

## *Alameda County 4H Skit Night Manual 2013-2014 Edition*

This year, we are happy to announce the addition of a 30 to 90 second commercial category in addition to traditional skits. Your club can enter a traditional skit, commercial, or both. **The traditional skits are being reduced to 12 minutes.** (Previously they were 15 minutes.) We hope that this manual of tips and guidelines helps your club create a winning skit or commercial.

**General Guidelines** (applicable to both traditional skits and commercials): Each skit or commercial is to be written by the 4H youth members. As well as being written by the youth members, the skit needs to feature youth members as the actors and stagehands, as no adults are allowed onstage or backstage during the skit. Also, the props, backdrops and costumes have to be made by the members. All props need to be made by the members, adults may be there to supervise, but should only step in to help if there are safety issues.

Each component of the skit production process can be counted as a committee. This means that your club can have a Script Writing Committee, Prop committee, Costume Committee, and Performing Committee with separate chairs for each.

**Script Writing Committee:** It is better to work in small groups to write and revise scripts. Even with a small group, it may be hard to get all of the members together so don't forget technology, conference calls, Skype or other video calling software, and email. Since skit night is in March this year you should get a group together to write the script ASAP so that your members can get started practicing. Make sure that the script does not take up the whole allotted twelve minutes. The twelve minutes includes not only performance time, but time to set-up and take-down. Allow between two and three minutes total for your group to get on and off the stage, leaving about nine to ten minutes maximum to

perform the skit. If the skit goes overtime, four points will be deducted from your total.

**Prop Committee and Costume construction Committee:** Props and costumes need to be designed and constructed by 4H youth. You don't need to spend a fortune to have good props in your skit. There are many cheap or even free ways to procure supplies. Appliance stores can usually provide you with refrigerator, stove and oven boxes if you simply ask. Paint stores sometimes give discounts if you tell them what you need it for. Dollar tree, Thrift Stores and clearance bins are usually great places to find inexpensive supplies and costumes. You can also talk to grandparents who have lots of old fabric and building supplies. In this phase of skit production, the only thing parents should be used for, is to drive and transport props and costumes.

**Performing Committee:** Directing and performing is the sole responsibility of the youth members. Don't forget rule number 1: Have Fun! Skit is a great experience for all involved. All of your practices will not be perfect. You may have absent members, rowdy kids or lines not learned. All of these things will be challenges, but don't be discouraged, simply use your skills to resolve any problem. Let your challenges make the Best Better.

**Commercial Committee:** There is a 30 to 90 second time limit on commercials. If you go over 90 seconds, 2 points will be deducted from your final score. Commercials will be performed in front of the curtain between skits. There will be no backdrops used and no prop can be bigger than a two foot by two foot cube or a folding chair. The commercial needs to advertise 4H.