

# The Interior News-Way

A Newsletter By Leaders for Kansas 4-Hers in the Geology Project

Vol. 1, Issue 4, Mar 2026

## In This Issue

“The Riley County Geology Day” by Genevieve Crouch

“Geology Display Protection” by Knox Crouch

## What’s That Specimen?

Can you identify the specimen below? No worries if you can't! The image is taken from the weebly website, so take a look around and see if you can find it.

<https://kansasgeology.weebly.com>



Last Issue’s Answer: A carbonate mineral, Dolomite

## Online Resources

The Kansas Geological survey has geologic maps for almost all the counties in the state. It is an ongoing project, so not every county has an updated, detailed map, but there is at least a cropped section from the state geologic map.

<https://www.kgs.ku.edu/General/Geology/index.html>

## News and Updates

### Educational Grants

The State Geology Subcommittee has set up a new committee for Educational Grants. They are setting up new guidelines and requirements for applicants. Please look out for new information on how to get a grant.

### Topeka Gem and Mineral Show

Many of you know that the Topeka Gem and Mineral Show has had 4-H boxes displayed and judged during the show. This year, due to a sudden need for a change in venue, they will NOT be hosting 4-H geology boxes. Hopefully we will see them again!

### State Fair Clerks

Want to learn about how the Geology project is handled at State Fair? Want to get a closer look at the judging process? We will be looking for more people to be clerks at the State Fair this year. Clerks help with taking notes for judges, setting up the display for the year, and just make the whole process smoother. Please reach out if you’d like to help.

### State Geology Trip

The planning for our annual state trip has started! While not all the details are set yet, we can tell you we will be headed to Southeast Kansas this year. The dates are set for June 12-14.

Keep an eye out for registration to begin soon! It will be available on the state website when it opens. <https://www.kansas4-h.org/educational-experiences/project-based-events/conferences-events/geology-field-trip/>

### State Project Resources

The Kansas 4-H website has a Geology Project page. It contains information for 4-Hers, their parents, and leaders. One of these is the leader notebook, which contains activities to guide learning in the project. It is located under the Project Materials tab, under Project Leader Resources. You can also find the previous issues of this newsletter, resources for your boxes, and more. <https://www.kansas4-h.org/projects/natural-resources/geology/>

If you have a submission you would like to have considered for the newsletter, you can send them, along with your name and county, to Natasha Graham, the 4-H Geology Project Leader in Johnson County, at [nlgraham95@gmail.com](mailto:nlgraham95@gmail.com)

## The Riley County Geology Day



*Geologic History of Kansas, Keynote Speaker, Andy Connolly*

The Riley County Geology Day was a huge success. It was an all day event held on January 21, 2026, at Pottorf Hall at the Riley County Fairgrounds. Geology project leaders from several counties came and assisted with the regional workshops and specimen identification opportunities for 130 participants. The event included a guest speaker, presentations, quiz bowl, and a geology judging contest.

The guest speaker Andy Connolly, a Science and Communications Specialist from the Kansas Geological Survey, gave the keynote presentation called "Geologic History of Kansas." He discussed the many types of environments that existed over the geological history of Kansas and the types of fossils that could be found during past times.



*Educational Workshop*

Wally Mack and Knox Crouch gave a Geology 101 workshop which included safety tips and packing for a trip. It also included KGS stratigraphy maps and topographical maps to aid 4-Hers with a field trip guide. Genevieve and Brenden Crouch gave project talks on the state fair rules on Educational Displays as well as the other classes of geology box displays that can be entered in the state fair. This included the Mineralogy, Petrology, and Paleontology boxes.



Earthquake “Quake Shaker” Workshop

Sue Williams was assisted by Sienna Williams and Zoe Crouch in an earthquake workshop. Participants enjoyed marshmallow fluff, chocolate, and graham crackers while learning about faults and tectonics. Rob Reves educated 4-Hers on Lake Superior Agates and Crista Burnett gave a fossil workshop. Participants had the opportunity to have specimens identified and many took advantage of the pool of knowledge there.



Specimen ID Session

Overall the Riley County Geology Day was a huge success. From learning about geological time to answering questions at the quiz bowl, everyone had fun and learned something new. We are thankful to Riley County for their generosity for sharing their fairgrounds and the leaders who made the day possible.

-Genevieve Crouch, Sedgwick County

### [Congrats to the Geology Judging Contest Winners](#)

#### Juniors

1st place: Corbin Bullard, Zoe Crouch, Chase Klenda

2nd place: Anne Hawpe, Raymond Arnaud

3rd place: Andrew Neier

#### Seniors

1st: Brenden Crouch

2nd: Genna Crouch

3rd: Corbin Haug



February 14, 2026, members of Sedgwick County 4-H including: County Geology leader Crista Burnett, State Geology Leader Dave Goldak, Sedgwick County Extension Agent Stephanie Hays, Bruce Hays, Brad Crouch, Club Leader Shannon Crouch, Knox Crouch, Genna Crouch, Zoe Crouch, and Brenden Crouch, got a head start on preparing the Geology Department display shelves for the county fair; showing their love for Geology and 4-H. The project was accomplished in about 2 hours.



If you are unaware, last year 13 different Geology exhibits on display at the state fair were robbed of specimens. This raised large concerns on the safety of open exhibits at fairs. Sedgwick County is not going to risk it. The Crouches asked Home Depot to donate wood and hinges for the project and obtained what was necessary mostly free of charge. The previously mentioned group met on St. Valentine's Day and quickly accomplished the task. They modified the **pre-existing** county display shelves by adding 2x4s to decrease shelf spacing and hinged flaps that could lock the boxes in, preventing them from being slid open without permission.

Although theft in the county fair is not common, this will help prevent any theft from happening. It relieves volunteer exhibit monitors from worry who might be overwhelmed with the many displays. If your county is interested, the State Geology Committee is encouraging steps to be taken in order to protect specimens and

displays. The photos below showcase the simple modifications made. A work day at the state fair to modify shelving will be scheduled with Chandra Plate. Many 4-H geology leaders have volunteered to go and help in Hutchinson. Right now a work date is set at the Kansas State Fairgrounds for June 30, 2026. If you are interested in volunteering or would like to make a donation for materials please reach out. More heads and hands could be used so a solution can be found and worked on quickly in the limited time.

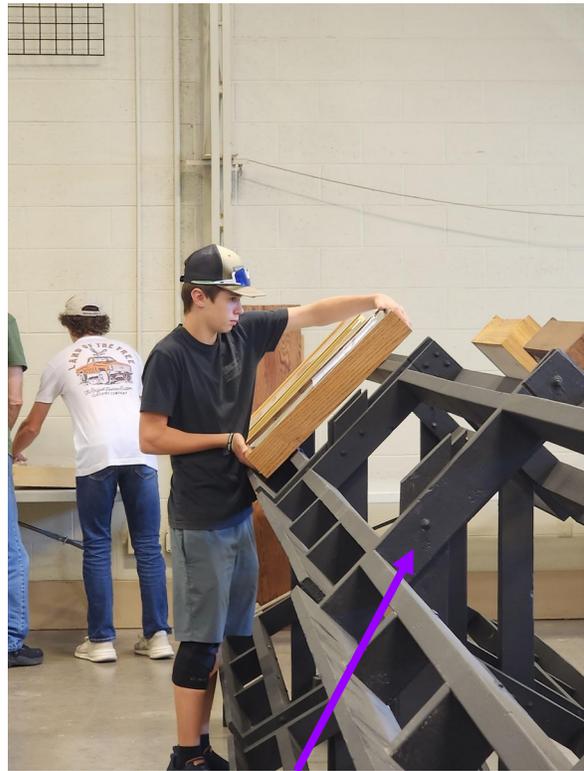


On these shelves in particular, a 2”x4” was added to the top of each shelf to prevent the Plexiglas from being slid upward while boxes rested on the rack. Then 1”x3” and 1”x6” boards were added with hinges to each shelf to prevent boxes from being taken off the rack. A combination lock will be installed at the end of the shelves on the wood flaps and a more simple locking mechanism on the other end. Each county may have a unique set of shelves that can be modified with a little ingenuity.



These are photos of the current 4-H geology shelving at the State Fair in Hutchinson.

There are four shelves per row and three rows total. Twelve shelves in all need modifying.



They have their own unique construction. The shelves are all constructed with bolts. And have fitted corners with Rabbet Joints.

**-Knox Crouch, State Geology Subcommittee President**

### **4-H Building Security Tightens at the Kansas State Fair**

by Chandra Plate, 4-H Youth Development Specialist

This year there will be more security cameras in the 4-H Buildings at the State Fair. As mentioned above, there will be a workday at the Kansas State Fairgrounds on June 30th. There will be more information on times coming. All are welcome to participate in this work day. There has also been a rule change that will allow you to secure your own individual box. Please note the following rule change:

As outlined in the General Rules of the Kansas State Fair 4-H Exhibitor Handbook, "Exhibits at the Kansas State Fair are entered and displayed at the risk of the exhibitor." For projects displayed in box-style exhibits such as Entomology or Geology -- that must be opened for judging, exhibitors may choose to include a closure mechanism on the box. While closures are not required, their use will not result in a ribbon deduction. Acceptable options include velcro strips or hook-style fasteners. Closures should not interfere with the box's ability to be displayed on the shelf and must not be lockable.



Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.