

A close-up photograph of purple flowers, likely grape hyacinths, with some buds and open blossoms. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the same flowers.

April 2026

THE EXTENSION CONNECTION

Wyandotte County K-State Extension

Director's Note

Denise Dias

Wyandotte County Director

In a time when online interactions often replace inperson connections, many communities are rediscovering the value of knowing the people who live nearby. Simple conversations and small gestures can go a long way in creating friendlier, safer neighborhoods. By taking the first step to say hello, residents can build meaningful relationships that strengthen the entire community.

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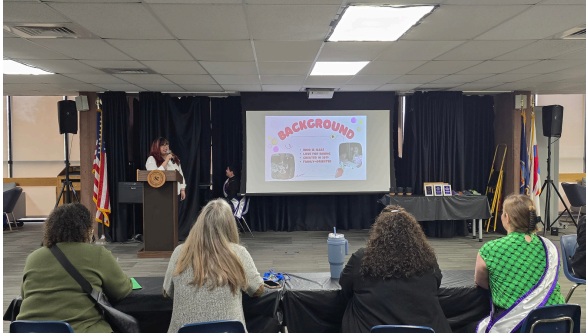
4-H Youth Development

2026 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE

The Wyandotte County Extension Office and 4-H program are proud to celebrate their second successful year co-organizing the 7th Annual Kansas City Kansas Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC). The 4-H agent serves as co-event organizer, partnering with ToolBox KC and Network Kansas to bring this opportunity to Wyandotte County high school students.

The YEC is a competitive showcase exclusively for youth-owned businesses. Students present their ventures through a tradeshow, elevator pitch, formal presentation, and executive summary—much like the format seen on Shark Tank. Participants compete for cash prizes designed to help jump-start their businesses. They also gain valuable exposure to local entrepreneurs, bankers, executives, and other Wyandotte County business professionals who can support their future success.

This year's event, held on March 5th & 6th at the Kansas City Kansas Community College, featured 17 youth-owned businesses and 22 high school participants. A total of \$5,200 was awarded to the top-placing businesses. We look forward to organizing this inspiring event again in 2027!



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Family and Consumer Sciences

APRIL HOLIDAYS AND OBSERVANCES TO ADD TO YOUR 2026 PLANNER

April, the fourth month of the year with 30 days. It marks the start of the new season, featuring diamonds as birthstones, daisies/sweet peas as flower. April arrives with bright skies, budding trees, and the welcome promise of true spring. We hope that your sky is bright and clear and your grass is growing green. Discover everything happening in April—from spring holidays and weather forecasts to gardening tips, seasonal recipes, and the April Full Moon. The month of April gets its name from the Latin word *aperio*, meaning “to open [bud],” because plants really begin to grow now. This month brings us some capricious weather! April rains bring green with vegetation; covered with growing plants or grass. This month also brings out umbrellas and rain boots, to make the rainy days bearable. April is recognized for several, often overlapping, national awareness campaigns. With the most prominent being Stress Awareness Month, Autism Acceptance/Awareness Month, National Donate Life Month, Alcohol Awareness Month, and National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

April Calendar & Holidays

- April 1 is All Fools’ Day—otherwise known as “April Fools’ Day.” Where did this silly day come from?
- April 1 also marks the beginning of Passover.
- April 3 is Good Friday. Learn more about Good Friday.
- April 5 is Easter Sunday. Did you know that Easter’s date is related to the full Moon?
- April 22 is Earth Day. To celebrate, see some Earth Day ideas and activities.
- April 24 is the birthday of Robert B. Thomas, the founder of The Old Farmer’s Almanac!
- April 24 is also National Arbor Day. Find out who started Arbor Day and how we observe this day honoring trees.

“Just for Fun” Days

- Apr. 4 (first Saturday in April): International Pillow Fight Day
- Apr. 6 (first Monday in April): Sweet Potato Day
- Apr. 7: National No Housework Day
- Apr. 10: Gopher Tortoise Day (Florida)
- Apr. 17: Blah, Blah, Blah Day
- Apr. 26: National Richter Scale Day



April reminds us of a universal truth—it’s never too late to bloom. Whether you’re setting new goals, nurturing relationships, or exploring your spirituality, the month offers fertile ground for growth and abundance. For more fun facts;

<https://www.madewithhappy.com/april-fun-facts/>

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Nutrition and Food Safety

STEP INTO SPRING: CELEBRATE NATIONAL WALKING DAY

With Walk Kansas now in full swing and April 1 recognized as National Walking Day, it like the perfect time to highlight the many health benefits of walking in this month's newsletter.

Walking is a simple, accessible, and powerful way to support your health. The best part is that you don't need a lot of time or special equipment to get started. Even walking for just 30 minutes a day can have a positive impact on your overall well-being. Below are just a few of the health benefits that regular walking can provide:

1. Improves cardiovascular health
2. Reduces the risk of heart disease and diabetes
3. Supports brain health
4. Strengthens muscles and helps reduce the risk of osteoporosis
5. Reduces stress and anxiety
6. Promotes mental well-being and mindfulness

Ready to get walking? Before heading out, make sure you have supportive walking shoes, comfortable weather-appropriate clothing, and plenty of water. Don't forget to apply sunscreen when spending time outdoors. It's also helpful to stretch your calf, hamstring, and hip muscles before AND after walking to help reduce your risk of injury.

Finally, consider inviting a family member or gathering a group of friends to walk with regularly. Walking with others is a great way to spend time together while also helping you stay motivated and build a consistent habit.

A short walk each day can make a big difference in your health. Whether you're walking around your neighborhood, at a local park, or as part of Walk Kansas, every step you take is a step towards better health!

For more information on National Walking Day, Walk Kansas, or the health benefits of walking, please visit the following websites:

[Lace up your sneakers and join us for National Walking Day 2026! | American Heart Association](#)

[Walk Kansas | K-State | Kansas State University](#)

[Walk Kansas Newsletter](#)

[Walking | American Heart Association](#)

[Healthy for Good Every Step Counts](#)



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APRIL PLANNING FOR YOUR LAWN, TREES AND GARDENS

Lawn care

Apply crabgrass preventer when redbud trees are in full bloom in April. The preventer needs to be watered in before it will start to work. One-quarter inch of water will be enough to water in any of the products commonly available. Remember that a healthy, thick lawn is the best weed prevention.

For the Love of Lichen

One concern for a number of folks who have shade trees in their yard tends to be “what is this green stuff on my tree?!” The answer is far less troubling. Pictured below are an organism known as lichen, they are the result of a symbiotic relationship between fungi and algae that use the tree for support to get more sunlight. Lichen cause no damage to the tree and are not indicative of problems with the tree, and are thought to be a sign of good air quality.

Vegetables

With mid to late April holding the anticipated frost free date, it's still a great time to plant those brassicas along with root and tuber veggies as well! Now is also a great time for seed starters to be growing those indoor seedlings for those warm gardening days just around the corner.



Community Development

BUILDING COMMUNITY STARTS NEXT DOOR: SIMPLE ICEBREAKERS HELP NEIGHBORS CONNECT

In an era where digital connections often overshadow face-to-face interactions, community experts say one of the strongest ways to build a safer, friendlier neighborhood begins with a simple step: meeting the people who live next door.

Across the country, community organizations are encouraging residents to re-engage with their neighbors, emphasizing that small conversations can have a big impact on quality of life. Whether someone is new to the block or has lived in the same home for years, experts note that breaking the ice doesn't have to be complicated or awkward.

Among the most effective openers are simple introductions. A friendly "Hi, I'm _____. I realized we've never officially met" remains a reliable way to start a conversation. Other easy topics—such as asking how long someone has lived in the neighborhood or inquiring about favorite local shops—can open the door to longer, more meaningful exchanges.

Compliments are another low-pressure way to connect. Commenting on a garden, a pet, or seasonal decorations gives neighbors something comfortable to talk about and often leads to shared interests. Community leaders say that even small gestures, such as offering extra baked goods or asking to borrow a tool, can help form natural relationships built on trust and helpfulness.

Seasonal greetings also play a role. Observations about weather, holiday décor, or yard projects provide timely opportunities to start conversations without feeling intrusive. And for those who enjoy hosting, a simple invitation to a casual gathering—no elaborate planning required—can help create a stronger sense of belonging on the block.

Neighborhood engagement advocates emphasize that these interactions do more than create friendly moments. Communities where neighbors know one another tend to experience higher levels of safety, stronger social support during emergencies, and increased civic participation.

In an age of busy schedules and digital distractions, the movement toward reconnecting with neighbors underscores a timeless truth: community begins with human connection. And sometimes, that connection starts with nothing more than a smile and a simple hello.



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Upcoming Events



- April 1-** K-State Garden Hour
- April 2-** EMG Advanced Training
- April 11-** Kansas Healthy Yard Expo
- April 15-** Hypertension Awareness and Prevention Program Kick-Off Meeting
- April 30-** Steam Night

Connect with us!



K-State Extension is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may be requested by contacting the event contact Jo McLeland two weeks prior to the start of the event (insert deadline date) at (913-299-9300 or jo1@ksu.edu). Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

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