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Virginia 4-H Community Improvement
(Including the Home Grounds)

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To the 4-H Club Member:

This program area of nationwide concern is planned to encourage you to do a better job of improving your home grounds, your community, and your appreciation for better surroundings in general. While being a part of such worthwhile interests, you have the opportunity to achieve much through your individual efforts and as a member of a group of interested young citizens.

Seek the advice and guidance of others such as your parents, your 4-H leaders, your extension agents, and the many other people who are anxious to be helpful. Make the most of your opportunities to grow individually while developing into a better citizen for serving your community.

Your Name ____________________________ County _________ Age ___
Address _______________________________________________________
Club Name _____________________________ Club Year _________
Years in Club Work __________
Adult Leaders'Name ____________________________________________
Extension Agents' Name _________________________________________
Objectives:

1. To respond to the national challenge for each community throughout the State and Nation to remove ugliness from the countryside by:
   a. Controlling litter and combating vandalism
   b. Encouraging individuals, organizations, public officials, industrial leaders, and others to remove or conceal ugly objects or places under their supervision.

2. To add beauty to our surroundings by:
   a. Making all community surroundings more attractive
   b. Improving each members' home grounds
   c. Gaining a fuller knowledge and appreciation for plants, their habitat, their effective uses, and their general maintenance
   d. Encouraging preservation of our national surroundings.

3. To develop better citizens through:
   a. Development of leadership talents and good character
   b. Development of family and group relationships by working with others on a program of nationwide concern and importance.

4. To explore career opportunities in the related fields of land use planning, creative design, and conservation of natural resources.
Your 4-H Club can take the lead in making other local young people interested in improving the appearance of the community. Ask your parents, adult leaders, professional workers in community beautification, leaders of organizations, and others for ideas and guidance for worthwhile activities.

**Note:** At the beginning and during the progress of projects or activities, 4-H Club members are urged to make good photographs for publicity and promotion, records, and other uses.

**Individual and Group Activities:**

Project requirements are in 2 parts:

a. Home Grounds Beautification (individual activities)

b. Community Beautification (individual and group activities)

**A. HOME GROUNDS IMPROVEMENT**

Complete at least 1 of the 3 activities listed under Required and at least 4 of the activities listed under Optional Activities for each year of work in Unit II. To the left of the activity number, write the project year (example 1967 - 1, 1968 - 2, etc.) in which you are doing the work. Practice neatness, imagination, accuracy, and thoroughness.

Required:

1. Map Your Home Grounds to Scale.

Instructions: a. Use a scale such as 1" = 10'; 1" = 8'; or 1" = 20'
b. Use a sheet of paper large enough for the map plus a border area of three to four inches.

c. Following the mapping instructions in Extension Bulletin 217, "Design of Home Grounds" and/or 4-H Teaching Aid, "Mapping to Scale".

d. Fold the map so it can be fastened within the covers of the Record Book.

e. Complete the following information in addition to the map:

(1) **General information:**

Define scale: ____________________________

Which scale did you use? ___ inch ___ feet.

Distance to nearest neighbor's house _____
(from your house)

Describe the setting for your house: (wooded, hilly, etc.) ____________________________

(2) **The yard (site):** ____________________________

Shape of your yard (square, rectangle, etc.)

Size: Length _____ ft.; width _____ ft.

Slope: (Check ✓) level ____, steep ____,
rolling ____, other (describe) ________
(3) **The soil:** (See Extension Bulletin 253, "Soil", for more soil information)

General quality: good __, fair __, poor __

Topsoil depth (to rock, tight clay, etc.)

________ inches.

Type: Sandy loam __, heavy clay __,

deep sand __, other (describe) __

______________________________

Drainage (rate of water movement down through soil) good __, fair __, poor __

(4) **The house:**

Style (Early American, Ranch, etc.) __________

Walls or siding material (brick, wood, etc.)

______________________________

Color: roof ________, siding______, trim ______

How many outside doors ___________

How many first floor windows _______

How many basement windows _______

(5) **List of other buildings** within 100' of the house: _______________________

_________________________________
(6) **Plants in your yard:**

How many trees ______. Names: ________, ________, ________, ________, ________.

How many evergreens ______. Names ________, ________, ________.

How many flowering shrubs and vines ______. Names: ________, ________, ________.

(7) **List special interest natural areas or features:**

(rock outcroppings, good views, brook and others)

List and briefly describe _______________

____________________________

____________________________

2. Survey and make an organized check list of needs for your home grounds. Consider usefulness, attractiveness, and problems. Check each need in the order of importance such as 1st, 2nd, etc., regardless of the order of the record book check sheet listing. Also, add other items if needed.

_______ General clean-up

_______ Improved entrance-way

_______ Better drive

_______ Parking and turning area
Build or improve walk
Yard fence, build or repair
Painting, house and other buildings
Remove worthless plants
Grade for better drainage
Establish a vegetable garden location
Level the soil surface
Build a retaining wall
Make a better lawn
Plant trees
Screen unsightly views
Provide outdoor lighting
Develop an outdoor living area
Plant flowers
List other needs ________________________________


3. Know more about the State Flower (tree).

Common Name ____________________________
Scientific Name ___________________________
Size: Average height _____ feet  Spread _____ feet
Type of branching habit __________________________

Flowers:
   Color or colors ________________________________
   Season of flowering ____________________________

Draw the following sketches in the blocks and draw lines connecting the flower parts listed:

[Diagram of flower parts: Petal, Stamen, Pistil, Stem]

Flower
Fruit:

Color: Summer __________ Fall __________

Brief description of fruit ____________________________
Write a short essay (250 words or less) about the state flower (tree) including: Why it is the state flower, its natural habitat, special problems, landscape uses, legend, etc.

Optional Activities:

Do any 4 of the following each year: (in addition to at least one of the "required").

4. Prepare a scrapbook or notebook of Home Grounds Improvement Ideas.
Include: Cover for 8½" x 11" sheets or regular scrapbook sheets. Attach the sheets in the cover. Use the cover title: "Home Grounds Beautification Ideas".
In the lower right corner of the cover have your name, county, address, age, name of your 4-H Club, years of club work.
Prepare an index of subjects: Include 1 to 3 pictures of your home grounds.
Write a one-page summary of your home grounds experiences and views (what was done, cooperation, future plans, what you learned, etc.)

5. **Plan, plant, and care for a flower bed or border.** Use at least 3 different annuals, or 3 perennials, or 3 bulb plants, or a combination.

Make a sketch of your flower bed or border:

**Show:** Length and width; arrangement of flowers by names; colors; height. (Attach the sketch to this report and label Flower Border).

When were flowers planted? ________________________
Date of first flowers: ________________________
Special uses of flowers: ________________________
Pest problems: ________________________
Controls used for pests: ________________________
Number of times cultivated or hoed: ______________
6. Explore a career. Write to 3 universities or colleges, in or out of the state; and ask for descriptive outlines of courses and career opportunities in 3 of the following:
   a. Landscape design
   b. Horticulture
   c. Sociology and land use
   d. City planning
   e. Outdoor recreation
   f. Conservation and natural resources

List the schools contacted: ______________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
How many schools sent materials? ____________________________________________

Write a paragraph about each of the 3 fields for which you requested information. (Attach to this sheet.)

7. Visit a plant nursery, florist shop, or arboretum. Write a brief account of what you saw and learned.

Include: Name and location of place or placed visited ____________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Type of Establishment: _______________________________________________________
Type of training needed to manage the establishment: ____________________________
Your impressions: ____________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
8. Prune a flowering or evergreen shrub, using recommended methods.

   Name of plant or plants: _________________________
   When did you prune it? _________________________
   Why did you prune it? _________________________
   Where did you get pruning information? ______
   What did you learn? _________________________

9. Help groom the home grounds.

   List the things done during the year: ______________
   _________________________
   _________________________
   _________________________
   _________________________
   What did you learn? _________________________


    You may use the entire yard area for the story or parts of the yard. Make each pair of "before" and "after" pictures from the same location. Use not more than 8 pictures mounted on heavy weight paper and fastened in the record book. Carefully plan the photographs so that a minimum of words are needed to help tell the story. Use a descriptive title for the picture story.
11. Plant or transplant trees and/or shrubs.

How many plants were planted? ________________________

How many plants were transplanted? ________________________

Name the plants ______________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

When was the planting done? ______________________________

Describe briefly the method used and what you learned:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________


After the plant specimens are prepared, fasten them in a folder or scrapbook. On the front cover, use a descriptive title. In the lower right corner of the cover include: your name, county, address, age, name of your 4-H Club, and years of 4-H Club work. Prepare and include an index page. Include a minimum of 10 plants. For each plant, prepare the following information:

Common name ________________________________________

Where collected ______________________________________

Date collected ______________________________________

Is it a native plant? ________________________________

Landscape use ______________________________________
Brief description of natural growing conditions: ___

____________________________________________________________________________________

13. **Give a demonstration or make a talk on some phase of home grounds beautification or ornamental horticulture.**

   Some suggested topics are: (Imaginative titles are encouraged.)

   Making a Home Grounds Map to Scale
   Pruning Plants with a Purpose
   Developing a Landscape Plan
   Transplanting Trees and Shrubs
   Care of Landscape Plantings
   Planning the Flower Border
   Growing House Plants

   And you can think of additional topics.

**B. COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION**

   Participate in one or more of the following activities each year. (Credit can be given for a project lasting more than one year.)

1. Clean-up and/or litter control activity or campaign for a public or special area. **Special Note:** Be sure, if possible, that action photographs are made during the planning and action phases of the program. Also, be sure that accurate records are kept of meeting dates, number of participants, etc.
Describe the area dealt with __________________________

Clean up ________, litter control ________, both ___

Number of 4-H Club members involved __________________________

Number of other youth organizations represented ______

Number of members __________________________________________

How many 4-H adult leaders were involved ________________

Other leaders __________________________________________

Date of first planning meeting _____________________________

Briefly, what happened? ________________________________________________

______________________________________________

Date of first action meeting _____________________________

Briefly, what happened? ________________________________________________

______________________________________________

Do you think the activity was successful and worthwhile? ______ Why? _____________________________

Is the activity to be continued or repeated? ______

Discuss briefly ________________________________________________

2. Help survey your neighborhood or community (or other selected area) for general appearance. **Note:** Mark the outline on a map or make a sketch of the area viewed.
Name and general location of the area ________________

General impressions (entire area) ....................

Appearance of buildings (public and private-including homes) ........................

Appearance of grounds ................................

Absence of dangerous intersections ................

Street markers (in towns) .............................

Mailbox appearance and names ......................
(rural mail delivery)

Condition of vacant lots ..............................

Roadside appearances .................................

Control of trash & litter ............................

Other ...................................................

Good  Fair  Poor

Individual Total

Team or group total

What are your conclusions? _______________________

________________________________________________________________________

What does your group recommend? ___________________

________________________________________________________________________
3. Give a demonstration or talk on community beautification to an organized group or for a special occasion.

Some suggested topics:

- Remove Ugliness from Your Community
- Add Beauty to Your Community
- Are Adults Setting Good Community Examples?
- How Tourists View the Community
- Beauty and Economic Values
- Restoring and Preserving Historic Sites and Places
- How to Organize and Conduct a Clean-Up Campaign
- Community pollution Problems
- Litter Control Costs
- Vandalism and the Community
- The Natural Beauty Program

You can think of many other worthwhile topics for demonstrations or illustrated lectures. Emphasis should be placed on such important factors as conditions for more enjoyable living, economic values, citizenship, careers, and others. Employ the use of such tools or visuals as maps, charts, photographs, models, drawings, samples, and other aids.

4. Help develop a program for restoring a historical place of interest in your area or community.
Virginia has a rich background of historical interest to be found in every community. If all areas are not of a state or national acclaim type, they can have a local historical importance. Such interests might include: churches, cemeteries, public or semi-public buildings, special trees or plants, old mills and mill ponds, waterways, war relics or areas, covered bridges, and many others.

Included in the organized information:

Name of the site, place, or article ____________________________

Dates of importance ________________________________

Why is it considered to be of special interest? ______

_____________________________________________________

What was the source of information? ________________

_____________________________________________________

How are you impressed by the place, site, or article of interest? ________________________________

_____________________________________________________

Note: Some good sources of background information are elderly residents of an area. Some direct comments or quotations should be used, when possible, in the report.

Selected photographs (copies of prints) or original pictures of places and articles should be used when possible.
4-H youth interests could result in the preservation or restoration of worthwhile historic areas, places, or things.

5. Involve an organized youth group (other than 4-H) in a cooperative community improvement project with your 4-H group.

Name of the group or groups involved ______________________
How many individuals were involved? ____________________
What was the special activity? _________________________
How did the combination of efforts come about? ______
How many adult leaders were involved? _________________
Do you consider the cooperative efforts satisfactory? ___ or unsatisfactory ____?
Are the cooperative efforts or similar ones to be continued? _________________________________
How many organized youth groups are there in your community? ____________________________
Do you belong to others than 4-H? ______________________
What are your views about cooperative efforts by different youth groups on Community Beautification activities? ___ _________________________________
6. Visit, with a group, a place of recognized historical interest, Natural Beauty, or landscape design. Write a brief report (250 to 500 words) about your observations and what you learned. Include:

   Why the particular site was visited _________________
   Why is it considered outstanding?__________________
   What are the high points of interest?_______________
   Who of importance was involved?__________________
   How did it affect you as to outlook, appreciation, changing of opinions? ____________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________________________

7. Make a list of state and/or national parks, historic places, or forest recreation areas in your county or city. For each listing, give the source of information and write a paragraph statement describing the area, its use, and importance.