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## Lake County 4-H'ers gear up for modified animal showings

Mary Freda  
Aug 7, 2020

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**C**ROWN POINT — When the COVID-19 pandemic struck the Region, Mackenzie Hein didn't fret about her two-piece navy prom dress or June graduation.

She was more concerned about wishing a final farewell to her senior year at the end of summer. The "one last hurrah," as Hein put it, is known as the Lake County Fair.

But this year, the final goodbye will look different. Though Hein is still able to show her four pigs in person at the Lake County Fairgrounds, it won't be the same.

In late May, the Lake County Fair was canceled because of concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. The Porter and LaPorte County Fairs also were canceled.

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 **UPDATE: Porter, LaPorte county fairs canceled**

 **UPDATE: Lake County Fair canceled**

The cancellation caused 4-H officials to get creative, with many exhibiting 4-H projects online through videos and hosting virtual animal auctions.

However, on Saturday and Sunday, Lake County 4-H'ers will be able to show their animals in person in an event that is closed to the public, said 4-H Livestock Superintendent Amy Hein, who is not related to Mackenzie Hein.

Amy Hein added 4-H'ers also can show their animals virtually.

"We have a very large group of seniors this year in the Lake County 4-H program, more than I can remember in the livestock barns in recent memory," she said.

"That large group of seniors is a group of very active kids that have done a lot throughout their 4-H careers. Their families are very active. ... There is an excessive amount of seniors this year in 4-H, and because of that, we decided to try to do everything in our power that they could get their last fair."

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## Indiana State Fair canceled due to coronavirus pandemic

Hein said the shows will be limited to under 150 people — around of 50% decrease from normal years, adding the show wouldn't have been able to go on without the approval from the Lake County commissioners.

The beef show will be 9 a.m. Saturday, with the sheep show following at 11 a.m. The swine show will be 9 a.m. Sunday, with the goat show to follow at noon.

To participate in this year's virtual Lake County 4-H auction on Aug. 15, bidders can register at [kraftauctions.hibid.com/auction/227010/olo-lake-county-4-h-livestock-auction/](https://kraftauctions.hibid.com/auction/227010/olo-lake-county-4-h-livestock-auction/), said Lake County 4-H Auction Committee Chairwoman Deanne Nagel.

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"We will also offer online bidding and phone bidding to buyers that do not wish to participate in the live event," Nagel said previously.

### **Ten years in 4-H**

A Hebron High School graduate, Mackenzie Hein has been showing animals her entire 4-H career. She began showing horses 10 years ago and started showing pigs six years ago — the same amount of time she has been in 4-H Junior Leaders.

She has done non-animal projects, too, including foods, ceramics, jewelry making, exploring through books and movies, Legos and "a lot of poster projects."

"I am beyond thankful for everyone that's put all this hard work in. It touches my heart that they care this much about putting on a show for us, especially for us 10-year members," she said.


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While she's not sure about how her last shows are going to go — a swine show on Sunday and a horse show on Aug. 15 — Hein said "there's definitely going to be tears."

"Four-H has been my life for the past 10 years," said Hein, who plans on attending Marian University in Wisconsin to study biology through the university's pre-veterinarian program.

 **Bidding goes virtual for 4-H exhibitors**

 **Local 4-H kids make the best of it after fairs canceled this year**

Like Hein, Conner Hayden, of Lowell, will be celebrating his 10th and final year as a 4-H'er.

Hayden, a Lowell High School graduate who grew up on a cattle farm, said he has shown cattle for the entirety of his 4-H career, and along the way has shown pigs and sheep.

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During the year, Hayden said he shows cattle with the Indiana Junior Beef Cattle Association, which typically begins its shows in the spring. He participated in one IJBCA show before the rest were canceled for the year.

"... You look forward to spending the week at the fair and showing your animals that you've worked on all summer long and winter long and then to sell them at a live sale, but now we take pictures of them in our yards to post them and then sell them that way," said Hayden, who is showing a steer, a pig and lambs this year.

## **Gallery: Lake County Fair 2019**

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## **Frugal Friday satisfies tastes buds at Lake County Fair**

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