as they did to compete in Kitsap County Fair – just to mid-August. The Awards Committee recognizes that doing record books is hard and that not all youth want to put the extra effort into fully completing them. We do not want record book completion to prevent youth from applying for year-end awards and recognitions for their efforts and achievements.

Some awards do require a completed (through September 30th) record book. Please read the requirements of each award carefully.

It is your responsibility to fill out the application form and bring your record book to your leader to ask for their signature on the application form. If you do not have a regular club meeting where you can ask your club leader for their signature, it will be your responsibility to make arrangements to meet your leader to ask for their signature. Club leaders are not required to sign forms if they feel a member is not worthy of a specific award.

If you are able to fill out the application form and bring your record book to your leader to ask for their signature on the application form, please do so. Leaders, please sign and keep the application with the

record book. Record books and applications can then be dropped off at the Kitsap County 4-H Extension Office in the Norm Dicks building in Bremerton.

Applications and record books are due in the 4-H office by Friday, October 14th at 4:00 pm. The office closes at 4:00, so we strongly suggest you have things turned in by 3:30 pm. All applications need to have all signatures to be reviewed by the awards committee.

Judging of record books and applications will take place at a to be determined and then announced time. EACH PROJECT MUST HAVE AT LEAST ONE REPRESENTATIVE TO HELP JUDGE AWARDS. This can be a superintendent, a club leader, a project leader or a parent volunteer. Judging of awards is a large task that needs many hands to complete efficiently.

Club leaders: The awards committee struggled with how best to honor and recognize more youth without making club leaders struggle to fill out lengthy award applications. We hope that you will help us to recognize and honor the effort of more 4-H youth from more 4-H projects. We weighted the application forms to give more value to attendance rather than ribbon color. We felt that if youth were to really succeed they needed to attend meetings. If they did not attend, they could not participate. If they were not participating, they were not sharing and growing with other youth in their project. We do ask that you look at the applications to ensure that what they youth have recorded coincides with your records. We do not expect you to remember what each youth received at each contest, but if there are glaring inconsistencies, please remember that we value your insights and experience. If you do not feel a youth is worthy of an award, we ask you not to sign the application. A 4-H member does not necessarily need to know whether you have signed or not. You do not need to sign it in their presence.

If a member asks you to sign their application and you are unable to look at a member's application and record book before the deadline, please tell the member that you will look at it as soon as possible.

If you are able to bring record books and applications to the 4-H office by the 14th we would greatly appreciate your help. If you would like to ask another volunteer or parent to bring them, that is fine too. If you need to help getting record books and applications turned in on time, please send an e-mail to Heidi Brandt -- brandt5family@comcast.net -- and she will help with arrangements.

Please consider helping at awards judging. The committee has found that having a representative from each project helps to answer any clarification questions. Again, judging awards cannot be left to a small handful of volunteers. We need help to do an adequate job.

Thank you for your help in making the best better!

The Awards Committee